Every aspect of the Social Work Program’s organization and implementation is conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, mental or physical disability.
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SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the social work program at Lewis-Clark State College is to prepare students for entry-level generalist practice. We are committed to the preparation of professional social workers instilling the knowledge, skills, and values to address the needs and potential of individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. Drawing on an ecological, strengths-based perspective, the program prepares students to engage as professional social work practitioners who will be able to provide competent services with integrity to promote social justice and human rights recognizing the dignity and worth of the person. Graduates are prepared for practice with diverse populations understanding the person-in-environment influence on identity development and relationships. Through courses, internships, and student activities, the program aims to foster in its students a celebration of differences among people and a belief that respecting these differences enriches the quality of life for all. Graduates will practice from a set of ethical principles inherent in the social work profession, including the recognition that professional development is a life-long learning process. Finally, our program is dedicated to the inclusion of non-traditional aged, rural, and lower income students. The program is also devoted to providing students the opportunity to engage in meaningful research projects, in the community in which they live, by conducting program evaluations and needs assessments through our research sequence which culminates in a public symposium. (Rev. 10-13)

FORWARD

The philosophy, policies, and procedures set forth in this manual attest to the unquestionable importance of field instruction. It is our hope that the manual will serve as a guide to accomplishing the objectives of the program. It is offered with gratitude to the many agencies who so willingly share in the education of future social work practitioners.

Field instruction is an integral part of the social work curriculum for it is in the field setting that students learn to integrate the theory and knowledge learned in class with hand-on experience for responsible problem-solving of social welfare needs.

This guide for field instruction has been prepared for the purpose of assisting students, faculty, and field instructors in developing an understanding of the objectives, policies and procedures necessary to the orderly conduct of the field instruction component of the social work program. For your convenience this manual is available on our web site http://www.lcsc.edu/social-sciences/programs/social-work/field-education/

Although an effort has been made to be responsive to situations and issues which occur most frequently, many other matters are likely to be left out inadvertently. In such cases, the faculty field liaison or the field education director will be valuable resources.
CONTACT INFORMATION:

Director of Field Education/Lewiston Field Liaison:
Lauren Nichols, LCSW, 208-792-2261

Coeur d’Alene Field Liaison:
Doug Eacho, LMSW, 208-292-2678

OVERVIEW

Social Work 487 A/B and 488 A/B (Field Instruction/Seminar) are dynamic and vital courses which challenge a student to apply the generalist practice process within an agency setting. A minimum of 400 hours of field instruction is required of all social work majors. This is considered the minimum amount of time for the students to achieve the skills and knowledge necessary to enter the work force as an entry level social work practitioner. The traditional schedule is 200 hours in the Fall semester and 200 hours in the Spring semester. Students serve in one agency for the entire senior placement to ensure comprehensive practice experience over two consecutive semesters. Students are covered by liability insurance provided through the College by payment of a course fee of $15.00.

Field Instruction affords experiential assessment and evaluation of the student’s development in the process of becoming a helping professional. The student utilizes his/her academic and life experiences in the reality of the agency-client system.

The Field Instruction experience should be a generalist experience, giving the student an opportunity to participate and become familiar with the many components of the social work role.

The ideal placement affords the student opportunity to interact professionally with individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities. In conjunction with the field experience, the student attends a field seminar for structured activities which are focused on the integration of theory, coursework, and practice.

FIELD INSTRUCTION

Field instruction is an integral part of the social work curriculum in the B.S.W. program at Lewis-Clark State College. The courses of instruction which students receive in this area are essential to the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for the competent practice of social work. In field instruction, students are provided an opportunity for practical experience working directly with people needing social work assistance with problems of daily living. Moreover, in the field sequence, the didactic instruction received in the classroom is enlivened, enriched, and enhanced through the experience of applying theories, concepts, and principles to practice.

The partnership between the College and the Agency is a natural and necessary characteristic of field instruction. The resources of the agency, including its line staff, supervisors, and administrators, provide critical components of the educational process. The social work program at Lewis-Clark State College could not proceed without the involvement of students with the agencies’ client systems. The field instruction experience provides students with a microcosm of the profession at work. Here, students observe
professional social workers performing their various tasks: the Agency Field Instructor models the attitudes, behaviors, and skills expected of the competent professional; the agencies’ programs reflect important social policies and issues whose analysis, implementation or change are important aspects of the student’s learning. The operation and management of the agency provides important insights and understandings about the administration of social services. Taken together, the student’s interaction with consumers, Agency Field Instructors and the agency as a whole, comprise a comprehensive educational experience.

At the same time, the College contributes to the agencies’ goals and functioning as well. The faculties’ knowledge and skills, and the service provided by students (even as they learn) illustrate the promise and realization of this dynamic partnership as well as the mutuality and reciprocity of our joint participation in the educational process.

Clearly, field instruction is a challenging and demanding component of the student’s undergraduate social work education. This manual is intended to assist the student, the faculty, and the Agency Field Instructor in carrying out their respective roles. The manual is presented as an effort to clarify roles and expectations of all involved, and serves to provide answers to questions which faculty, field instructors, or students may have about the structure and process of field instruction. In such cases, the faculty liaison or the field director will be valuable resources.

