



# Social Science: Social Work Program Field Education Manual 2025



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# Field Education Manual

## Overview

Field education is an integral part of the social work curriculum. The didactic instruction received in these courses is enriched through the applying of theories, concepts, and principles to practice within the internship. In addition to the learning experience, Field also affords experiential assessment and evaluation of the student's development in the process of becoming a helping professional. This assessment process guides the program in ensuring that students have effectively integrated classroom learning of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) core standards into their social work practice. A minimum of 400 hours of field instruction during the year is required of all social work majors.

## 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 within their chosen community. Our program is dedicated to meeting students' needs by providing in-person and online delivery options to promote success for all students. We are committed to the preparation of professional Social Workers by enhancing cognitive and affective processes, and instilling knowledge, skills, and values to serve the needs of individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.

The Program relies on a liberal arts foundation and draws on person-in-environment and strengths-based perspectives. Through courses, field education, and student service activities the program prepares graduates to:

- Provide competent services to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice and advocate for the creation of conditions that facilitate human rights to promote human thriving, community well-being, and enhance the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally.
- Acknowledge and respect the importance of human relationships across diverse populations and to value the dignity and worth of each person.
- Practice from a set of ethical principles inherent to the Social Work profession, including the recognition that professional development is a life-long learning process.
- Practice with integrity as professional Social Workers.
- Engage in meaningful scientific inquiry, practice-informed research, and research-informed practice.

(Adopted FY25)

## Objectives of Field Education

The student enters the field setting with a background in: the generalist approach to social work practice; the problem solving process; methods of research; the place of values and ethics in social work practice; the effects of environmental factors on human behavior including an appreciation of human diversity; social, economic, and environmental justice; populations-at-risk; major social welfare programs both public and private; and an understanding of the impact of social welfare policy and programs on social work practice. The goal of the field experience is to ensure that the student achieves skills in the competencies as set forth by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

The Council on Social Work Education sets educational standards for all accredited social work programs. The 2022 Educational and Policy Accreditation Standard (EPAS) established 9 social work competencies that encompasses 20 integrated behaviors that social work students are expected to meet upon graduation from an accredited BSW Program. At the termination of their field experience, the student will be competent in the following educational standards:

### 2022 Social Work Competencies and Integrated Behaviors Applied to this Course

| COMPETENCY           | DESCRIPTION  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Competency 1:</b> | <b>Demonstrate Ethical &amp; Professional Behavior</b>   |
|                      | 1.a. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context                                     |
|                      | 1.b. Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication  |
|                      | 1.c. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes  |
|                      | 1.d. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior  |
| <b>Competency 2:</b> | <b>Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice</b>  |
|                      | 2.a. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organization, and community system levels   |
|                      | 2.b. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice  |
| <b>Competency 3:</b> | <b>Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice</b>   |
|                      | 3.a. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels   |
|                      | 3.b. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences |
| <b>Competency 4:</b> | <b>Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice</b>   |
|                      | 4.a. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs  |

| COMPETENCY           | DESCRIPTION   |
|----------------------|---|
|                      | 4.b Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work |
| <b>Competency 5:</b> | <b>Engage in Policy Practice</b>  |
|                      | 5.a Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services  |
|                      | 5.b Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice  |
| <b>Competency 6:</b> | <b>Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>  |
|                      | 6.a Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies  |
|                      | 6.b Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies   |
| <b>Competency 7:</b> | <b>Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>   |
|                      | 7.a Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies   |
|                      | 7.b Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing mutually agreed-upon plan  |
| <b>Competency 8:</b> | <b>Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>   |
|                      | 8.a Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals                                       |
|                      | 8.b Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies  |
| <b>Competency 9:</b> | <b>Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>   |
|                      | 9.a Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes   |

| COMPETENCY | DESCRIPTION  |
|------------|--|
| 9.b        | Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities   |
|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Competencies 6 through 9</b> should be learned through in-person contact (not simulations) across all system levels which include: individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</li> </ul> |

## Admission to Field

The Social Work Program simultaneously admits students into both the Program and Field Education by utilizing the same criteria and process for both – see Social Work Student Handbook and/or Application to the Program/Field for Admission criteria.

