

FIELD EDUCATION

Relationship with Field Agency

The program and field work agency are partners in the education of baccalaureate students in social work. The B.A.S.W. field coordinator serves as the field adviser. Because ongoing relationships with agencies are fundamental to ensure sound educational field experiences for students, it is essential that the field adviser maintains a pattern of regular contacts with agencies. Field instructors complete a six-week evaluation of the student that alerts the faculty adviser to any issues early in the internship. Students keep journals which they submit to the B.A.S.W. field coordinator in the Integrative Seminar that enhances communication, and helps to identify any issues in field work. Students are encouraged to share their experience both in and outside of the seminar with the B.A.S.W. field coordinator. Agency visits are the main way of ensuring the maintenance of a relationship and communication necessary for effective educational field experiences for students. Therefore, at least one visit is made to the agency each year. The visit(s) are intended to maximize the potential for student learning by addressing three principal objectives of field teaching:

1. Assist the agency in establishing and maintaining an effective learning environment.
2. Assist and support the agency supervisor in the role of field instructor.
3. Monitor the learning experience, assist the integration of the individual student and relevant agency personnel and productively intervene when learning impediments or difficulties are identified.

During the visit the field coordinator meets with the field instructor, the student, and other relevant personnel to discuss the student's progress. The visit also may be coupled with an individual conference with the student. The faculty adviser reviews:

1. How field education is affecting the agency
2. Student's relationship with agency personnel
3. Quality of student contact with clients
4. Nature and number of assignments carried by the student
5. Time allotted for supervisory conferences
6. Nature of the supervisory contract
7. Student's process recordings
8. Learning opportunities other than specific student assignments
9. Space for students
10. Viability of agency as a field setting

As consultant to the field work agency, the faculty adviser is responsible for knowing the structure, function, staff and other pertinent information about the agency. It is especially important that the faculty adviser be aware of changes in agency structure, services, and staff that may influence the quality of the student's educational experience. Consultation may be planned with the field instructor's supervisor or agency educational coordinator as indicated.

At least two process recordings per semester are submitted by the student so that the individual student's perception and concerns can be reviewed and addressed. The session provides the student, on a consultation basis, with alternate ways of thinking about problems, increased self-awareness, and the opportunity to individualize academic and field career planning. Individual conferences provide the faculty

adviser with time to help the student to clearly identify his/her own learning needs and deficiencies, and place these in the context of student strengths, current functioning and future goals. The adviser can assess whether the field placement is providing the student the opportunity to practice with diverse populations and populations at risk, to engage in practice assessment, and to have assignments in accordance with the program's curriculum. The B.A.S.W. Field Coordinator will meet with the student during the first two months of their internship to systematically review their performance and progress in their internship and classes.