SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AT WARTBURG

Overview

The purposes of social work education are to prepare competent and effective professionals, to develop social work knowledge, and to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems. Social work education is grounded in the profession’s history, purposes, and philosophy and is based on a body of knowledge, values, and skills. Social work education enables students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession for competent practice.

Following from these purposes, social work practice should focus simultaneously on enhancing and restoring the individual’s capacity for social functioning and creating societal conditions favorable to the individual’s goals. Social workers must have the skills to intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge, practice skills, and services that further the well-being of people and promote social and economic justice.

Since 1974 when the Council on Social Work Education first began accrediting undergraduate social work programs, standards have required baccalaureate programs to educate generalist or entry level social workers and graduate programs to educate specialist or advanced-level social workers. This requirement has served the profession well and has resulted in a well-designed route for students to follow from BSW to MSW level of practice; from graduation from an accredited undergraduate program into (often times) advanced standing at a graduate school of social work.

Nondiscrimination

The social work department conducts its educational program without discrimination on the basis of age, class, race, color, culture, gender, gender identity, religion, ethnic or national origin, immigration status, disability, political ideology or sexual orientation.

History

Wartburg College is named after the Wartburg Castle, a landmark built in 1027 and located near Eisenach, Germany. During the Reformation, Martin Luther took refuge in the castle and, while there, translated the New Testament into the language of the people. From Wartburg Castle, St. Elizabeth of Thuringia cared for the poor and needy. Adopted as a role model of the first “Wartburg social worker,” St. Elizabeth fed the hungry with bread from the castle kitchen, established a hospital to treat the sick, and provided special care for needy children.

Wartburg College began in 1852 primarily to serve the Lutheran Church and American society by the preparation of individuals for service in the ministry. Later this expanded to include both the ministry and the training of teachers. Still later in this century, Wartburg’s mission expanded through the development of a liberal arts base and education for a wide variety of occupations. The social work program began as an autonomous department in 1945 as a continuation of the
mission and liberal arts foundation of the college. Dr. C.H. Becker, the President of Wartburg in 1945, initiated the social work program because of his conviction that the values and service orientation of the social work profession were closely related to the mission of the college and the Lutheran Church. He saw the social work program as reinforcing the mission of the college to prepare students for a life of leadership and service.

Dr. Becker, through his vision, established Wartburg’s social work program as the first undergraduate social work program in Iowa and established it as a professional social work degree program. No Iowa college or university has recognized the need for trained social workers longer, and Wartburg’s commitment to social work has never diminished over the years. Since 1945, Wartburg’s social work program has graduated approximately 750 men and women with social work majors.

Social Work Program Mission Statement

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. 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. 2011).

Goals of the Social Work Program

The program’s goals are to:

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 our students with an appreciation for professional ethics and the skills needed to apply ethical principles consistently in everyday practice.

4. Enable our students to seek and skillfully use resources and research methods that enhance the quality of 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.
Core Competencies of the Social Work Curriculum

Reflecting the directives of the Council on Social Work Education, as articulated in the 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), Wartburg’s Social Work Program has adopted 11 core competencies that all of its graduates are expected to acquire:

1. Students will identify with the social work profession and demonstrate behaviors expected of entry level practitioners.

2. Students will act and practice in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of professional social work ethical principles.

3. Students will demonstrate the competent application of critical thinking to the practice of social work and an ability to communicate effectively.

4. Student practice will reflect an appreciation for the value and importance of human diversity (gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, disability, spirituality, and age).

5. Students will demonstrate an appreciation for the social work profession’s commitment to social and economic justice and an understanding of our ethical obligations to work towards these ends.

6. Students will demonstrate research skills that enable them to critically evaluate practice and outcomes; their practice will reflect the use of relevant research findings.

7. Student practice will evidence due regard for principles and theories of human behavior and the social environment.

8. Students will demonstrate a willingness and ability to incorporate social policy practice with their professional work.

9. Students will demonstrate a capacity for embracing the ever-evolving changes that affect their practice of social work.