### ***Application Evaluation Process***

*All requirements of the Social Work Program/Field Application should be submitted by the student, within the Application Canvas course by **October 1st**.*

*The Social Work faculty will then evaluate each requirement and submit a score. The scores inform the faculty which components of the application are complete and to what degree. The faculty utilize rubrics to evaluate application requirements.*

*Each application will be evaluated by a minimum of two faculty members. Applicants who meet all requirements moved forward for acceptance into both. Applicants who fail to meet one or more requirements are discussed at the next Social Work Faculty Meeting to determine next steps. These steps may include (1) accept the application as is, (2) interview the applicant, (3) deny admission, or (4) give provisional acceptance with actionable steps to move towards full acceptance. Decisions will be final and made by a majority vote (Social Work Student Handbook, p. 16-17).*

## 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 ensure the quality and diversity of field education experience. All efforts are made to recruit faculty and Agency 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 efforts to provide a learning experience in which understanding and respect for diversity (including age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation) are practiced. 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 and cultural backgrounds. 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.

## Field Education Partnerships

The LC Social Work Program partners with community agencies in/near the students' place of residence to collaborate in the educational responsibility of preparing the next generation of social workers. In this partnership there are various participants, criteria, and responsibilities.

### LC Social Work Program

The Social Work Program will be responsible for:

- Preparing students both academically and professionally to enter field education with a solid foundation of social work knowledge, values, and skills;
- Ensuring students who enter field education have been admitted into the Social Work Program;
- Providing a Field Director with at least 25% assigned time to oversee the educational and administrative aspects of field education;
- Providing a Faculty Field Liaison to oversee interns' field education;
- Providing Professional Liability Insurance for the student while in field placement;
- Providing a Field Education Manual stating the objectives, policies, and procedures of Field Education.

### Social Work Field Director

The criteria for a Social Work Field Director includes:

- Holding a master's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program;
- Having at least 2 years of post-baccalaureate or post-master's social work degree practice experience;
- Being a full-time member of the LC Social Work faculty;
- May or may not also be a Social Work Field Liaison.

The Social Work Field Director will be responsible for:

- Planning, coordinating, organizing and implementing the field education program;
- Developing all aspects of the field education program;
- Evaluating all aspects of the field education program, including Social Work Assessment of Competencies and Field Agency Evaluation assessment surveys;
- Completing legal paperwork related to Field Sites;
- Coordinating the formal process of admission into the Program/Field;
- Coordinating Faculty Field Liaison assignments;
- Onboarding and coordinating Agency Field Instructor Field Orientations and Field Trainings;
- Assisting Field Liaisons, Interns and AFIs with problem solving and/or remediation if the need arises.

### Social Work Field Liaisons

The criteria for Social Work Field Liaisons include:

- Holding a master's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program;
- Having at least 2 years of post-baccalaureate or post-master's social work degree practice experience;
- Being a member of the LC Social Work faculty.

The Social Work Field Liaison will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the field experience of assigned interns;
- Facilitating assigned section of SW483/484: Field Education I/II and SW485/486: Field Seminar I/II;
- Providing an orientation to juniors during the spring semester prior to the student's field education experience;
- Assisting students in finding appropriate field settings during the spring semester prior to the student's field education experience. Which includes:
  - Meeting with new AFIs to ensure they and their agency meet the criteria for an appropriate field setting and supervision;
  - Ensuring that the agency can provide quality and diverse field education experiences for the intern;
  - Answering questions about LC Social Work Program expectations for interns, AFIs, and agencies;
- Meeting with interns and Agency Field Instructors (at minimum) for initial meeting, midpoint evaluation, and endpoint evaluation meetings to:
  - Interpret CSWE core standards and LC State policies, procedures, and expectations to the intern and Agency Field Instructor (AFI)/Task Instructor;
  - Assist interns and AFIs in developing a valuable learning agreement that fulfills CSWE core competency standards;
  - Discuss AFIs evaluation of interns' fulfillment of core competencies by reviewing the Social Work Assessment of Competencies;
- Assisting interns and AFIs with problem solving and/or remediation if the need arises;
- Assigning final grades for SW483/484: Field Education I/II and SW485/486: Field Seminar I/II while considering AFI recommendations.

### Community Agencies/Field Settings

The criteria for selecting Field Settings include the ability to:

- Provide interns with the opportunity to gain social work practice experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, including face-to-face experiences with these system levels;
  - In the event that an agency is not able to provide students with opportunities across all system levels, the Social Work Field Director and/or Field Liaisons will work with the agency and the intern to develop opportunities outside of the agency environment;
- Provide a qualified Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and/or a Task Instructor to supervise the student during their field education experience;
- Provide students with the opportunity to gain a breadth of social work practice experiences across dimensions of diversity such as, but not limited to:
  - Age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status;
- Provide students with a safe environment, free of discrimination with regard to the before mentioned dimensions of diversity;
- Ensure that the agency, and activities within the agency, can be maintained and delivered without reliance on interns.

