

## *Partners in Field Roles and Responsibilities*

### *Students/Interns*

Student interns are those who meet the requisites established by the BSW or MSSW Program for field education enrollment. Students must have completed the process for field placement, provided a signed Understanding of Field Placement Agreement, and registered at the appropriate session. Some of the responsibilities of the student interns include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Follow the Social Work Department's guidelines and process for placement.
- ✓ Behavior in placement and in the community should be in accordance with the social work profession's standards of ethical performance (See Appendix P – NASW Code of Ethics)
- ✓ Close observance of and adherence to agency policies and procedures, including but not limited to dress code and notification of absences. Therefore, interns should become familiar with agency policies and procedures as soon as possible.
- ✓ Maintain agency standards and practice guidelines, including respect for client's confidentiality, follow up, and reporting laws.
- ✓ Be pro-active in their role as learner: identify learning needs and seek to meet them; ask questions and seek answers.
- ✓ Complete all assignments on time.
- ✓ Be open to constructive feedback.
- ✓ Share concerns/issues/questions promptly with the field instructor, task supervisors, and/or faculty field liaison.
- ✓ If asked, complete and submit process recordings or journals on time.
- ✓ Be self-reflective; take time to process feelings, thoughts, and actions.
- ✓ Attend and actively participate in Integrative Field Placement Seminar.
- ✓ Attendance and participation is a major requirement of the field education course. Students must complete the minimum of clock hours for on a weekly basis as stated in the Educational Agreement.
  - Although each agency may have their own attendance log and procedures, students are required to complete the official log of hours and activities that will be provided at the Field Education Orientation. Copies of these logs would be handed to the field liaison at mid-term and final evaluation.
  - Be on time for placement, field instruction orientations, and field seminars.

### *Field Instructors*

The Field Instructor is a community person who meets the selection criteria discussed further below in this handbook. The field instructors voluntarily serve as teachers, role models, evaluators, mentors and supervisors for students in field. The field instructor may elicit the assistance of other professional staff within the agency, known as Task Supervisors, to help students learn specific tasks, e.g., intake, staffing, recording, procedures, etc.; however, the field instructor has the overall responsibility for planning, monitoring, and evaluating the student's learning. Some of the responsibilities of the Field Instructors are as follow:

- ✓ Provide work space, equipment, and materials to interns.
- ✓ Introduce interns to the agency and staff.
- ✓ Provide or make arrangements for orientation regarding agency's policies and procedures within the first two weeks of field placement. They should also provide orientation regarding the organizational structure, functions of the agency and the student's unit, client referral and funding sources
  - An Orientation Checklist (See Appendix Q - Orientation Checklist), will be provided at Field Placement Orientation which should be completed and signed within the first two weeks of placement, and attached to the first two pages of the educational agreement that will be provided to the field liaison.
- ✓ Work with students on developing an educational agreement that includes planning and evaluation of activities throughout field placement.
- ✓ Be available to evaluate the student's accomplishment of tasks, and provide constructive feedback on a regular basis.
- ✓ Deliver a minimum of one hour per week of private one-on-one professional feedback and direction to the student regarding performance in order to enhance the student's learning experience.
  - The following are seen as key elements for effective supervision:
    - Reciprocity
    - Honest feedback
    - Respect for the level of awareness that the student brings
    - Openness to conflict
    - Safety (emotional and physical)
    - Willingness to collaborate with the student
- ✓ Attend required field orientations and training sessions, and when possible, participation in workshops, seminars and symposia on field instruction and other social work practice –related subjects.
- ✓ Offer accessibility to students, including interim or contingency plans for providing such accessibility when not available, and enforce safety procedures.

- ✓ Assist students with linking theory to practice by assuring sufficient number and variety of cases/assignments to student at the micro, mezzo, and macro level as possible within the agency context.
- ✓ Assign learning experiences in accordance with the course syllabus, students' Educational Agreement, and Competencies. This may include but is not limited to:
  - Reading/researching about the agency, relevant social policies, client populations, and needs.
  - Reviewing records and other recordings
  - Assigning primary responsibility for a caseload, group and/or community intervention.
  - Participation with other professionals.
  - Making referrals and home visits
  - Visiting/contacting other social service agencies.
  - Keeping a professional journal.
  - Developing and discussing Process Recordings.
  - Following-up on student's questions/concerns in a timely fashion.
- ✓ Maintain and promote an environment in which students are treated with respect throughout interactions in the office and the community.
- ✓ Complete mid-term and final written evaluations, and meet with field liaison to provide feedback regarding student's performance.
- ✓ Be punctual in meeting with students for regularly scheduled field instruction, and in meeting with the Faculty Field Liaison.