10. Students will demonstrate beginning social work practice skills with individuals and families.

11. Students will demonstrate beginning social work practice skills with groups, organizations, and communities.

These competencies are taught and assessed through a sequenced set of courses and field experiences that constitute its core foundational curriculum.
Generalist Social Work Practice

With respect to its mission, goals, and curriculum, the program strives to produce generalist social work practitioners. Generalist social work is the professional activity of helping systems of all sizes to enhance their capacity for social work functioning and to create conditions favorable to their goals. The generalist social work perspective exists in all parts of the curriculum.

Generalist social work practitioners view problems holistically from a strengths perspective and plan interventions with the client that address all systems implicated in the client system. Understanding the change agent, client, target, and action systems requires a wide range of knowledge and skills.

Our program provides students with the necessary knowledge and skills that serve as a base for both continuing education and graduate study in social work. Our generalist emphasis provides students with essential knowledge of social work as a profession, social welfare institutions, and social work ethics and values. Many of our graduates continue their education in social work, sometimes immediately after completing their BA degree and sometimes after an intervening period of social work practice. For over two decades, our graduates have been granted advanced standing at graduate schools of social work. This means that our graduates have been able to complete the Masters of Social Work (MSW) degree at certain select universities in one year instead of the full two years required for a typical MSW. Wartburg students have been accepted with advanced standing at many of the top 10 MSW programs throughout the country.

Required Courses in the Social Work Curriculum

The social work curriculum at Wartburg College is delivered through the following required courses:

SW 101: *Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare*
SW 102: *Social Welfare History & Programs*
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 (individuals & families)*
SW 302: *Social Work Practice II (individuals & families)*
SW 303: *Social Work Practice III (organizations & communities)*
SW 321: *Social Work Research Methods*
SW 400: *Senior Integrative Seminar*
SW 401-03: *Supervised Field Experience*

PSY 101: *Introduction to Psychology*
SO 101: *Introduction to Sociology*
BI 130: *Drugs & Personal Health*
PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF THE FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM

Field instruction has long been recognized as a *signature pedagogy*, 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 the mission and goals delineated in Section I, 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. In summary, field education is designed to teach students how:

1. To integrate theoretical learning with social work practice in a wide variety of social service settings.

2. To work effectively within a social service agency setting with a variety of human service professionals.

3. To 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, age, ability, and spiritual beliefs.

4. To recognize their own abilities and limitations; to develop a practice style that is consistent with personal strengths and capacities, and reinforce identification with the profession.

5. To develop an ability to monitor and evaluate their own practice using current professional literature and generally accepted research methods.

6. To demonstrate effective, professional interpersonal, oral and written communication skills, and professional competence.

7. To recognize the inevitability of professional ethical dilemmas and the need to confront them; to practice within the framework of social work values and ethics.

Commitment to Diversity Education

In accordance with the perspectives on diversity enunciated by the Council on Social Work Education and the profession as a whole, the Social Work Program at Wartburg College prepares students to understand, appreciate, and work with a diverse variety of people and groups distinguished by the characteristics, and factors specifically mentioned in Section I (above). The field education program assists in meeting this goal by actively seeking field 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.
Program Structure

Field Instruction at Wartburg College is delivered through two required and two optional courses, each of which is aimed at achieving specific learning outcomes. Students are required to have a minimum of 590 hours of field experience (two field courses) and may actually have over 800 hours prior to graduation. These experiences are spread over a number of social service agencies and provide exposure to a wide variety of consumer populations, geographic locales, etc.

All field courses at Wartburg College are “block placements.” During the time they are in placement, students take no other courses for academic credit. The courses are sequenced, each designed specifically for students at a particular level and providing a base for the next level of learning.

The four field courses offered to social work majors are:

1. **Beginning Field Experience (SW181)**: This course, usually taken during the first or second year, is required of all social work majors and provides students with an initial exposure to a social service agency, its staff, and clientele. The course is of three and one-half weeks duration (140 hours), and is offered only during the May Term. *Beginning Field Experience* students are evaluated on a P/F basis.

2. **Diversity Field Experience (SW281)**: As an optional course open to students who have successfully completed the Beginning Field Experience, this three and one-half week placement (140 hours) enables students to broaden their exposure to the profession in order to make later courses and field work more meaningful. Students choosing this option are placed in settings that will broaden their exposure to diverse groups. The course is offered during the May Term and also during the Summer Term. Students are evaluated on a P/F basis.