Additionally the Social Work Program provides periodic in-service training for field instructors which seek to further enhance the experience for all involved.

Field instruction is, in reality, a method of teaching and learning, rather than a discrete content area in the social work curriculum. Field instruction is built upon a structured sequence of learning activities designed to prepare the student for the field setting. The student enters the instruction with academic knowledge appropriate to the field setting: the generalist approach to social work practice, the problem solving process, methods of research, the place of values and ethics in social work practice, an understanding of the effects of environmental factors on human behavior including an appreciation of human diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, knowledge of major social welfare programs, public and private, and an understanding of the impact of social welfare policy and programs on social work practice as well as a global/international awareness/understanding.

Field instruction carries the prime responsibility for the experiential component of social work education, and, of necessity, helps the student use the agency program as a learning tool in the practice of social work. As the Curriculum Policy Statement of the Council on Social Work Education suggests:

“The learning experience provided through field instruction is essential to the achievement of the social work curriculum. Purposeful helping or problem-solving activities with the recipients of social work services enable the student to experience the discipline of professional relationships; to gain knowledge and understanding in all content areas
of the curriculum; to learn to apply and test social work principles, values, and techniques; and to develop the self-awareness necessary for professional performance as a social worker.”

This experience is intended to compliment the student’s academic work by allowing the opportunity to further apply theory to actual social work situations. The student’s goal in the field instruction sequence is to achieve competence at the beginning level of professional social work practice.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE FIELD INSTRUCTION PROGRAM**

1. Provide for the integration of theoretical learning with practice experience within a supervised field experience
2. To further develop and integrate into practice professional values and ethics associated with the social work profession: empathy, objectivity, acceptance, genuineness, non-judgmental attitude, respect for individual differences, and belief in self-determination
3. Develop an understanding of how one’s own values and ethics influence work with culturally diverse groups, disadvantaged populations, and women
4. To provide experiential assessment and evaluation of the student’s development in the process of becoming and being an entry-level generalist practitioner
5. To provide reality experiences in the following areas:
   a. Understanding of work within the structure and function of agency and community delivery systems
   b. Developing a worker-client relationship
   c. Interviewing, assessing, planning intervention, implementing intervention, evaluation, termination and follow-up
   d. Developing knowledge of community resources and how to employ them in practice
   e. Developing community and political relationships within the community social service system
   f. Analyzing and using organizational policies, procedures, communication systems, etc.
   g. Utilizing case recording and/or other technical writing such as grant applications, community needs assessments, court reports, legislative background documents, etc.
   h. Evaluate one’s own practice in relation to professional social work standards.
   i. Employment of program evaluation instrument to assess program effectiveness
   j. Developing an educational supervisory relationship and appropriately utilizing that relationship for personal and professional growth

**COMPETENCIES FOSTERED BY FIELD INSTRUCTION**

The Council on Social Work Education sets educational standards for all accredited social work programs. The 2008 Educational and Policy Accreditation Standard (EPAS) established 10 Core competencies and 41 Practice Behaviors that social work students are
expected to meet upon graduation from an accredited BSW Program. Professional Social Work Education is competency based education.

**Education Policy 2.1 – Core Competencies:**
Competency-based education is an outcome performance approach to curriculum design. Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills. The goal of the outcome approach is to demonstrate the integration application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills (CSWE EPAS, 2008:3). Field education is considered the primary means of socializing students to the profession of social work.

At the termination of their field work experience, the student should:

2.1.1 – Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

- A. Advocate for client access to the services of social work
- B. Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continued professional development
- C. Attend to professional roles and boundaries
- D. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
- E. Engage in career-long learning
- F. Use supervision and consultation

2.1.2 – Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice

- A. Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allow professional values to guide practice
- B. Make ethical decisions by applying the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics
- C. Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts
- D. Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

2.1.3 – Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

- A. Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom
- B. Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation
- C. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues

2.1.4 – Engage diversity and difference in practice

- A. Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power
B. Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups
C. Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
D. View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants

2.1.5 – Advance human rights and social and economic justice
   A. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination
   B. Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice
   C. Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice

2.1.6 – Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research
   A. Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry
   B. Use research evidence to inform practice

2.1.7 – Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
   A. Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention and evaluation
   B. Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

2.1.8 – Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services
   A. Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being
   B. Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action

2.1.9 – Respond to contexts that shape practice
   A. Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services
   B. Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services

2.1.10 – Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities
   A. Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities
   B. Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
   C. Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes
   D. Collect, organize and interpret client data
   E. Assess client strengths and limitations
   F. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives
   G. Select appropriate interventions strategies
   H. Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals
I. Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities  
J. Help clients resolve problems  
K. Negotiate, mediate and advocate for clients  
L. Facilitate transitions and endings  
M. Critically analyze, monitor and evaluate interventions  

**GENERALIST INTERVENTION MODEL**

The Bachelor of Social Work Program at Lewis-Clark State College supports and instructs a generalist model of social work practice. The generalist intervention model is characterized by four principles:

1. Based on a foundation of knowledge, skills, and values which reflect the unique nature of social work profession  
2. Oriented toward solving problems which build on the strengths accessed using the Person-In-Environment perspective of individuals, families/groups, structural environment, culture and history of the client  
3. Fosters an approach to analyzing bio-psychosocial situations at all levels of intervention involving micro, mezzo and macro systems  
4. Uses a generalist approach method which is flexible in its application  

**Generalist Practice Skills**

The intent of generalist practice is to provide a solid base of skills for working at the micro, mezzo and macro levels of practice. Specific skills may characterize each level of practice, but six core activities are necessary, regardless of the level of intervention. These activities include: preparation; communication skills; the ability to analyze problem situations; contract formulation with client systems; assumption of a variety of roles when addressing a variety of problems; and the ability to guide and monitor (stabilizing) the intervention and its progress.  