Agencies will be responsible for:

- Completing an Agency/College Agreement between Lewis-Clark State College and the field site to be signed by the Agency Director, and approved LC State representatives;

- Providing an opportunity for the student to observe agency administrative structure, accountability mechanisms and policy making body (whenever possible);
- Providing a qualified Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and/or a Task Instructor to supervise the student during their field education experience with approved time for weekly supervision meetings;
- Providing comprehensive orientation and training regarding agency safety policies and procedures (see Safety Expectations suggested list);
- Providing students with adequate desk, phone and office space and sufficient clerical time to meet their needs;
- Providing necessary supplies to enable students to complete assignments including an agency vehicle (with sufficient auto insurance) and/or mileage (for expenses incurred while on official agency business) if needed;
- Being cognizant of liability problems as they may affect student in his or her assigned task;
- Allowing student sufficient time during the work week to complete required supervision and learning commitments;
- Initiating change/termination of field placement when necessary, in consultation with Field Liaison.

### Agency Field Instructors (AFIs)

The criteria for Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) include:

- Graduation from a CSWE accredited School of Social Work with a BSW or MSW;
- Having two or more years of social work practice post BSW or MSW;
- Employment at their current social service agency for at least 6 months;
- Report their qualifications within the AFI Questionnaire;
- Their potential to assist students with their field education experiences;
- Their interest in the education of future social work practitioners.

The role of the Agency Field Instructor is to guide the intern 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. Although each student will vary in their supervision needs, the field education experience encompasses the following AFI responsibilities:

- Interviewing the student prior to placement and approving the student placement for the agency;
- Providing or arranging for an orientation to the agency, which explains policies, procedures, administrative structure and responsibilities of the social work student;
- Providing direct supervision and coordinating other educational opportunities for the intern;
- Assisting the intern in the development of a clear and realistic learning agreement that will outline the activities for the intern within the agency;
- Outlining agency expectations of the intern's work, including what they can and cannot do, safety, how to report daily activities, how to report case contacts, and so forth;
- Providing an educational climate that challenges the student to expand generalist practice professional skills, knowledge and values;
- Providing an hour per week of regular supervision with the intern and allowing adequate time for discussion of intern's concerns and progress;
- Working with the Field Liaison and intern to ensure the objectives of the Field Education are being met;

- Evaluating the intern's performance based on the CSWE Core Competencies and Learning Agreement at the end of each semester;
- Discussing problems relating to performance with the intern as they arise and contacting the Field Liaison if those problems are not resolved;
- Immediately notifying the Field Liaison when more serious issues and/or concerns arise.
  - For example, if intern: disregards agency regulations; violates NASW Code of Ethics; fails to appear for work without prior notice; is consistently late; neglects the learning agreement; or in other ways is disruptive to agency functioning;
- Notifying, as soon as possible, the Field Liaison if significant changes occur in the nature of the field placement which will affect the opportunities and quality of learning for students.

### Task Instructors

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.

The criteria for Task Instructors include:

- B.S. Degree in Psychology, Health Science, Nursing, Sociology, Criminal Justice, or related field;
- Employment at their current human service agency for at least 2 years;
- Their interest and commitment to the educational objectives of the Social Work Program and Field Education Program;
- Ability to work collaboratively with an agency BSW or MSW or a contracted BSW or MSW in designing student learning assignments and in guiding student practice activities;
- Knowledge of social work ethics and values and respect for the profession;
- Submitting a current Resume to Social Work Program Director.

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 Field Liaisons on a case-by-case basis. Final approval will be the responsibility of the Field Director in consultation with the Field Liaison. In cases of exception, LC Social Work Program will assume responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective.

In the event that a Task Supervisor is approved, the Field Liaison will act as the student's AFI and provide the necessary additional supervision from a social work perspective. The Task Instructor then takes on all the responsibilities listed under Agency Field Instructor responsibilities (see above).

### Social Work Interns

The criteria for Social Work Interns include:

- Admittance into the LC Social Work Program/Field;
- Concurrently enrolled in Field Education I (SW483) and Field Seminar I (SW485) for the first semester and Field Education II (SW484) and Field Seminar II (SW486) for the second semester.