*Task Supervisors (also referred to as Preceptor or Ancillary Field Supervisors)*

At times field instructors use other agency personnel to supervise social work interns. The type and quality of this ancillary supervision varies by sites. Under direction of the field instructor, the ancillary field supervisors may take part in the following tasks:

- ✓ Provision of an additional practitioner role model/work relationship.
- ✓ Teaching a specific expertise, skill, and function.
- ✓ Meeting with student regularly for on-the-job assistance.
- ✓ On-site task focused supervision.
- ✓ Feedback to student and field instructor regarding assignment and work progress.
- ✓ Teaching interns how to conduct intakes.

- ✓ Delivering basic social services (information & referral).
- ✓ Teaching interns how to perform case documentation.
- ✓ Teaching the agency's policies and procedures.

### *Field Liaisons*

The Faculty Field Liaison is a member of the social work faculty who coordinates, monitors, and evaluates the field education experience to ensure that conditions are present to encourage optimal learning and professional development. The faculty field liaison will visit with the field instructor and the student two to-three times during the semester. The first visit usually takes place during the Field Education Orientation, or is otherwise scheduled early in the semester. The purpose of the initial visit is to clarify expectations of the agency, the students, and the school, to identify areas for personal and professional growth, and set goals for future placement experiences. A different faculty field liaison may be assigned to the student for each semester when they select to do the split placement.

The Faculty Field Liaison is responsible for assigning and recording the final *Pass* or *Fail* grade. Some other responsibilities of the Faculty Field Liaisons are as follow:

- ✓ Assist with the development of a Field Educational Agreement in order to structure the internship to address objectives, competencies, practice behaviors, and student's educational goals.
- ✓ Interpret field curriculum competencies to Field Instructors, and clarify expectations regarding internship competencies and appropriate field experiences to students and Field Instructors.
- ✓ Monitor the level of supervision/instruction provided to students and appropriateness of assignments.
- ✓ Monitor the internship through liaison visits, student and field instructor feedback and faculty consultation.
- ✓ Ensure completion of Educational Agreements, Mid-Term and Final Evaluation, and bring the signed appropriate forms to the Office of Field Education in a timely fashion.
- ✓ Mediate between student and field instructor to address issues of concern that may impact the learning process and to facilitate problem solving.
- ✓ Mediate when there's conflict in the field practicum/agency and request the intervention of the Director of Field Education when a solution cannot be achieved at that level.
- ✓ Monitor students' progress in the field internships and provide alternatives for improvement in field.
- ✓ Depending upon student and Field Instructor needs, the Faculty Field Liaison may assist Field Instructors in the identification of student's learning style and planning learning experiences to fit this style.

- ✓ Assist Field Instructors in the development of supervisory and teaching skills.
- ✓ Evaluate field placement agencies and provide feedback to the Director of Field Education.

### *Director of Field Education*

The Director of Field Education carries full responsibility for the administration of the Field Education Office at the UTRGV Dept. of Social Work. Some of the responsibilities of the Director of Field Education are as follow:

- ✓ Coordinates and evaluates every aspect of field education including but not limited to Preparation Meetings, Individual Meetings with students, Field Education Fairs, and Field Placement Orientations.
- ✓ Responsible for securing field placement for students and for referring students to appropriate field placements based on their program of study. Student's preferences and special needs will be accommodated contingent to availability.
- ✓ Intervene as last resource if an issue in field placement cannot be resolved by student/field instructor/field liaison involvement.
- ✓ Decide, in consultation with faculty and Field Education Committee, which agencies will be used for field instruction in the different programs and to negotiate affiliation and program agreements with them.
- ✓ Maintains continuing evaluation of the agencies and field instructors
- ✓ Provides a training seminar for all Field Instructors designed to acquaint, instruct and provide learning opportunities for Field Instruction and student learning.
- ✓ Provides Field Instructors and agencies educational material that delineate time schedules, University and Social Work policies and educational responsibilities.
- ✓ Identify specific educational objectives and competencies which the student must meet during their placement process.
- ✓ Design and implement an evaluation to ensure that field instruction objectives and competencies are being met.
- ✓ Maintains open communication and support with Field Liaisons.