3. **Supervised Field Instruction (SW401, 402, 403)**: This is a required, intensive thirteen-week (450 hours) placement for senior-level students offered during the Winter. Students in Supervised Field receive three course credits and are concurrently enrolled in the *Senior Integrative Seminar* (for which they receive an additional course credit). It is an initial experience in actual professional practice with an agency under the supervision of a qualified field instructor selected and approved by the Social Work Department. Students are evaluated using the standard grading system.

4. **Senior Integrative Seminar (SW400)**: This seminar is taken along with the *Supervised Field Instruction*, giving students in placement an opportunity to meet together weekly with department faculty 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, providing a synthesis of liberal arts
and social work courses taken throughout students’ academic careers at Wartburg. Students are evaluated using the standard grading system.

5. *Extended Field Instruction (SW405):* This is an elective course that enables students to lengthen their *Supervised Field Instruction* placement by an additional three and one-half weeks (140 hours) in order to finish projects initiated earlier in the placement or to ready themselves for professional employment. Evaluation is on a P/F basis.

**FIELD EDUCATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Wartburg College Social Work Department**

The social work program has a commitment to:

1. Maintain a social work program, including a field education that meets the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education.

2. Allocate sufficient faculty resources to successfully implement the field education program.

3. Provide students with the academic base and support necessary for a successful, meaningful field experience.

**Field Education Coordinator**

The field education coordinator oversees the development and implementation 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 and have two years of professional social work experience at a minimum. Specific responsibilities are:

1. To implement the field education program, in collaboration with other department faculty, according to the Field Instruction Manual and requirements established by the Council on Social Work Education.

2. To evaluate and assess the field education program and to recommend policy changes to the Social Work Department as a whole.

3. To develop an annual plan for the field education program specifying strengths, needs, and targets for future development.
4. To coordinate the recruitment and development of field placement sites that meet the criteria specified in the Handbook; to execute agreements between agencies and the Social Work Department, as needed.

5. To enhance successful teaching by the field instructors by providing orientation sessions, training workshops, consultation, and information about the social work program.

6. To communicate to students information about potential placement agencies.

7. To coordinate the process of placing individual students in appropriate practicum settings.

8. To maintain on-going communication with social work department faculty and the program’s national advisory board regarding field education policies, procedures, requirements, and issues.

Faculty Liaison

Once students are placed in an appropriate fieldwork setting, they are assigned faculty members who serve as liaisons and consultants through the duration of the placement. Field liaisons all hold the MSW degree and have two years of professional social work experience at minimum. The specific responsibilities of the faculty liaisons are:

1. To help the students and the field instructor in planning individualized learning experiences and objectives based on the student’s needs, the placement agency’s capacities, and the goals of the field education program.

2. To meet with the students and field instructor in a three-way conference at least twice during the 13-week supervised field instruction to review progress in learning.

3. To contact both the student and field instructor at least twice during all beginning, intermediate, and extended intermediate placements.

4. To maintain correspondence, time records, and evaluation forms relative to assigned students.

5. To be available as a resource person for the student; to consult with the student on field experience and progress toward achieving field education objectives.

6. To be available as a consultant to the field instructor.

7. To assist in the planning and conduct of weekly seminar meetings for students in the 13-week supervised field experience.

8. To assign grades in collaboration with the field instructor.
9. To assess the quality of field instruction provided to each student and make recommendations to the field education coordinator regarding the continued participation of the agency and field instructor in the field education program.

Placement Agency

In addition to meeting the criteria specified in the Selection of Agencies section of this Handbook, agencies accepting students for placement have the responsibility to:

1. Provide a designated field instructor meeting the qualifications outlined in the Selection of Agencies and Instructors section of this Handbook.

2. Allow sufficient time for the field instructor to adequately supervise the student’s field experience.

3. Allow sufficient time for the field instructor to collaborate with social work faculty and participate in orientation, training, and other relevant meetings.

4. Provide the student with adequate working space and other necessities (supplies, clerical assistance, parking space, etc.).

5. Allow the student access to clients, meetings, and records necessary to a meaningful educational experience.

Agency Field Instructor

As the student’s direct supervisor, the field instructor has the responsibility to:

1. Assist in the selection of students for placement through interviews and evaluation of students referred by the Social Work Department.