Lewis-Clark State College social work students are expected to employ the Generalist Interventionist Model in their practice of social work during their practicum experience. By working with other staff, personnel/practitioners, under the direct supervision of a professional social work practitioner, and by sharing experiences with college faculty and student peers during field seminar, the student’s ability to apply the model in practice will be greatly enhanced. We are committed to the preparation of professional social workers who possess the knowledge, skills and values to address the needs and potential of individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations. Drawing on an ecological and liberal arts based background and strength’s based perspective; the program prepares students for the pursuit of a more just, humane society. Graduates are prepared to practice particularly with the oppressed and at-risk members of society. Graduates are expected to practice from a set of ethical principles inherent in the social work profession, including the recognition that professional development is a life-long learning process.
RESPONSIBILITIES

The Social Work Program, the agency, and the student each have responsibilities in carrying out the objectives of the field component of the curriculum.

Responsibilities of the LCSC Social Work Program

1. Conduct class sessions to teach basic human behavior and social work practice knowledge and values necessary as a base for the field placement;
2. Have a Faculty Field Liaison available to consult with the field instructor when a student is having problems in their field placement;
3. Have a Field Education Director available for help in problem solving when the faculty-field liaison is not available;
4. Provide Professional Liability Insurance for the student while in field placement;
5. Provide a Field manual stating the objectives, policies, procedures, and content of the curriculum and practicum.

Responsibilities of the LCSC Faculty Field Education Director

This person is a full-time member of the Lewis-Clark State College faculty and has the primary administrative responsibility for coordinating field education. He/she completes paperwork related to assigning agencies, field instructors and students to field, coordinates the formal process of admission into field and coordinates Field Instruction workshops. This person may also serve as faculty Field Liaison.

The Field Education Director is responsible for the administration and coordination of the field instruction program, which includes:

1. Planning, coordinating, organizing and implementing the field education program;
2. Evaluating all aspects of the field education program;
3. Developing all aspects of the field education program;
4. Coordinating faculty liaison assignments;
5. Coordinating field instructor training activities.

Responsibilities of the LCSC Faculty Field Liaison

This person is a member of the Lewis-Clark State College faculty whose purpose is to oversee the field experience of specific students. This person facilitates the Integrative Seminar, meets with student and field instructor for evaluative conferences and works directly with student and field instructor to assure educational needs and expectations are met.

The responsibilities of the faculty field liaison:

1. To participate in the development and approval of appropriate field practicum sites;
2. To participate in the assigning of students to the appropriate field placements;
3. To ensure each student has read and understands the field manual and has signed the form indicating such;
4. To conduct the integrative seminar for students. The seminar addresses the principles of practice as they are enacted in various agency settings, provides clarification and
amplification of the relationship of the academic classes with the experiential learning assignments in the field and provides a collegial forum for problem solving around field issues;

5. To review and respond to integrative seminar assignments submitted by students;
6. To monitor student’s compliance with field learning objectives through regular participation in seminar;
7. To identify and report any problems or barriers to progress the student has discussed in the seminar or in his/her seminar assignments to the Field Education Director;
8. To meet with Agency Field Instructors, when appropriate, to discuss the student’s progress;
9. To assume ultimate responsibility for assignment of final grade. Recommendation of the Agency Field Instructor is given considerable weight when assigning final grade. The final grade is determined from a composite of agency field instructor’s written evaluation, seminar assignments and faculty liaison’s observations in the field;
10. To visit each agency of placement as needed to assist in identifying learning activities to meet established objectives;
11. To consult with the Agency Field Instructor and student at least twice each academic year. During such visits the liaison interprets the school’s policies and procedures, reviews the curriculum, guides the development of the learning contract, assists the student and Agency Field Instructor in integrating the curriculum with the student’s practice skill development, assist in problem solving monitors and evaluates the student’s progress;
12. To include the student in agency visits and encourage full participation of student and agency field instructor in all conferences;
13. To communicate to the Field Education Director matters of potential concern, relevant issues and positive developments within the agency;
14. To ensure field evaluations, learning contracts and time sheets are completed and maintained in the IPT data system.

**Responsibilities of the Agency Field Instructor**

The Agency Field Instructor provides direct supervision and other educational opportunities for the student, guides the development of the student’s learning agreement and evaluates the student’s performance.