The student enrolled in field education is responsible to Lewis-Clark State College and to the Social Work Program for academic requirements; to the agency for work performance; and to the client for sound

and ethical professional practice. Consequently, each intern who is placed in an agency for field education will be responsible for:

- Providing their agency with any other reasonable materials, documentation, immunizations, drug testing, background checks, etc. that the agency requires;
- Submitting complete medical documentation as required by the Social Work Program;
- Completing 200 hours of supervised experience in a social service agency each semester of field education for a total of 400 hours (minimum);
- Maintaining accurate time sheets and submitting them in the month following the hours completed;
- Working with their AFI to develop a learning contract which outlines the activities of field education and is submitted to the Field Liaison by the fourth week of class;
- Renegotiating the Learning Agreement with the AFI in the event of difficulties regarding task assignments, prior to contacting the Field Liaison;
- Participate in remediation with the AFI and Field Liaison when other actions have not been effective;
- Participating in weekly supervisory conferences with the AFI and accepting responsibility for providing AFI with agenda items and written materials as requested;
- Establishing a schedule, being punctual, and keeping all appointments. Students are expected to conform to agency working hours and holiday schedules. Scheduling should be based on client needs;
- Notifying the Field Liaison if significant changes occur in the nature of the field education setting;
- Reading this manual to be familiar with the requirements outlined;
- Adhering to agency rules and regulations;
- Keeping confidential all information about clients served by the agency;
- Understanding and practicing the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics;
- Participating in the student evaluations at the end of each semester;
- Maintaining a professional dress code, respecting agency property and conducting themselves in a professional manner in the field;
- Maintaining an attitude of inquiry and a willingness to pursue learning opportunities offered through the field education setting;
- Developing the skills, attitudes and behaviors of an entry level generalist social work practitioner;
- Developing conscientious work habits in the completion of agency assignments. Interns will submit agency required paperwork promptly and completely;
- Providing their own transportation to and from the field education setting;
- Completing the Field Agency Evaluation at the end of the field education experience.

## Securing Field Sites for Internships

Selecting field settings is a collaborative process in which both students and Field Liaisons have significant roles. Students may research and contact agencies outside of the Program's approved list of field settings. Before the student can accept an internship, the Field Liaison will first meet with the potential field setting representatives to evaluate the agency's ability to meet the Field Setting Criteria (see criteria above).

### Student Role:

Securing an internship is primarily the responsibility of the student, with assistance and permission from the Field Liaison. The following are steps students will take to secure an internship:

| <b>Students who live in or near Lewiston or CDA</b>   | <b>Students who don't live in or near Lewiston or CDA</b>   |
|---|---|
| Build a solid resume  | Build a solid resume  |
| Attend Field Fair in Lewiston or CDA (group interviews)   | Research and list out social service agencies in your area  |
| Report to Field Liaison who your top three agency field sites are   | Report to Field Liaison the list with your top three choices for preliminary approval   |
| Follow up with at least two agencies that you met during the Field Fair for an individual interview   | Utilize phone script to introduce yourself to the preliminarily approved agencies and set up an initial interview   |
| Update your Field Liaison every time you set up an interview, complete an interview, or receive an internship offer (students may accept or decline an offer) | Update your Field Liaison every time you set up an interview, complete an interview, or receive an internship offer (students may accept or decline an offer) |
| ONLY accept an internship offer that has been officially approved by your Field Liaison   | ONLY accept an internship offer that has been officially approved by your Field Liaison   |

### Field Liaison Role:

The Field Liaison assists students in securing internships and grants permission for students to accept internships based on Field Setting and AFI selection criteria. The following are steps the Field Liaison will take to assist students in securing internships:

- Facilitate a local Field Fair where local social service agency representatives come to interview prospective interns.
- Review student field site preference, give guidance on appropriateness and fit, and grant permission for students to contact preliminarily approved agencies.
- Interview agencies and/or AFIs to ensure agency and AFI selection criteria is met.
- Communicate with student when agencies/AFIs meet/don't meet criteria and are able to accept/decline their internships invitations.

## Field Education Required Hours Policies

### Sequence of Field Education

Interns are placed in field education at the beginning of the fall semester of their senior year and remain in the same placement for the entire academic year. Interns are expected to complete their field education in two consecutive semesters (SW483/484: Field Education I/II) as guided by their respective course syllabi and learning agreement.

### Length of Time/Hours in Field Education

All interns spend approximately 12 to 15 hours per week (200 hours per semester) in their field education sites during the academic semesters. Interns are required to complete a minimum of 400 hours of field education experience at a social service agency. These hours are documented within the SW483/484: Field Education I/II course. These two 4 credit courses are graded within a pass/fail system.