2. Develop, with the student, a mutually agreeable learning plan outlining goals and objectives for the placement.

3. Conduct an orientation and introduction of the student to the agency.

4. Coordinate the involvement of other agency staff and community resources impacting the student’s learning experience.

5. Provide regular supervisory time to the student and feedback on performance, strengths, needs, attitudes, values, etc.

6. Give assignments geared to promoting the student’s learning and professional development as a beginning social worker.
7. Make assignments that help the student in learning about a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice, including practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; facilitate the integration of previous learning and help the student in connecting theory to practice.

8. Participate in three-way conferences with the student and faculty liaison during the placement.

9. Encourage practice that is congruent with the department’s objectives and with the ethics and values of the social work profession.

10. Become generally familiar with the Social Work Department’s social work curriculum and syllabi for the field courses.

11. Participate in orientation sessions, conferences and seminars for field instructors sponsored by the Social Work Department.

12. Complete evaluations of the student’s performance (in collaboration with the student) and submit a copy to the faculty liaison.

13. Inform the faculty liaison immediately of any perceived problems of a serious nature which the student is having in the placement.

**Student**

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

1. Follow the procedures for selection of a placement agency specified in this Handbook.

2. Develop, in collaboration with the field instructor, a learning plan outlining goals and objectives for the placement.

3. Perform placement assignments in a responsible, professional manner, keeping all commitments made to the agency, field instructor, clients, and social work faculty.

4. Abide by the policies and procedures of the placement agency.

5. Notify the field instructor of unavoidable absences and tardiness in advance, as expected in professional employment.

6. Take responsibility for personal and professional growth by seeking assistance or consultation from the field instructor and faculty liaison.

7. Complete work assigned by the field instructor.
8. Learn, test, and apply the NASW Code of Ethics at all times during the placement.

9. Observe, test, integrate, and apply the theoretical concepts and principles learned in the classroom to experiences in the field placement.

10. Exercise responsibility in observing the confidentiality of clients and information encountered in the placement.

11. Bring to the attention of the field instructor and the faculty liaison questionable professional practices within the agency.

12. Participate with the field instructor in on-going self evaluation throughout the placement.

13. Maintain records of time and activities on forms provided by the social work department and submit them, as required.

14. Complete all assignments and written work specified by the course syllabus on a timely basis.

15. Attend all seminars, conferences, and meetings required as a part of the field course.

16. 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 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:

1. The development of the student’s general *social work knowledge and skills* is the paramount goal of the supervised field experience. This is best accomplished by placing students within a relatively close proximity to the campus (200 miles) so that regular visits by department faculty and participation in the weekly senior integrative seminar meetings are possible.

2. Another important goal is to meet 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 to seek a placement in a more distant location. Regardless of location, all placement agencies and field instructors must meet the criteria outlined elsewhere 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 and apply and be accepted for the Wartburg West program. Social work faculty must give final approval.

**International Field Placements**

The 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 that students may take advantage of semester and year-long study abroad programs offered through the college’s Global and Multi-Cultural Studies 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:

1. The student must have sufficient language skills and cultural knowledge to work effectively with clients and placement agency staff.

2. The placement agency and designated field instructor must meet the criteria delineated elsewhere in this manual.

3. 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 s/he is currently employed, has worked as a paid employee, or has done considerable volunteer work. Likewise, students should avoid seeking placements with agencies where they have completed earlier fieldwork. Exceptions may be made in some cases where, in the judgment of the student, her/his faculty
advisor and the field coordinator, it is clearly in the best interests of the student's professional education. In these exceptional cases, the student must have:

1. practicum assignments and responsibilities that are consistent with objectives of the social work program.

2. practicum assignments and responsibilities that are significantly different than assigned job functions or past work.

3. 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:

1. The agency’s approach to student training must be compatible with the educational objectives of the Wartburg College Social Work Program.

2. The agency offers a variety of learning experiences appropriate for baccalaureate-level social work students.

3. The agency must function in a manner consistent with social work values and ethical principles.

4. The agency can afford a student the opportunity for beginning social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and organizations.