The role of the Agency Field Instructor is to guide the student in experiential learning activities designed to promote the development of generalist practice professional skills in accordance with the curriculum plan of the Social Work Program. She/he is in a key position to provide the student with practical, reality-based education in the field which cannot be provided in the classroom and which is the cornerstone of quality social work education. Although each student will vary in their supervision needs, the field work practicum encompasses the following Agency Field Instructor responsibilities:

1. To interview the student prior to placement and approve the student placement for the agency;
2. To aid in the development of a clear and realistic learning contract with the student that will outline the learning activities for the student in the agency;
3. To provide or arrange for an orientation to the agency, which explains policies, procedures, administrative structure and responsibilities of the social work student;
4. To outline agency expectations of the student’s work, including what they can and cannot do, safety, how to report daily activities, how to report case contacts and so forth;
5. To make available office space and clerical assistance as appropriate;
6. To provide an educational climate that challenges the student to expand generalist practice professional skills, knowledge and values;
7. To provide a minimum of one hour per week regular supervisory appointments with the student and allow adequate time for discussion of student’s concerns and progress;
8. To work with the faculty liaison and student to insure the objectives of the field practicum are being met;
9. To discuss problems relating to performance as they arise and to contact the faculty field liaison if those problems are not resolved;
10. To immediately notify the faculty field liaison when issues and/or concerns arise. For example: if student disregards agency regulations; violates the NASW Code of Ethics; fails to appear for work without prior notice; is consistently late; neglects the learning contract; or in other ways is disruptive to agency functioning;
11. To complete an evaluation of the student's field practicum performance at the end of each semester and recommend a grade following the completion of the evaluation.
12. To notify, as soon as possible, the faculty liaison if significant changes occur in the nature of the field placement which will affect the opportunities and quality of learning for students;
13. To participate in periodic trainings and meetings designed to meet the informational and educational needs of field instructors;
14. To complete an end of year evaluation of the placement process.

**Responsibilities of the Agency**

The Agency will:

1. Provide meaningful tasks for the student which will test skills and knowledge. These tasks will be related to agency functions and will reflect professional activity. Tasks will be appropriate to student’s prior experience and education
2. Whenever possible, provide an opportunity for the student to observe agency administrative structure, accountability mechanisms and policy making body
3. Provide a qualified Agency Field Instructor (AFI). The AFI will be a licensed BSW or MSW graduate from a CSWE accredited program with two (2) years’ experience. The AFI will meet with the student on a regular basis (weekly) for supervision
4. Provide students with adequate desk, phone and office space and sufficient clerical time to meet their needs
5. Provide necessary supplies to enable students to complete assignments including an agency vehicle or mileage
6. Be cognizant of liability problems as they may affect student in his or her assigned task
7. Allow student sufficient time during the work week to complete required recordings for supervision and learning commitments
8. Initiate change/termination of field placement where needed, in consultation with LCSC faculty field liaison.

Responsibilities of the Student

The student who is enrolled in field practicum is responsible to the College and Social Work Program for academic requirements, to the agency for work performance, and to the client for sound and ethical professional practice. Consequently, each student who is placed in an agency in the field program shall have the following specific responsibilities:

1. Will provide the agency with a resume prior to assignment. Students will also provide their AFI with any other reasonable materials that agency field instructors think is necessary;
2. To complete 200 hours of supervised experience in a social service agency each semester of field placement;
3. To maintain accurate time sheets and submit completed sheets to IPT the month following the hours completed;
4. To attend seminar classes;
5. To complete seminar assignments and submit them to the faculty liaison on or before the due date;
6. To assess, with the faculty liaison, their own potentials and identify preliminary and ongoing learning goals for the field practicum;
7. To work with the AFI to develop a learning contract (see Appendix I) which outlines the activities of the field placement and is turned in to the faculty field liaison by the fourth week of class;
8. To renegotiate their contract with agency field instructors in the event of difficulties regarding task assignments, prior to contacting the faculty field liaison;
9. To participate in weekly supervisory conferences with the field instructor and, to accept responsibility for providing agency field instructor with agenda items and written materials as requested;
10. To establish a schedule, be punctual, and keep all appointments. Students are expected to conform to agency working hours and holiday schedules. Scheduling should be based on client needs;
11. To notify the faculty liaison if significant changes occur in the nature of the field placement;
12. To read this manual to be familiar with the requirements outlined. See Appendix K for the form which must be completed and returned to the faculty field liaison no later than three (3) weeks after first (1st) seminar class;
13. To adhere to agency rules and regulations;
14. To keep confidential all information about clients served by the agency;
15. To understand and practice the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics;
16. To participate, review and sign the evaluation of student performance;
17. To complete the student evaluations at the end of each semester;
18. To maintain a professional dress code, respect agency property and conduct themselves in a professional manner in the field;
19. To maintain an attitude of inquiry and to pursue learning opportunities offered through the field placement agency;
20. To develop the skills, attitudes and behaviors of an entry level generalist social work practitioner;
21. To develop conscientious work habits in the completion of agency assignments. Students will submit agency required paperwork promptly and completely.

**Diversity of Field Education Experience**

Consistent with Lewis-Clark State College Policy, the NASW Code of Ethics, and the CSWE standards for undergraduate social work education, the selection of field agencies, and agency field instructors is conducted in an ethical manner to assure the quality and diversity of field education experience. All efforts are made to recruit faculty and field instructors who represent and bring diversity to the educational experience. Likewise, agencies are selected on their ability to provide professional, nondiscriminatory, services to their respective client populations. All field education personnel are expected to make “specific, continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which understanding and respect for diversity (including age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation) are practices” (CSWE, Curriculum Policy, Statement, Evaluative Standard 3: Non-discrimination and Human Diversity). Such diversity in the placement setting should include services to populations at risk, without discrimination, as well as acceptance of social work student interns who represent a variety of learning styles, cultural backgrounds, etc. Agencies must also be willing to provide placement training and supervision to students with special learning challenges as they prepare to enter the profession of social work.

