



University of Nevada – Las Vegas School of Social Work

BSW Practicum Manual 2025

**Field education
is designed to integrate
the theoretical and
conceptual
contributions of the
explicit curriculum in the
field setting.**

COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Educational Policy

& Accreditation

Standards

**ALL BSW PRACTICUM EDUCATION
STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR
REVIEWING AND COMPLYING WITH ALL
INFORMATION CONTAINED WITHIN THE
UNLV SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
PRACTICUM MANUAL**

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Message from the Assistant Director of Field Education

Welcome to Field Education,

You have reached the point in your education where you will begin working with real people in real situations, applying course content and theory to everyday experiences.

It is an exciting time and there are often many considerations and feelings around securing a practicum and gaining proficiency in social work practice.



Field education is a course for experiential learning processes that allow students to engage in social work practice in various agency settings, which will include working directly with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

The Practicum Manual contains valuable information which provides students and our community partners with our policies and procedures, as well as information about our forms, roles, expectations and responsibilities of everyone involved in the field education process to ensure a quality experience for everyone.

As you embark on this next step in your educational journey, we encourage you to own your experience:

- ❖ Use your Learning Contract as a tool to develop a quality engaged learning experience.
- ❖ Know that everyone struggles along the way and that this is a part of the learning process.
- ❖ Use your resources - reach out to your agency field instructor, faculty field liaison and the field office for support and guidance throughout your practicum.

We encourage you to make the most of your field education to attain the skills, knowledge, and the will to make a lasting impact in the world. Social Workers are needed now more than ever. The Field Office Team is here to assist as you prepare to enter the profession of social work at a time of tremendous challenge.

Don't forget to reach out to the Field Education Office!

We've all taken this journey, felt the struggles, and are here to support you in your success.

Delayna Tonogan, MSW
Assistant Director of Field
Education UNLV - School of
Social Work

Message from the Field Education Team

To Students, Agency Field Instructors and Partners:

Social Work is a dynamic profession that empowers individuals, families, and communities to solve problems and build resilient skills. Social workers address challenges across diverse settings, including mental health, child welfare, healthcare, aging services, domestic violence, school social work, and substance abuse prevention and treatment. Social workers can work in nonprofits, government agencies, or establish private practices.

Students – as you work towards your degree, try always to remember the reasons you’ve chosen social work as your professional path. We encourage students to utilize their own resources and support networks as well as take advantage of the connections built throughout your education especially your practicum.

Agency Field Instructors – thank you for your mentorship and coaching, we encourage you to approach the selection and support of students seeking placements with an open heart and an open mind.

Field Instructors are charged with exemplifying the social work skills and ethics they’ve garnered throughout their career; that adaptability, flexibility and patience are key skills in becoming a resourceful and empathetic social worker.

The Field Education Team stands by our commitment to support students by answering questions, sharing information, and providing guidance with respect to securing a practicum. In return, we expect that same commitment from our students, to continue to adhere to deadlines, respond to requests in a timely manner, and practice professional conduct with all parties. Practicum is where it all comes together. Take great care, stay healthy, stay safe, and stay connected.

The Practicum Education Team

A Social Worker is



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION

School of Social Work Land Acknowledgement

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas wishes to acknowledge and honor the Indigenous communities of this region, and recognize that the university is situated on the traditional homelands of the Nuwuvi, Southern Paiute People. We offer gratitude for the land itself, for those who have stewarded it for generations, and for the opportunity to study, learn, work, and be in community with this land.

Mission

Nevada's rapid growth and diverse population create an ever-changing social landscape. From addressing housing and healthcare challenges to supporting mental health and advocating for social justice, the need for adaptable and resilient social workers has never been greater.

At the UNLV School of Social Work, our mission is to empower you with the tools and knowledge to thrive in this dynamic environment. In our program, you'll develop:

- A profound appreciation for diversity and inclusion.
- Critical thinking skills to navigate complex social challenges with confidence.
- A passion for promoting resilience and advancing social justice in communities.

With mentorship from experienced faculty, hands-on learning opportunities, and a commitment to building stronger, more resilient communities, you'll graduate ready to lead, adapt, and make a lasting difference in the lives of others—and your own.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Statement

An inclusive workplace culture makes diversity work. We strive to provide a supportive, inclusive campus through administrative initiatives, resources, and committees.