5. The agency must designate a single professional staff member as the field instructor who meets the criteria identified in this Handbook, and who has sufficient practice experience, time, and interest to provide a quality educational experience for the student.

6. Preference in selection is given to those agencies that can offer students the opportunity to work with diverse or traditionally-oppressed populations.

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 coordinator. A copy of this agreement form is included in the appendix.
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:

1. Master of Social Work degree (MSW); or
2. Bachelor of Social Work Degree (BA in Social Work or BSW) with a minimum of one year’s post graduate professional experience; or
3. 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. A copy of this form is included in the appendix.

Orientation and Training for Field Instructors (AS 2.1.5)

Field instructors supervising Wartburg College social work students for the first time are provided with an orientation by the field education coordinator that focuses on policies, practices, and basic supervisory issues.

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 conferences, workshops, and seminars on topics related to social work education and practice sponsored by the department.

FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

It is essential for the Social Work Department to continually monitor and evaluate the extent to which the field education program is successful in attaining its objectives, and to seek more innovative and effective means of preparing students for professional practice. A meaningful evaluation requires that an effort be made to obtain feedback from a broad range of people
involved in and/or affected by the field education program, including students, field instructors/social work practitioners, and faculty, and that their input have an actual direct impact on the operation of the program.

Program evaluation data is gathered and documented through the following channels:

**Students**

Students’ assessment of their field instructors and placement sites is obtained through use of the *Student Evaluation of Field Placement* from (see appendix). Information from these evaluations is provided to field agencies and is used in determining which sites should be used again, how the program might be improved, and if additional training should be offered to field instructors. The completion of this evaluation also serves to encourage students to reflect upon and integrate the learning that has taken place in the field, and the extent to which the educational objectives have been met.

**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 to recommend areas for curriculum development. This feedback plays an important part in the annual overall assessment of the social work program and development goals that are set.

**Faculty**

All faculty in the Social Work Department are involved in the planning and conduct of field education. Their thoughts and ideas regarding the effectiveness of the program and individual field placement sites are formally articulated through an annual review of field education, which usually occurs during the May Term.

**Annual Evaluation of Field Education**

At the completion of the academic year, the field coordinator prepares a written evaluation of the program, using data obtained from the sources identified above. This report documents the performance of the program over the past year, identifies strengths/needs, and recommends goals for the coming year. These recommendations are considered as part of the social work program’s broader annual assessment and addressed through formal developmental goals.
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS IN FIELD EDUCATION
GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Transportation

Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from placement sites, and in some cases are expected to have a car available for use at field agencies. Specific expectations regarding student travel should be clarified with the agency and field instructor before the placement begins. Students must have a current, valid driver’s license and sufficient insurance if driving is a necessary part of the field experience.

Insurance

Although professional malpractice insurance is not required by the social work program, some placement agencies may require the coverage. Insurance for students can be obtained through the National Association of Social Workers and other carriers. Specific information and application forms are available from department faculty members.

Work Hours and Holidays

Work days and hours are negotiated between the student, field instructor, and faculty liaison prior to the beginning of the placement. Although the number of hours worked may vary slightly from week to week, students should not consistently exceed the 36-40 hour maximum limit or alter their schedule without first consulting their faculty liaison.

The Social Work Department does not require students to work in placement during college-designated holidays and breaks. However, an agency may request that a student work during these periods. The responsibility for requesting time off for any reason rests with the student, and such requests should be negotiated directly with the field instructor well in advance.

Changing Agency Placements

Typically, students remain in the same agency for the duration of the placement. However, there may be compelling reasons to change placements at some point during the term if, for example, the structure of the agency suddenly changes, or if a field instructor is incapacitated in some way. A request for a change in placement may be initiated by the student, field instructor, or faculty liaison. If a change is deemed necessary, the faculty liaison will work with the field coordinator to locate an alternate placement meeting department criteria.

Removal From Field Placement

Occasionally, while in a field experience, a student will demonstrate unsuitability to continue with the experience which may result in removal from the agency and from the social work major. The following are four areas of main concern:
• Violation of NASW Code of Ethics.

• Unsatisfactory performance in field placement, for example, absenteeism, failure to follow agency policies and procedures, failure to follow supervision, harm to clients, etc.