**INTERN PLACEMENT TRACKING (IPT) SYSTEM**

The Social Work Program has implemented a placement tracking system that allows for practicum related communication amongst students, faculty, field instructors, task supervisors and agencies.

The system is a database that is stored in a password-protected server. Contact and placement information is recorded by the student, the field instructors, the task supervisors and agency representatives so that it may be kept current. Each student, field instructor, task supervisor and faculty liaison is required to logon to view and update information relevant to them. Keeping email addresses up to date is important, as this enhances the communication among all of those involved in the placement process from selection to evaluation. Field instructors and task supervisors will receive login information during the Fall Semester orientation meeting.

The system allows the time card, beginning contract, learning contract and required evaluations to be completed and viewed online with input from the student, the field instructor, the task supervisor and the faculty liaison. The forms are then stored in this
database with the final copy to be stored in paper format in the student’s permanent record for five (5) years. The Field Placement/Practicum Assessment instrument will be delivered through a web-based format. Training and details will be provided by the Social Work Program to Agency Field Instructors and students each fall and when needed throughout the academic year.

**STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS**

**Expectation of Practicum Sites**

Before any student is assigned to a field practicum, the Field Education Director approves both the agency and the field instructor. In approving the agency as a field practicum site and the agency’s staff as field instructors, the Program adheres to the guidelines of the Council on Social Work Education.

In order to be considered a field practicum site for Lewis-Clark State College, Social Work Program field practicum program, an agency must adhere to the following:

1. Prior submission of the Agency Application Form to be a Field Placement site;
2. Agency/College Agreement between Lewis-Clark State College’s Social Work Program and the field practicum agency must be signed by the Agency Director, Field Instructor, LCSC Field Education Director and LCSC Social Work Program Director;
3. The overall learning experience provided for the student includes a commitment to service compatible with the values, ethics and practices of the social work profession;
4. Students will be provided with the opportunity to gain practice experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions and communities. In the event that an agency is not able to provide students with opportunities above, the Social Work Program and Faculty Liaisons will work with the agency and the student to develop opportunities outside of the agency environment;
5. The agency identifies clear and specific educational opportunities which reflect the student’s learning objectives and program guidelines;
6. Students will be provided with the opportunity to gain a breadth of practice experiences with persons from such diverse groups including but not limited to groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, class culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion, mental and physical ability, age and national origin;
7. The agency agrees to provide an environment free of discrimination for students in field practicum with regard to race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, or political or sexual orientation;
8. The agency will demonstrate support for field practicum instruction by:
   a. Granting the field instructor the necessary time for teaching and supervising students;
   b. Providing the student with the physical facilities and materials necessary for her/him to function as a professional. These include desk space, supplies, phone, private facilities for interviewing and for participating in supervision and instruction, reimbursement for agency-related travel and provision of essential clerical services;
c. Allowing the student to assume supervised responsibility for the client systems with whom she/he is working;
d. Granting time for field instructors to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops on field teaching, sponsored by the Social Work Program;

9. The organization and activities of the applicant agency must be such that its basic program can be maintained and developed without reliance on student.

**Agency Field Instructor Selection**

The selection of Agency Field Instructors is based upon their potential to assist students with their learning experiences. The Field Education Director and the Faculty Field Liaisons are responsible for ongoing identification and selection of potential field and task instructors.

**Criteria for Agency Field Instructors and Task Supervisors**

**Field Instructor Criteria:**

1. Commitment to the educational objectives of the Social Work Program and Field Education Programs;
2. Graduation from CSWE accredited School of Social Work with a BSW or MSW;
3. Two or more years of professional social work practice experience;
4. Employment in the human service agency for at least six months prior to becoming a field instructor;
5. Submission of the Field Instructor Application form; and,
6. Agreement to participate in the field instructor orientation and subsequent field instructor meetings and workshops as appropriate.

If an agency does not have staff who meet the above criteria, arrangements may be made with their agencies or with the Social Work Program to provide the instructional component of field placement. Task supervisors are qualified professionals with the interest and expertise to provide supervision of the student’s practice tasks.

In the selection of task supervisors, particular emphasis is placed upon educational background, adherence to professional ethics, practice competence, supervisory interest, skill in teaching, the ability to conceptualize and illustrate generalist practice principles and the capacity to stimulate and support students in the learning process.

**Task Supervisor Criteria:**

1. Commitment to the educational objectives of the Social Work Program and Field Educational Programs;
2. B.S. Degree in Psychology, Health Science, Nursing, Sociology, Criminal Justice;
3. Ability to work collaboratively with an agency BSW or MSW or a contracted BSW or MSW in designing student learning assignments and in guiding the students practice activities;
4. Minimum of two-years successful work experience at the agency;
5. Knowledge of social work ethics and values and respect for the profession;
6. Independence, creativity and flexibility in the use of professional self.
On rare occasions exceptions can be made for an Agency Field Instructor or Task Supervisor who does not meet the above criteria. Requests for exceptions will be considered by Lewis-Clark State College faculty on a case-by-case basis. Final approval will be the responsibility of the Field Education Director in consultation with the Social Work Program Director and Faculty. In cases of exception, LCSC will assume responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective. Written documentation will be included in the student’s file describing how this will be accomplished. In the event that a Task Supervisor is approved, an agency or faculty liaison who meets the AFI criteria will be assigned to supervise the student placement.