A student's inability to complete the 200 hours in placement is grounds for receiving a failing grade in SW483/484: Field Education I/II. Interns who may have completed less than 200 hours during their first semester need to discuss plans for completion of the 400 hours with their AFI and Field Liaison before registering for the second semester (SW484). There are no exceptions to the completing of 400 hours prior to graduation – this is a minimum requirement.

### Hours Completed During Semester Breaks

Field Education officially begins the first day of the fall semester. Interns are prohibited from participating in field education before the first day of the fall semester. Although it is preferred that interns complete their hours during the 16 weeks of each fall and spring semester, interns are permitted to participate in field education activities and collect field education hours at their field education site during college breaks (Thanksgiving, winter, spring, and summer). The schedule for the year and whether or not the intern will work over breaks, should be determined during the initial field meeting with the Agency Field Instructor and the Field Liaison with regard to what is the best interest of the clients with whom the agency is working with.

### Early Completion

Note, that while interns are encouraged to continue interning during breaks, and to earn hours beyond the minimum of 400, this does not invalidate the intern's requirement to continue interning 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 intern for the school year should be maintained.

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 academic year – preferably before the internship begins.

### Adherence to Internship Hours

Interns are expected to adhere to the schedule agreed upon with their Agency Field Instructor. This means showing up on time and staying for the entire time period. An intern is expected to call the practicum agency in advance if the intern is too ill to attend field education that day. The student must seek approval for all other absences from the field education with their Agency Field Instructor at least 24 hours in advance.

A student may be dropped from field education for excessive unexcused absences (unexcused absences in excess of five days from field education during the course of a semester are considered excessive).

### Holiday Hours

Field education is attached to 2 academic courses and therefore, interns are expected to observe the academic schedule. No holiday or sick leave hours can count as field education hours. For example, if an agency takes Thanksgiving Day off but pays its employees for the day, an intern may not count hours for Thanksgiving that were not worked.

### Approved Conference or Meeting Attendance Hours

With the Agency Field Instructor's approval, an intern's attendance at conferences and professional meetings may be counted toward field education hours when the content pertains to the student's field setting and/or clientele.

## Life Experience Policy

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 granted for any Social Work Core Requirements.

## Paid Internship Hours Policies

### Use of Employment for Field Education Settings

Ideally, students who come into the Program after being employed as social service providers will complete field education 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 obtaining their BSW. The Social Work Program follows the standards established by CSWE that clearly state that the student's field education experience must be different than the student's current or past 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 field education settings where the student is already an employee or is hired as an employee may be permitted if the following criteria are met:

- The availability of release time for course and field education is ensured;
- There is clear differentiation between work-related activities and field education activities that are educationally focused in areas of new learning for the intern;
- The intern's administrative supervisor cannot serve as the Agency Field Instructor, rather a separate Agency Field Instructor must be assigned;
- The learning experiences for the intern must be drawn from a unit of the agency different from the area where the intern functions as an employee.
- The agency must agree that the Learning Agreement will guide the field education experience;
- The agency must meet the same criteria as other field education settings;
- The student and Agency Field Instructor must complete a Paid Internship Hours Application.

### Paid Field Education Hours

Occasionally interns will be hired by their Field Education site after the internship begins and the intern would like to use some of their work hours towards field education hours. This is permitted as long as the following criteria are met:

- The intern informs their Field Liaison of the inclusion of paid internship hours;
- The availability of release time for course and field education is ensured;
- There is clear communication regarding what activities fall under which category: work, internship, or both;
- The intern's administrative supervisor cannot serve as the Agency Field Instructor, rather a separate Agency Field Instructor must be assigned;
- The agency must agree that the Learning Agreement will guide the field education experience;
- The agency must meet the same criteria as other field education settings;
- The student and Agency Field Instructor must complete a Paid Internship Hours Application.

## Field Education Documents

### Medical Documentation Statement of Understanding

The Social Work Program no longer requires the submission of medical documentation prior to entry into field education. However, each student will acknowledge that the Program strongly encourages them to be up to date on the following vaccinations: Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR); Meningococcal; Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap); Hepatitis B; Varicella (Chickenpox); and COVID-19. Students sign a “Medical Documentation Statement of Understanding” within the Program/Field Application acknowledging the following:

I acknowledge that it is my sole responsibility to ensure I have the necessary medical documentation required by my field education placement site. I understand that failure to provide required documentation to a placement agency may result in a delay in the start of my internship hours and/or may limit my placement options, including the possibility of being unable to secure placement at my preferred agency.