WHAT IS PRACTICUM EDUCATION?

Mission Statement

The goal of Field Education is to prepare students for competence in social work practice. Students learn and practice theoretical concepts, ethics and principles when working in their practicum with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. The Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) has declared that Practicum Education is the signature pedagogy for social work as cited in the 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for Baccalaureate and Master's Social Work Programs

Vision Statement

UNLV School of Social Work Field Education aims to remain consistent with our institution's mission while providing practicum opportunities for students that reflect the values and priorities of the social work profession.

What is Signature Pedagogy?

“Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline: to think, to perform, and to act intentionally, ethically, and with integrity. The field setting is where students apply human rights principles from global and national social work ethical codes to advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. It fosters a learning environment where anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion are valued. Field education is designed to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contributions of the explicit curriculum in the field setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria and measures of student acquisition and demonstration of the nine social work competencies. Responding to the changing nature of the practice world and student demographics and characteristics, field education programs articulate how they maintain or enhance students' access to high-quality field practicum experiences. Field education programs develop field models to prepare students for contemporary and interprofessional social work practice, including the use of various forms of technology. The program's field education director serves as an essential contributor to the curricular development, administration, and governance of field education.” – CSWE 2022EPAS

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Field Education Department consists of:

- Marde Closson, Director of Field Education. (702) 895-5848 or [marde closson](#)
- Delayna Tonogan, Assistant Director of Field. (702) 895-3313 or [delayna.tonogan](#)
- Zarinah Washington, Field Education Liaison. (702) 895-5124 or [zarinah washington](#)

The Field Education Department has alphabetically designated a point of contact for agencies and students:

Agency: First letter of name of the agency (please do not include THE)

- A-J Delayna Tonogan, Assistant Director of Field (702) 895-3313, [delayna tonogan](#)
- K-Z Marde Closson, Director of Field (702) 895-5848, [marde closson](#)

Student: Academic Standing

- BSW: Delayna Tonogan, Assistant Director of Field (702) 895-3313, [delayna tonogan](#)
- MSW: Marde Closson, Director of Field (702) 895-5848, [marde closson](#).

Please contact the appropriate staff member if you have any questions and/or concerns.

All Field Education Documents referenced in this manual can be found on the Field Education Department Website: [Practicum Forms](#)

TERMINOLOGY

The Field Education Office is responsible for the identification, affiliation, oversight and approval of all placement sites where students will complete their practicum. The Field Education Office is also responsible for maintaining connections with Agency Field Instructors regionally through membership in CSWE and other associations of Directors of Schools of Social Work.

Field Education Roles

Directors of Field: Includes Director and Assistant Director of Field Education

Agency Field Instructor: Used interchangeably with AFI

Faculty Field Liaison: Used interchangeably with Liaison/Field Liaison

Director of Field Education - Manages and oversees the Field Education Office, and trains Field Education staff, and Agency Field Instructors.

The Director of Field will be responsible for:

- Providing the agency with the necessary consultation and support to carry out the educational program goals.
- Providing specific learning objectives to be used in planning the educational program for students.
- Providing guidelines for evaluation of student progress.
- Obtaining regular feedback from the agency regarding the field program's strengths and limitations and recommending suitable modifications when appropriate.
- Maintaining regular communication with Agency Directors and Agency Field Instructors (AFIs).
- Providing consultation around field practicum concerns.
- Providing continuing educational services including the field instruction training seminars.
- Teaching Social Work Practicum seminars.

Assistant Director of Education - Provides support to the Director of Field Education. Coordinates the BSW Field Education.

The Assistant Director of Field will assist the Director of Field in all responsibilities listed above.

In addition, the Assistant Director of Field is responsible for:

- Assisting in the development of Practicum sites within the community.
- Teaching Social Work Practicum seminars.
- Providing supervision to students in the field.
- Serving as a Field Liaison as needed.