**Student Placement**

**Requirements for Admission to the Field Practicum**

Students must meet the following requirements to participate in the social work field practicum:

1. Be formally admitted to the Social Work Program;
2. Have completed SW341, SW386, and SW442;
3. Receive at least a B- in SW 140/240, 241, 341, 342, and 443.

After students have met the above requirements, they submit the application for field placement on IPT. Students will attend a meeting outlining the steps required for gaining a practicum placement. While consideration is given to the student’s preferences regarding the type of agency experience desired, the final decision to refer to a field site is made by the faculty field liaison. Final selection authority rests with the field agency who will determine the suitability of a student’s placement after the interview. The time line is as follows:

- March – Field Application due
- April/May – Students meet with Faculty Field Liaison
- April/May – Student/Agency Field Instructor interview and selection

**Student Orientation**

The faculty field liaison provides a formal orientation to students during the first week of the fall semester. Topics include: research project; organizational structures of the field education program; integration of seminar class with agency placement; performance expectations, supervision, the nature of experiential learning; learning styles; common student stressors; performance evaluations and the grading process.

**Length of Time in Field Placement**

Students are placed in field at the beginning of the fall semester of their senior year and remain in the same placement for the entire academic year. Students are expected to complete their field instruction in two consecutive semesters (SW497 A/B and SW498 S/B) using the learning objectives outlined in the respective course syllabi, and operationalized through the individualized student learning contract to guide and direct their professional development.
All students spend a total of 12 to 15 hours per week (200 hours per semester) in their agencies. Students are expected to meet this clock hour requirement during the 16 week semester. A student’s inability to complete the 200 hours in placement and attend the seminars during the semester is grounds for receiving an unsatisfactory grade in the course.

**Use of Employment Settings for Practicum Placement**

Ideally, students who come into the program after being employed as social service providers will complete a field practicum in an agency different from their place of prior employment. This is based on the educational rationale that students should be exposed to the broadest variety of learning experiences while in school.

The Social Work Program follows the standards established by CSWE that clearly state that the student’s practicum experience must be different than the student’s employment.

The program will make every attempt to work with the student and the agency if the student requests to complete the practicum requirement at their place of employment.

The use of settings where the student is already an employee, or is hired as an employee, as a field practicum site may be permitted if the following criteria are met:

1. The availability of release time for course and field practicum instruction is ensured;
2. There is clear differentiation between work-related assignments and educationally focused in areas of new learning for the student;
3. The student’s administrative supervisor cannot serve as the field instructor. Likewise, the administrative supervisor must not have previously supervised the student in other employment;
4. The learning experiences for the student must be drawn from a unit of the agency different from the area where the student functions as an employee.
5. The agency must agree that the Field Practicum Learning Agreement will guide the field practicum experience;
6. The agency must meet the same criteria as other field practicum agencies;
7. The student and field instructor must complete a form.

**Paid Practicum Placements**

Paid placements are permitted as long as the field instruction remains educationally focused rather than centered on agency services. This type of field practicum should be administered in accordance with the field instruction policies and procedures as established by the program for all students and approved by the Field Education Director and Faculty Field Liaison.

**Problem Solving Policy**

**Steps to address student challenges and concerns in field placement**

Lewis-Clark State College strives to help its students maximize their learning experience in field placement. For this reason the social work program endeavors to identify concerns and difficulties in the placement as early as possible so that they may be addressed in a
professional manner which will enhance the student’s learning rather than detract. When a concern is identified, the program, in conjunction with the Agency Field Instructor, the student and the Field Liaison, will create a plan for corrective measures. Participation in this process is considered a part of the learning objective and a natural process in learning. In this process the student’s rights to due process are protected; in addition the rights of the agency participants and the college are also protected.

When the student has concerns about the Agency Field Instructor

1. The student will first address the concerns with the Agency Field Instructor and will work to come to a resolution directly. However, as the power differential between student and Agency Field Instructor may be intimidating, especially early in the practicum, the student may wish to meet with her/his Faculty Field Liaison to “rehearse” how to approach the Agency Field Instructor for such a discussion.

2. If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the Agency Field Instructor, the student will contact their Faculty Field Liaison and consult with him/her regarding a potential face-to-face meeting among all concerned. Teleconference may be used as a more practical way to meet with rural agencies that may otherwise require significant travel time. The meeting will serve to clarify problems, discuss potential solutions, and develop a student support plan that will allow the practicum to proceed.

3. Should this final approach be unsuccessful, the student, Agency Field Instructor and/or Faculty Field Liaison shall inform the Director of Field Education and all parties shall meet to discuss options available to the student. If indicated, this meeting may be to arrange termination of the student placement with the agency. Termination of a field placement will not be decided upon by the Field Liaison or the Director of Field Education unless the problem solving process has been fully utilized.