• Failure to follow through on faculty and supervisor recommendations for correction.

• Violation of the Wartburg standards for students as outlined in the Wartburg College Student Handbook or the commission of a crime.

Students have the right to appeal Departmental decisions to terminate a field placement through the established Departmental grievance policy outlined in the Social Work Department Student Handbook.

Grievances

Students who experience difficulties or dissatisfaction with placements can address them using the following procedures:

1. Discuss the problem directly with the agency person with whom the problem exists and the field instructor.

2. If the issue cannot be resolved at the first level, the student should discuss it with her/his faculty liaison, who will subsequently address the problem with the agency field instructor.

3. If a satisfactory solution to the problem cannot be achieved, the student and faculty liaison should reconsider the appropriateness of the placement and the possibility of initiating a change.

4. Students retain the option of addressing problems through the grievance procedures established by the college. These procedures are described in the Student Handbook.

Exceptions to Policies

While they should never be considered lightly, exceptions to policies described in this handbook can be made on a case by case basis, with the authorization of the field coordinator and Social Work Department chair. Exceptions will be made only if they are clearly in the best interests of the student’s professional education and if they do not compromise the integrity of the social work program.
BEGINNING FIELD EXPERIENCE
SW 181

Course Description and Rationale

Beginning Field Experience is a 3 ½ week (140 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 is helpful to students in determining the compatibility of their own values, personal qualities, and level of commitment with professional social work practice. Student evaluation from their supervisors is one of the criteria in considering students’ application to the social work major.

The Beginning Field Experience 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 11 core competencies and 51 practice behaviors that are essential for beginning social work practice. In this course, students will:

Outcome 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.

Outcome 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.

Outcome 3: Gain a basic exposure to the structure of a social service agency: its goals, clientele, funding sources, and services.

Outcome 4: Recognize how a social service agency interacts with its social environment; how it works with other agencies and community resources.

Outcome 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:

2. Approval of the student’s academic advisor and the Field Education Coordinator based on maturity, sense of responsibility and 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.

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 Agreement

A Field Instruction Learning Agreement 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 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. A copy of the Field Instruction Learning Agreement can be found in the appendix.

Placement Length

Students spend a total of 140 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 student or agency needs; such cases should be discussed with the faculty liaison before the placement begins.

Reporting Procedures

Students in Beginning Field complete the following reports and submit them to their faculty liaison at the end of each week:

1. The Weekly Time Log. A copy of this form can be found in the appendix.

2. A written summary of activities and reflections, using the guidelines contained in the course syllabus.

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 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.

DIVERSITY FIELD EXPERIENCE
SW 281

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 Intermediate Field Experience is offered as an elective to broaden their exposure to professional practice, settings, and clientele. The course can help to define future learning needs, make their classroom learning more meaningful, and acquaint them with broader professional options before entering the fourth-year Supervised Field Instruction placement. This course also provides a valuable opportunity for students to broaden their exposure to diverse populations and settings.
Learning Outcomes

The structure of this course is guided by a curriculum plan that identifies 11 core competencies and 51 practice behaviors that are essential for beginning social work practice. In this course, 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 support, 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

1. Satisfactory completion of Beginning Field Experience (SW 181).

2. 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.

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 Agreement

A Field Instruction Learning Agreement 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. A copy of the Field Instruction Learning Agreement can be found in the appendix.

Placement Length

Students spend a total of 140 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 form 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.

Reporting Procedures

Students in Intermediate Field complete the following reports and send them to their faculty liaison at the end of each week:

1. The Weekly Time Log. A copy of this form can be found in the appendix.

2. A written summary of activities and reflections, using the guidelines contained in the course syllabus.

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 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 basis, reflecting the recommendations of the field instructor and the quality of the student’s written assignments.

SUPERVISED FIELD INSTRUCTION
SW 401, 402, 403

Course Description

This course, for which students earn three credits, consists of an intensive professionally-supervised practicum in an approved social work setting where students are placed for thirteen weeks. 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, this placement represents the final educational experience before entering beginning professional practice.