By marking True in the Social Work Program Application, I affirm that I have read, understand, and accept the responsibility for meeting the medical documentation requirements set forth by potential internship agencies.

### Criminal Background Checks

While a student’s legal background, including felony charges and convictions, does not prevent admission into the LC Social Work Program, it is the Program’s responsibility to inform students of the difficulties that may be faced upon choosing to enter the field of Social Work.

The LC State Social Work Program does not request or require a declaration of past criminal record or a background check. However, students should be made aware of the following:

1. The Social Work Program requires students to complete a Social Work field education experience. Many agencies will require a background check and their agency policy may prohibit students with certain types of criminal backgrounds from working as an intern in their agency.
  - The LC State: Social Work Program does not guarantee field placement.
  - The Program will provide reasonable efforts towards finding students a placement.
  - Faculty Liaisons will assist students in finding a field education placement by interacting with up to three agencies in the community.
    - However, if a student is turned down by three agencies with which the student has interviewed, the Social Work Program maintains the right to drop the student from Field Education which will also impact the student’s standing in the Social Work Program.
2. Field Education Sites may require fingerprinting and criminal background checks.
3. Criminal history may affect a student’s future employability.

Each state has its own policy regarding the licensing of social workers. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of said policy. Examination for social work licensure may include an evaluation of an applicant’s criminal record.

## Intern Education Agreement

The Intern Education Agreement is an inter-agency legal document that specifies the responsibilities of the Agency and the College while students are participating in their field education. Once students have accepted an internship with an approved field education site, the Field Director will work with the Agency and College review, sign, and submit the Intern Education Agreement.

Students cannot begin their field education experience at a site until this document has been signed and approved by both parties.

## Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement is a document that lists the nine CSWE core competencies followed by a set of behaviors (20) that integrate the components that describe the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that interns should have an opportunity to practice and show competence at a beginning level of generalist practice.

Interns, in collaboration with their AFI and Field Liaison, will list at least two activities per observable components within each core competency that they will participate in to demonstrate competence at or above that of a beginning social worker.

The Learning Agreement is due approximately by week 4 in both the fall and spring semesters to the Field Liaison through Canvas. This document should be present during the initial, midpoint, and endpoint Field Meetings. It can also be helpful to have this document available during weekly supervisory appointments between the intern and AFI. Although submitted to Canvas, it is considered a working document and should be adjusted as needed to guide interns through a robust and diverse field education experience.

## Intern Evaluations: Social Work Assessment of Competencies

The Social Work Program utilizes a program developed evaluation tool called Social Work Assessment of Competencies (SWAC) to assess interns' competence at the level of a beginning social worker, across all nine CSWE core competencies. Interns are evaluated twice during their Field Experience. Once at the end of the fall semester (first 200 hours) for their midpoint evaluation, and the second at the end of their spring semester (second 200 hours) for their endpoint evaluation.

The endpoint evaluation is one data point that the Social Work Program utilizes for CSWE and LC State assessment reporting requirements. The Program has set the competency benchmark for this assessment at 80%. Meaning, 80% of the students will receive a "3" or higher on each of the nine (9) CSWE Core Competency Areas on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 = not yet demonstrated; 2 = not yet at the level of a beginning social worker; 3 = at the level of a beginning social worker; and 4 = above that of a beginning social worker.

## Final Hours Form

At the end of the academic year, each intern will complete a "Final Accounting of Internship Hours" form. This form includes the intern's name, total of hours completed, and academic year. The form is signed and dated by both the intern and their AFI. This document is submitted to the Social Work Field Director.

## Field Agency Evaluation

The Social Work Program utilizes a Field Agency Evaluation survey at the end of interns' Field Education Experience to evaluate the Program's field settings' effectiveness at providing internship opportunities across all nine CSWE core competencies and system levels (individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities). Students rate their Field Agency's ability to provide learning opportunities within the nine core competencies on a seven-point Likert scale from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree."

The Field Agency Evaluation first asks students to name the agency they completed their internship with. It then asks students to rate their Field Agency's ability to provide learning opportunities within the nine core competencies on a seven-point Likert scale from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree."

The evaluation is broken into five sections. The first section states, "My Field Agency was able to provide me with learning opportunities that allowed me to: (1) Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior; (2) Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice; (3) Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice; (4) Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice; and (5) Engage in Policy Practice." The next four sections delineate to the system level (Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities) across (6) Engagement; (7) Assessment; (8) Intervention; and (9) Evaluation.