4. If appropriate, the Director of Field Education will work with the Faculty Field Liaison and the student to identify other placement options. The Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.

When the Agency Field Instructor has concerns about the student

1. The Agency Field Instructor will address the concerns with the student and see if the issues of concern can be worked out directly. Experience with situations such as this indicates that open and clear communication between the student and Agency Field Instructor often alleviates tense or difficult situations.

2. If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the student, the Agency Field Instructor will contact the Faculty Field Liaison and consult with him/her about the situation and together consider options for remediation or plan to meet to
create a student support plan.

3. A student support plan will be created and agreed upon by all parties. The support plan will include a time frame for making changes and a time for meeting and review the plan with the Agency Field Instructor and the Faculty Field Liaison.

4. Should this final approach be unsuccessful, the student, Agency Field Instructor, and Faculty Field Liaison shall inform the Director of Field Education and meet to discuss options available to the student, and if indicated, arrange termination of the student placement with the agency. While an Agency Field Instructor or agency may terminate a student when deemed necessary, it is understood that the attempt will be made to remediate the problem using the student action plan.

5. Depending on the reason for termination, the Director of Field Education will work with the Faculty Field Liaison to identify other placement options. The Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.

When the Faculty Liaison has concerns about the student:

1. The Faculty Field Liaison will address any concerns with the student and see if the issues or concerns can be directly worked out.

2. If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the student, the Faculty Field Liaison will notify the agency and the Director of Field Education of his/her concerns and a meeting will be arranged to address the concerns.

3. If appropriate, the Director of Field Education and the Faculty Field Liaison with the student will work to identify other placement options. The Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.

When the Faculty Liaison has concerns about the Agency Field Instructor:

1. The Faculty Field Liaison will address any concerns with the agency and see if the issues or concerns can be directly worked out.

2. If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the agency, the Faculty Field Liaison will notify the agency and the Director of Field Education of their concerns and a meeting will be arranged to address the concerns.

3. If appropriate, the Director of Field Education and the Faculty Field Liaison with the student will work to identify other placement options. The Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.
A. **Situations in which immediate suspension or termination of a placement is necessary – Agency Driven**

In the event that an agency wishes to immediately suspend or terminate a practicum placement due to unprofessional behavior of a student, safety concerns for clients or unethical behavior of students the Agency Field Instructor is requested to:

1. Contact the Faculty Field Liaison immediately to discuss the circumstances leading to the situation.

2. The Agency Field Instructor and/or Faculty Field Liaison will then contact the Director of Field Education to inform of the decision to terminate a student.

3. Inform the student verbally (with written follow-up) the reason for the suspension or termination.

4. Work with the Faculty Field Liaison to accomplish any follow-up activities or meetings that need to occur in order to appropriately end the placement.

5. Discuss with the Faculty Field Liaison and Director of Field Education ways in which the situation causing the termination can be avoided in the future, and how the agency and Social Work Program can work together to provide social work education.

Depending on the nature of the termination, the Director of Field Education and the Faculty Field Liaison with the student may work to identify other placement options although the Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.

However, if the Social Work Program deems that the nature of the transgression cannot be remediated the student may be dropped from the BSW program.

Termination from a field placement may result in a grade of F in field, which would disallow the student from continuing in the BSW program.

Examples of some behaviors that would be valid reasons for possible termination of the student’s field practicum include:

1. Chronic tardiness;
2. Absences from field practicum without notifying the field instructor, chronic tardiness in completion of agency paper work;
3. Missing appointments with clients or field instructor without appropriate notification;
4. Exploiting the agency by misuse of agency supplies or resources;
5. Dressing in an inappropriate, unprofessional manner;
6. Acting unprofessionally while at the agency, such as inappropriate displays of emotions or displays of immature behavior.

Some examples of ethical violations include:

1. Engaging in intimate (sexual/romantic) relationships with a client or a client’s family member;
2. Falsifying agency or College documentation;
3. Breaching client confidentiality, initiating a physical confrontation with a client, clients family member, field instructor, agency staff, or faculty member;
4. Exhibiting impaired functioning due to the use of alcohol or other substances during practicum hours;
5. Acting in a discriminator manner toward a client, co-worker, fellow student, field instructor, or faculty member.

Policies related to dismissal or suspensions are not meant to inhibit the student’s right to appeal (see Student Handbook).
EVALUATING STUDENT PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE IN THE FIELD PLACEMENT

End of Semester Student Evaluation

The student’s performance will be formally evaluated at the end of each semester of placement. This evaluation will be conducted by the Agency Field Instructor and/or the Task Supervisor (if applicable) in a meeting with the student and the Field Liaison. This dual evaluative process between the agency field instructor and student fosters a positive learning environment. This evaluation will provide input on all objectives established in the learning plan. Following the evaluation, the field instructor will recommend a field practicum grade to the Social Work Program faculty field liaison.

The student will be evaluated based in the following:

1. Completion of minimum required clock hours;
2. Completion of activities defined by the student and field instructor as outlined in their learning contract.

The Agency Field Instructor will also complete an end of the year evaluation documented in ipt.

POLICIES RELEVANT TO PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

A number of policies have been described in early sections of this field manual. Also as noted in the Forward, not every policy can be covered, and the policies herein do not supersede those of the Social Work Program, or Lewis-Clark State College.