Philosophy and Rationale

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 11 core competencies and 51 practice behaviors that are essential for beginning social work practice. This practicum provides students with the opportunity demonstrate their mastery of the practice behaviors listed below:

Students will:

1. Set meaningful and realistic career goals.
2. Identify the unique roles and contributions of social workers in an interdisciplinary setting.
3. Demonstrate consistent adherence to standards of appearance, comportment, and communication.

4. Demonstrate proficiency in written communication with client constituencies and colleagues.

5. Demonstrate an ability to develop effective rapport with clients.

6. Demonstrate an ability to establish clear boundaries, interventions, and outcomes with clients.

7. Demonstrate effective problem-solving skills in their work.

8. Effectively negotiate mediate, and advocate on behalf of their clients.

9. Consistently and effectively terminate client services and relationships, when needed.

Application for the Supervised Field Instruction and Prerequisites

During the Winter Term of the third-year, students apply for admission to the supervised field experience, using an application form (see appendix) that is completed and returned to the Field Education Coordinator. Applications are then reviewed and approved by the social work faculty sitting as a committee.

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

SW 101: Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare
SW 102: Social Welfare History & Programs (for students entering Wartburg in Fall, 2012 and beyond)
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

They must also:

1. Have a minimum overall grade point average of 2.00 at the time of admission.
2. Have a minimum grade point average of 2.00 in all courses required for the social work major at the time of admission.
3. 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). The weekly seminar meetings afford students the chance to meet with each other and social work faculty each week to discuss placement experiences and 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, but 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 11 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 and summer prior to the student’s fourth year. The placement is formalized in the fall, and students begin their field placements in January.

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.
- assignments and activities that will enable the student to meet the 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:

1. arranging a meeting with the field instructor and faculty liaison to discuss possible goals and assignments.
2. writing a document summarizing the goals and assignments discussed in the meeting.

3. Obtaining the signature of the field instructor and forwarding a copy of the plan to the faculty liaison.

The plan should be viewed as a flexible document that can be revised as the need arises.

**Placement Length**

Students spend a total of 450 hours in the Supervised Field Instruction placement over a thirteen-week period. They are typically in placement 32-36 hours per week. Specific work hours and schedules are negotiated with the field instructor.

**Reporting Procedures**

Students in the field placements complete a weekly time log documenting the time spent at the agency. A copy of this form is submitted to the faculty liaison at the end of each week.

**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 and the field instructor. 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 plans 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 as an additional resource.

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 through 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).

**SENIOR INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR**  
**SW 400**

**Course Description**

This weekly seminar is offered for senior students in conjunction with Supervised Field Instruction. Its purpose is to facilitate the integration of social work knowledge, skills and values, and a liberal arts perspective into a set of practice competencies necessary for the performance of beginning social work practice. It is also the point at which students’ mastery of the 11 core social work competencies taught throughout the curriculum is assessed. The seminar meets three hours per week on Friday afternoon for the duration of the term.

**Philosophy and Rationale for the Course**

The need for an opportunity to begin integrating the various strands of learning drawn from both the student's liberal arts and social work coursework is supported both by the College's general education requirement for a "capstone" course and by the Social Work Program's desire for the student's development of a model of professional practice.

It is acknowledged that the process of integration is not and cannot be confined to a single course; rather it belongs to the whole range of the student's educational experience. Further, each student's ability to utilize the integrative process will vary according to his/her own interests, desires, and capacities. Integration may, in fact, be viewed as a developmental process occurring in sequential stages and extending beyond the student's involvement in his/her current educational efforts. It is a life-long activity.

This seminar is designed to enable students to engage effectively and meaningfully with each other and social work faculty in the process of combining many elements of their educational experience at Wartburg College into a basis of personal and professional competence. By its very nature the content, process and expected outcomes of the seminar differ from other courses by being more intensive, more critical, more interactive and more comprehensive.

**Learning Outcomes**

The structure of this course is guided by a curriculum plan that identifies 11 core competencies and 51 practice behaviors that are essential for beginning social work practice. This seminar course provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the practice behaviors listed below:

Students will:
1. Set meaningful and realistic career goals that give adequate consideration to professional strengths/limitations, participation in professional organizations, and continuing education.