## Guidelines for Problem Resolution

Lewis-Clark State College strives to help its students maximize their learning experience in field education. 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 Field Director, in conjunction with the Agency Field Instructor, the intern 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 intern's rights to due process are protected; in addition, the rights of the agency participants and the College are also protected.

### Resolving Intern Concerns Regarding the Agency Field Instructor

- The intern will first address their concerns directly with the Agency Field Instructor and will work to come to a resolution.
  - However, as the power differential between intern and the AFI may be intimidating, especially early in field, the intern may wish to meet with their Field Liaison to "rehearse" how to approach the AFI for such a discussion.
- If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the AFI, the student will contact their Field Liaison and consult with him/her regarding a potential face-to-face meeting among all concerned. The meeting will serve to clarify problems, discuss potential solutions, and develop a student support plan that will allow the practicum to proceed.
  - Zoom may be used as a more practical way to meet with rural agencies that may otherwise require significant travel time.
- Should this final approach be unsuccessful, the intern, AFI and/or Field Liaison shall inform the Field Director and all parties shall meet to discuss options available to the student. If deemed appropriate by the Field Liaison and Field Director, this meeting may be to arrange termination of the student placement with the agency. Termination will only be considered if the problem-solving process has been fully utilized.

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

### Resolving Agency Field Instructor Concerns Regarding the Intern

- The Agency Field Instructor will address the concerns directly with the intern as they arise to develop timely resolutions.
- If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the student, the AFI will contact the Field Liaison and consult with him/her about the situation and together consider options for resolution or plan to meet with the intern to develop and implement a student support plan.
  - If a student support plan is needed, it will be will be developed and agreed upon by all parties. The support plan will include a time frame for making changes and a time frame for meeting and reviewing the plan with the AFI and the Field Liaison.
- Should this final approach be unsuccessful, the intern, AFI, and Field Liaison shall inform the Field Director and meet to discuss options available to the intern.
  - If deemed appropriate by the Field Liaison and Field Director, this meeting may be to arrange termination of the student placement with the agency. Termination will only be considered if the problem-solving process has been fully utilized.
- Depending on the reason for termination, the Field Director will work with the Field Liaison to identify other placement options.
  - The Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.

### Resolving Field Liaison Concerns Regarding the Agency Field Instructor

- The Field Liaison will directly address any concerns with the AFI and see if the issues or concerns can be resolved.
- If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the AFI, the Field Liaison will notify the agency and the Field Director of their concerns and a meeting will be arranged to address the concerns.
- If appropriate, the Field Director and the Field Liaison will work with the intern to identify other field education site options.
  - The Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.

### Grievance Procedures for Field Education

Any student or student group may utilize Lewis-Clark State College's procedures for resolution of student disputes arising from decisions or actions of College faculty, staff, or administrative officials (see LC Student Handbook for Procedures).

## Field Education Suspension or Termination Policies

### Agency Driven Suspension or Termination

In the event that an agency wishes to immediately suspend or terminate a field education placement due to unprofessional behavior of an intern, safety concerns for clients, or unethical behavior of an intern, the Agency Field Instructor is asked to:

1. Contact the Field Liaison immediately to discuss the circumstances leading to the situation.
2. The Agency Field Instructor and/or Field Liaison will then inform the Field Director of the decision to terminate the intern.
3. Inform the intern verbally (with written follow-up) the reason for the suspension or termination.
4. Work with the Field Liaison to accomplish any follow-up activities or meetings that need to occur in order to appropriately end the field education placement.

5. Discuss with the Field Liaison and Field Director ways in which the situation causing the termination can be avoided in the future.
6. Depending on the nature of the termination, the Field Director and the Field Liaison will work with the intern to identify other placement options.
  - a. Although the Social Work Program cannot guarantee that a second field option will be available.
7. However, if the Social Work Program deems that the nature of the transgression cannot be remediated, the intern may be dropped from the BSW program. Termination from a field education placement may result in a grade of “Fail” in field, which would disallow the student from continuing in the BSW program.

### Activities that Could Result in Suspension or Termination

The Social Work Program is dedicated to developing professional, competent, and ethical beginning level social workers. Similar to the expectations of students within the classroom, interns are expected to bring their most professional self to their field education experience.

Therefore, the following behaviors may result in suspension and/or termination:

- Chronic tardiness;
- Absences from field education practicum without notifying the AFI;
- Chronic tardiness in completion of agency paper work;
- Missing appointments with clients or AFI without appropriate notification;
- Exploiting the agency by misuse of agency supplies or resources;
- Dressing in an inappropriate, unprofessional manner;
- Acting unprofessionally while at the agency, such as inappropriate displays of emotion or displays of immature behavior.