Required Hour. All students are required to complete a minimum of 400 clock hours in field practicum to earn eight (8) credit hours.

Two-Semester Placement. Students spend two consecutive semesters in one field practicum placement, 200 clock hours per semester, and receive 4 credit hours for each semester. This arrangement requires approximately 15 hours per week for 15 weeks for each semester. The student’s schedule is arranged in consultation with the field instructor. Specific arrangements for any given field practicum may depend on the student’s academic needs, the agency’s capacity, and the Program’s requirements.

Hours completed during the fall/spring semester break. The student may continue to work in their field placement during breaks although this is not a requirement of the program. However, this is often the most professional choice. The schedule for the year and whether or not the intern will work over breaks, should be determined during the first meeting of the year with the Agency Field Instructor and the Field Liaison.

Note, that while interns are encouraged to continue working during breaks, and to earn hours beyond the minimum of 400, this does not invalidate the intern’s requirement to continue working through the school year up to two weeks prior to graduation. An internship is considered a professional relationship with an agency, and as such the contract to work for the school year should be maintained. Students who quit an internship
before the end of the school year risk having their grade lowered by the Agency Field Instructor based on a lack of professionalism. However, the final decision on the intern’s schedule rests with the Agency Field Instructor.

Under rare and unusual circumstances a student may complete an internship early. This must be agreed upon by the Agency Field Instructor and the Field Liaison. The arrangement for this should be made as early as possible in the school year – preferably before the internship begins.

**Concealed Weapons and drug use** Policies that may be in effect on the Lewis-Clark State College campus do not carry over to agency field placements. Students while working at community placements will abide by the agency policies. Any infractions of these policies may result in termination of the field placement.

**Holidays** The field practicum is an academic course and students are expected to observe the academic schedule. No holidays or sick leave hours can count as practicum hours. For example, if your agency takes Thanksgiving day off but pays its employees for the day you may not count hours for Thanksgiving that you did not work.

**Conference and Meeting Attendance** With the Agency Field Instructor’s approval, student attendance at conferences and professional meetings may be counted toward placement hours when the content pertains to the student’s field assignments.

**Adherence to Work Hours** Students are expected to adhere to the schedule agreed upon with their field instructor. This means showing up on time and staying for the entire time period. A student is expected to call the practicum agency in advance if the student is too ill to attend field practicum placement that day. The student must clear all other absences from the field placement with their field instructor at least 24 hours in advance. A student may be dropped from the course for excessive absences (absences in excess of five (5) days from field placement during the course of a semester are considered excessive), or for unexcused absences.

**Grievance Procedure for Field Instruction** Any student or student group may utilize College procedures for resolution of student disputes arising from decisions or actions of College faculty, staff, or administrative officials (see Student Handbook for Procedure).

When the grievance relates to an action in field practicum, the grievance should first be initiated with the Faculty Field Liaison no later than five (5) school days after the act complained of has occurred. If the act complained of has occurred in between academic terms, the student shall file the complaint no later than five (5) school days after the beginning of the next academic term. The Faculty Field Liaison in coordination with the Field Education Director shall make a determination within five (5) school days following the presentation of the appeal and will notify the petitioner in writing immediately thereafter.

**Life/Employment Experience.** In accordance with the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) academic credit for life experience/previous work experience will not be given.
**Student with Criminal Convictions.** Students who have a criminal conviction need to be aware that this may affect internship placement and/or future ability to become a licensed social worker. Many agencies will require finger printing and background checks.

**Student Malpractice/Professional Liability Insurance Coverage.** The student is covered by the liability insurance of Lewis-Clark State College for activities and decisions made while the student is in placement. This coverage is valid during breaks or holidays within the school year – between the first day of school and graduation. However, the following conditions must apply:

1. The student is enrolled in SW497;
2. The activities in question take place within the time frame of the Field Instruction Agreement Between Lewis-Clark State College BSW program and the Affiliated Agency;
3. The activity is a normal and customary part of the student's educational program.

It is to be noted that the agency is responsible for the professional liability of all of its employees including the field instructor of the student.

**Students with Special Needs.** The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that the college make reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities as defined in the Act. Students with a disability seeking an academic accommodation must contact:

- Coeur d’ Alene Campus: 208.666.6707
- Lewiston Campus: 208.792.2211

**Student Safety.** We recognize that students cannot be insulated from the risks in providing services to people, institutions and communities. Students frequently lack the experience and skills that help seasoned practitioners assess risk and take appropriate precautions. Therefore Social Work Program requests that all field work agencies provide an orientation and a forum for discussion about safety, high-risk situations and violence issues that are relevant for the individual agency as the student begins field placement. Seminar Class will also include presentation on safety issues, which all students attend.

**Transportation.** Students are responsible for transportation to and from the field setting. The College has no funds with which to reimburse students for the use of their private automobiles and for other expenses incurred in the conduct of agency business.

*Students shall not transport clients in their own vehicles.* If the student is expected to use a personal car for any official agency business, the agency must provide in writing to the College, verification that the student is covered under the agency's insurance. In the event that such coverage is not available, the student must not be expected to engage in such activities and must not be penalized for this. Agencies are encouraged to reimburse students for reasonable mileage expenses incurred while on official agency business if such use has been approved.