2. Be able to identify the unique roles and contributions of social workers in interdisciplinary settings.

3. Show an ability to use professional consultation and supervision to enhance the quality of their practice.

4. Demonstrate an ability to practice in accordance with the NASW Code of Social Work Ethics and other recognized frameworks.

5. Articulate a thoughtful integration of their personal values/ethics and those of the social work profession.

6. Competently use accepted professional models and tools to analyze and resolve ethical dilemmas in social work practice.

7. Identify accepted models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation, and their proper use.

8. Show due consideration in their work to human diversity.

9. Articulate an understanding of the ways in which cultural structures and values exacerbate social inequalities among diverse groups.

10. Identify and mitigate the negative influences of their own biases and values in working with diverse groups and individuals.

11. Show that they understand the dynamics and historical roots of oppression, recognizing ways in which economic security and social well-being are related.

12. Identify effective policy strategies for alleviating social and economic oppression and ways that they might be implemented.

13. Articulate and advocate for legislative policy changes that reflect a high regard for social and economic justice.

14. Design interventions that are well-grounded in current, relevant research.

15. Design, implement and present a program assessment.

16. Use basic concepts and theories of human growth and development in their analysis of individual client functioning.
17. Effectively analyze and assess human behavior using the Ecological and Social Systems Perspectives as integrative frameworks.

18. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of social policies and programs.

19. Initiate policy changes via agency administrative channels.

20. Utilize valid program assessment strategies to suggest changes to agency services and programs.

21. Use professional assessment tools and protocols to interpret client data and identify significant strengths/limitations.

22. Develop clear, measurable intervention goals.

23. Accurately assess the impact of their interventions.

Co-requisites

Students must be concurrently registered for the *Supervised Field Experience* (SW 401, 402, 403).

Expectations and Learning Activities

To achieve the various desired knowledge, skill and value outcomes, the course utilizes a group process format and a series of other assignments. Opportunities to reflect, share, and evaluate common concerns are necessary to enable the students to engage in the integration process effectively and meaningfully. The role of the instructor is that of a group member with special responsibilities as an enabler and facilitator of the group process.

Specific learning activities include:

1. A regular guided discussion of professional ethics in social work practice.

2. Formal presentations of case plans and situations encountered in the field placement.

3. A series of written assignments addressing:
   
   A. A description and analysis of the placement agency’s structure and functioning.

   B. An analysis of an ethical dilemma encountered in the field placement.

   C. A description of professional resources and roles utilized in the field placement.
D. The nature, styles, and effectiveness of supervision received from the field instructor.

E. A comprehensive self-assessment of strengths, needs, aspirations, and potential for future professional practice.

4. A research assignment using an appropriate design to assess some aspect of the student’s field practice or the placement agency’s programs. The field instructor serves as a consultant to the student in the selection and design of the research assignment.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Assessment and the final grade for the course is based on the level and sophistication of the student’s participation in the seminar meetings. Consideration is given to attendance, active participation in discussions, preparation, performance as a discussion facilitator for assigned readings, and oral case presentations.

EXTENDED FIELD INSTRUCTION
SW 405

Course Description and Rationale

This course is offered to students who have completed the Supervised Field Experience (SW 401, 401, 402) and Senior Integrative Seminar (SW 400). It is an opportunity for them to extend their Supervised Field Instruction placement by an additional three and one-half 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:

1. Build upon the knowledge and skills gained in the Supervised Field Instruction placement.

2. Gain a deeper understanding of the placement agency’s structure, services, clientele, and interface with the larger community.

3. Develop and articulate a plan for future career development and/or graduate study.

Prerequisites
1. Satisfactory completion of the *Supervised Field Experience* (SW 401,402,403) and the *Senior Integrative Seminar* (SW 400).

2. Approval of the Field Education Coordinator, the student’s academic advisor, and the 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 140 hours in the Extended Field Placement over a three and one-half week period. They are typically in placement eight hours each working day.

### Reporting Procedures

Students complete the following reports and send them to their faculty liaison at the end of each week:

1. The Weekly Time Log. A copy of this form is included in the appendix.

2. A weekly written summary of activities and progress in meeting the placement goals outlined in the learning plan.

### Evaluation of Student Performance

The student and field instructor complete and sign the *Student Field Learning Evaluation* and *Student Evaluation* (see appendix) 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 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.