Faculty Field Liaison – provides the link between the school, the student, and the Agency Field Instructor. The Field Liaison is available for consultation around field issues that arise on the part of the student or the agency. For each assigned student, the Field Liaison is required to make at least two agency visits per semester to meet. One visit is primarily for the AFI and the other is for both the student and the AFI. The focus of the visit depends on the needs of the student and the agency, and involves consultation regarding the Learning Contract/Evaluation, problem-solving any practicum concerns, and clarifying any field education issues. In the

case of concerns or issues requiring immediate attention, the Faculty Field Liaison will make additional agency visits or phone contacts as needed. The liaison will also meet with students each month.

Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) - are vital members of the field training team and, with the support of the Directors of Field Education, are charged with the responsibility to assure that the planning, teaching, and evaluation components of students' field practicum experiences have a social work focus and are professionally sound.

Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) must have a current resume on file with the Field Education Department.

Off-site Agency Field Instructor - is a professionally trained social worker not employed by the agency, who provide educational supervision for the student. Agencies that do not have a social worker on staff will require a preceptor in addition to the off-site Agency Field Instructor.

Preceptor - is an on-site employee, usually a person from another discipline/educational background other than social work, who is assigned to assist the AFI with task assignments and training. A preceptor is required when the AFI is offsite.

Practicum Student

A “social work student” in a field practicum should NOT be referred to or sign any documentation using the title “intern”. Currently, the term “intern” is reserved for post-master’s professionals working on hours toward LCSW licensure in the state of Nevada and would constitute misrepresentation if used in reference to a MSW student.

Policy and Protocol Links

NASW Code of Ethics

CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation

UNLV Academic Policies for Students

For your convenience, the link for UNLV Academic Policies for Students is provided

<https://www.unlv.edu/policies/students>

Sexual Harassment - It is the policy of University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) –School of Social Work, that in order to maintain an environment in which the dignity and worth of all students are respected, that harassment of students in their field placements is intolerable and unacceptable. It is seen as a form of behavior that seriously undermines the atmosphere of trust essential to the learning environment. Also, willful false accusations of harassment will not be condoned. For further information on UNLV policy against discrimination and sexual harassment please review <https://www.unlv.edu/hr/policies/harassment>

****All BSW students are responsible for reviewing and complying with all information contained within the Practicum Manual. In addition, students are expected to comply with all social work professional expectations, as well as all University and Agency policies and protocols. ****

PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

Practicum Hour Requirements

BSW Practicum Hours for Graduation:

Two consecutive semesters (16 hours per week for 15 weeks)

240 HOURS each semester

480 HOURS total for graduation

The Practicum is a semester long course consisting of 15 weeks for Fall and Spring semesters. Students are expected to participate in practicum during the full duration of the semester. Participation in practicum during the Fall and Spring semesters requires 16 hours per week for both practicums. If a student has an extenuating circumstance preventing them from completing their weekly hours, they will need to develop a plan with their AFI to make up the hours at a later date. Any hours earned that week (less than 16, will still allow the student to count the week)

****Any deviation requires approval from the Agency Field Instructor and the Field Education Office.**

Documentation of Hours

It is the student's responsibility to complete daily recording and maintenance of hours completed at the practicum. To ensure credit for hours at the practicum, the student must have documentation of hours on the mandatory weekly timesheet and submit the timesheet to the Faculty Field Liaison by 5 pm on Monday.

BSW Placement Steps

In order for the field practicum to be effective, it is imperative that the School of Social Work and participating agencies work together in planning and carrying out the educationally directed experience. At the same time, the School also recognizes the social responsibility of the agency toward its clients and the community, and is aware of the necessity of the educational objectives to be complimentary to those of the agency. The relationship between the University, the School, and the agency is outlined in the Education Affiliation Agreement (EAA) and is formalized by the signing of this document. While the School retains primary responsibility for the quality of the educational experience, it can only carry out that responsibility through cooperation and ongoing communication between the agency field instructors and the School. Field Education Program policy mandates that agencies provide the School with, among other documentation, a description of their program and practicum activities to assist in appropriately matching students with the agency.

A Field Practicum is defined as an onsite (not remote) experience in one (1) agency/organization that has been contracted with the University and the School of Social Work. Because of liability insurance issues, Field Education is not capable of tracking or allowing students to be placed in multiple practicum sites simultaneously during the course of one semester.