The following ethical violations may result in suspension and/or termination:

- Engaging in intimate (sexual/romantic) relationships with a client or a client’s family member;
- Falsifying agency or College documentation;
- Breaching client confidentiality
- Initiating a physical confrontation with a client, client's family member, AFI, agency staff, or faculty member;
- Exhibiting impaired functioning due to the use of alcohol or other substances during field education hours;
- Acting in a discriminatory manner toward a client, co-worker, fellow student, AFI, or faculty member.

### Supporting Intern Safety

Every Social Work student at LC is entitled to complete their field education experience in a safe environment. However, the Social Work Program recognizes that interns cannot be insulated from the risks involved when providing services to people, institutions, and communities.

In preparation for field education, the Social Work Program introduces safety practices in SW341: Social Work Practice with Individuals, reinforces safety practices by having students preparing for field education read *NASW: Guidelines for Social Work Safety in the Workplace*, and finally students identify

and discuss their field site's safety policies, as well as best practices, in SW485: Field Seminar I as a module.

The Social Work Program requests that all field education agencies provide an orientation and a forum for training about safety, high-risk situations, and violence issues that are relevant for the individual agency as the intern begins field education.

The Lewis-Clark State College Social Work Program supports intern safety by providing an online safety review for all AFIs. In addition, the Program also supports intern safety at the placement site through the following policies:

### Agency Provided Safety Measures

Agencies are responsible for providing their interns with a comprehensive agency orientation that includes training regarding agency safety policies and procedures. As applicable to the agency, this should include:

- Building and office security;
- Safety plan when working with agitated clients, including the use of signal or code word to initiate help, de-escalation techniques, use of police or security, and evacuation;
- Agency vehicle use training, if applicable;
- Agency protocols regarding:
  - Emergency procedures;
  - Provision of services to clients who carry or have guns and weapons, if appropriate;
  - Provision of services to clients who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
  - Transporting clients via agency vehicles (note: interns are not allowed to use their own vehicles to transport clients);
- Preparing interns for working with clients in their homes/ community should include at a minimum:
  - Safety training about working in client's home/community
  - Interns first observing home/community visits with AFI/agency staff;
  - Being accompanied on their first home/community visits with AFI/agency staff before being asked to go alone;
  - Leaving location itinerary with AFI so that the intern's location is known at all times;
  - Having clear backup plan of who to call for consultation; and
  - Discussing risk-reducing behaviors in the home/community.

### Prohibited Internship Activities

To maintain safety, interns may not be asked to complete the following activities as part of their field education experience:

- Physical restraint of clients;
- Providing client care at the agency at times when there are no other staff present;
- Distribution or handling of medication;
- Transportation of a client with a recent history of violent behavior;
- Use their own vehicles to transport clients;
- Use their own cell phone to make agency related phone calls;
- Any activities beyond the scope of BSW social work practice.

## Student Malpractice/Professional Liability Insurance Coverage

The intern is covered by the liability insurance of Lewis-Clark State College for activities and decisions made while the intern 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:

- The student is enrolled in SW483/484: Field Education I/II;
- The activities in question take place within the time frame of the Intern Education Agreement between the Lewis-Clark State College BSW program and the Affiliated Agency;
- 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.

## Health Considerations

The LC State Social Work Program acknowledges that social work is practiced in a variety of settings that may expose interns to a variety of health risks. For this reason, AFIs are asked to educate interns on risks specific to the agency. This information is provided to the intern so that the intern may take measures to protect against known risks. Interns are encouraged to ask their AFI about any known health or risk factors in their field education interview and to obtain any information regularly distributed to agency staff (e.g., guidelines regarding universal precautions, recommended health screenings, etc.). Agencies must also inform interns of any agency safety trainings and make these available to interns. As with any other issue, if an intern has a concern which is not sufficiently addressed at the internship, they are encouraged to contact their Field Liaison.

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 is encouraged to contact LC Accessibility Services at 208-792-2677.

## Debriefing Critical Incidents

If an incident occurs in which an intern is personally threatened or hurt, the intern should immediately inform the AFI and the Field Liaison. The intern should contact the Field Director if their Field Liaison is not available.

The Field Liaison or Field Director will document the incident and the steps taken to address it and will confer with the intern and AFI. Together, they will assess the intern's readiness to return to the placement and develop a plan to remediate any further danger to the intern.