

Appendix T: Frequently Asked Questions

The following information provides a summary of the KSU MSW Program's Field Education Program. More extensive information can be found in the *MSW Student Handbook* and the *Field Education Program Manual*.

1. What is the purpose of field education?

Field education is an integral part of both the Foundation and Advanced Curricula. Classroom learning focuses on discrete knowledge and theoretical background whereas the field curriculum exposes students to a wide range of real-world problems and possibilities. Field education teaches students to assess these situations and to develop, implement, and

6. What are the goals of the second (Advanced) internship?

*In their second year, students select a placement in their **area of interest**. Students are expected to develop a depth of social work practice knowledge and skills sufficient for competent, self- evaluative, accountable, and ultimately, autonomous practice.*

7. What will the prospective field instructor know about the student before the pre-placement interview?

After a placement is recommended by the director of field education, the student must schedule a pre-placement interview with the field supervisor and other relevant agency or program staff. The prospective field supervisor is only provided the student's name before the interview. In some cases, prospective field supervisors call the Field Education Program to clarify information.

8. What is the purpose of the pre-placement interview?

The pre-placement interview gives the student and field supervisor an opportunity to get acquainted and explore each other's expectations about the placement. The goal of this interview is to determine if the match of student/agency/field supervisor is appropriate. The interview helps the student and field supervisor clarify and adjust their expectations and prepare for the internship experience. If the match of student and agency does not seem appropriate, the field supervisor will immediately notify the Field Education Office so that an alternate placement option can be explored.

The placement assignment process is not complete until the potential field supervisor and the student have met and the Field Education Office has received confirmation of placement acceptance from the field supervisor.

9. Can a student do a field placement in their current place of employment?

Employer-based field placements are one option that can be developed for students to fulfill their field education requirements while retaining a connection to their employing agency. Employer-based field placements can provide students with the opportunity to continue employment with their agency while completing their Foundation and/or Advanced Internship. Field placement assignments must be educationally appropriate to social work and engage students in new learning related to social work practice. An employer-based placement is possible only if the employing agency agrees to the placement and is willing and able to make accommodations to meet the student's learning needs. Students requesting approval for placement in their employing agency must submit an Employer-Based Placement Proposal.

10. Who needs to be involved in setting up an employer-based placement?

Setting up placements in employing agencies requires more effort than placement in non-employing agencies. This extra attention is necessary to ensure that the planned placement experience meets all program requirements, required competencies and behaviors, and does not duplicate learning that the student/employee has already mastered as part of their current or past job duties. Arrangement and approval of the placement plan requires involvement of the following individuals: Student/ employee, job supervisor, an agency executive or administrator, potential field supervisor, task supervisor (if applicable), and a field education faculty

the final decision regarding approval of requests for employer-based placements on a case-by-case basis.

11. What are the benefits of an employer-based field placement?

Because the student/employee already knows and is oriented to the agency, he or she might initially have a less steep learning curve relative to others placed in a new agency. The student/employee also brings new learning back to the agency, which can enhance agency practice. The agency demonstrates its commitment to the student/employee's professional development and education. The agency also retains a quality employee and protects its investment in the employee.

12. What are the challenges of an employer-based field placement:

Clearly separating student and employee roles can be difficult for both the student and other staff within the agency. It also can be challenging to ensure appropriate division of work load to accommodate student learning activities. As a result, the student role may be neglected or forgotten at times. The student/employee's work colleagues also may feel confused or even resentful of the employee in a student role. In addition, employer-based placements can sometimes create sensitive situations in the workplace because students/employees might have greater access to agency leadership, meetings, and information than they had in their previous role in the agency.

Additionally, when a student is terminated as an employee they will also be terminated as an intern. The student's internship placement is automatically suspended and the student is referred to the FWPPC for review and a final recommendation for field internship placement. Please see the FWPPC process in the manual.

13. Do students need to have a car?

Students are responsible for securing transportation to their field placements regardless of location. It is to the student's advantage to have a personal vehicle. Many of our local communities are small and have few resources for field placements.

14. Do students need insurance?

The Department of Social Work and Human Services carries a blanket professional liability insurance policy for students. Coverage is limited to \$2 million per incident, and \$4 million aggregate.

15. What if the placement doesn't work?

Occasionally it is necessary to terminate placements based on factors related to the agency, field instructor, or student intern. Termination requires as much planning as placement. The reasons for terminating the placement should be thoroughly discussed by the student and their field instructor, and in consultation with the field education faculty. Students are not relieved of their field responsibilities until the termination of the placement is approved by the Director of Field Education. See the Field Education Program Manual for specific procedures and guidelines.

16. Do I inform all clients that I have contact with that I am a student Intern?

Yes, it is part of their rights under informed consent.

17. Should I continue to work at my field placement during school breaks or holidays?

information during the interview process before the start of the internship. If the student and the field supervisor are unable to make arrangements the student must immediately notify their field faculty instructor for resolution.

18. Does it matter how many hours you work each day as long as you make 16 hours a week?

No, it is okay to have a variation of hours. This may be the case depending on the need of the internship site.

19. How do we make up hours if we miss class?

This should be negotiated with the agency supervisor, and you are responsible to complete all the hours of internship in semester in which the hours were missed.

20. If I have issues with my agency supervisor or another employee at my internship site,