Please follow these steps to secure a Practicum:

Step 1 – The Resume and Cover Letter:

Students entering a practicum search must first create a current Resume and Cover Letter describing their education, experience and objectives for field placement. Please contact [UNLV Career Services](#) at 702-895-3495 if you need assistance with creating a resume or cover letter.

Step 2– Sign-up for Handshake:

Please log in to [Career Services](#). Click on Student Instructions and FAQs and follow the directions. Search for available practicums by clicking on jobs and in the search box type in Social Work Practicum. Available opportunities will be listed.

Please note: Only agencies that have an educational affiliation agreement (EAA) can be approved as a practicum site. If you encounter any problems with setting up an account or logging onto Handshake, please contact Career Services at 702-895-3495.

Step 3- Searching for Placements:

Click on Jobs, then in the search field, type in Social Work Practicum. This will bring up all of the practicum placement opportunities that are available. Once you locate an agency you are interested in, just click the “Apply” button. Once you click “Apply” your resume will be sent directly to the Agency Field Instructor (AFI). You can check to see which positions you have applied to by clicking on the “Job Postings and On-Campus Recruiting OCR Interviews” tab. From this tab you can click on the “Applications tab” which will bring up a window with all positions you have applied to. Please make sure you include that you are a MSW student on handshake.

Step 4 – The Agency Interview:

The Field Education Program adheres to a “matching” philosophy; that is, practicum works best when agencies and students “choose” each other. At the agency interview, either party - the student or the agency - may choose to accept or reject the other. Students are advised to interview at multiple agency sites to facilitate an informed choice. Agencies are not obligated to accept any given student solely on the fact that she or he has been referred by the University. Similarly, after interviewing, students may not accept agencies to which they have been referred. If there are no matches (based on practicum position availability, incompatibility of goals or some other reasonable criteria), the student is advised to immediately contact their Field Education Department designated contact person.

Step 5 – Practicum Site Selection:

Once a student has been offered and has accepted a practicum at a particular site, she or he is to notify the Field Education Department by submitting the Practicum Selection Form located on the Field Education website. Upon providing this information to the Field Education Department, the Field staff will review and approve the practicum selected. The student will receive an email from the Field Office letting them know that they are cleared to begin their practicum the first week of the semester. Students are unable to start their practicum until they receive the approved email.

Step 6 – Agency requirements:

Please note that some agencies have an onboarding process and may require background checks, drug testing, physicals and other medical screenings. Students are responsible for these expenses. The agencies may require UNLV School of Social Work to maintain these records for the student and make them available to the agency at their request. Students will be required to provide this information to UNLV School of Social Work Field Education Office to be kept as part of the student record.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

- ☐ Be familiar and comply with policies and procedures outlined in the Practicum Manual
- ☐ Adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and behave in accordance with professional values
- ☐ Comply with all School of Social Work and Practicum Education policies and protocols
- ☐ Submit a placement selection form and be confirmed for a practicum before beginning placement
- ☐ Understand risks of practicum participation including: driving protocol, home visits, unpredictable behavior of clients, and exposure to infectious diseases

- ❑ Disclose any prior or current relationship/affiliation with the agency or agency field instructor to the Field Education Office (e.g., if you are an employee)
- ❑ Follow all rules, regulations, and procedures of the agency
- ❑ Address expectations with the Agency Field Instructor: attendance, absences, tardiness, dress code, issues and policies
- ❑ Arrange to make up any time lost due to illness, family crisis, planned absences, or other barriers
- ❑ Complete two semesters with two different agencies, unless otherwise approved. If there are issues that arise which will affect continued placement, notify your Agency Field Instructor, your Faculty Field Liaison and Field Education office immediately
- ❑ Do not terminate the practicum without following the problem resolution protocol
- ❑ Understand that all forms are required and are to be completed by the due date
- ❑ Cooperate with the Faculty Field Liaison via email and phone coordination, site visit/meeting schedule, and grading expectations
- ❑ Fulfill commitments made to the agency which are in alignment with the learning contract
- ❑ Complete required hours and adhere to the schedule determined at the beginning of the semester
- ❑ Adhere to HIPAA/confidentiality guidelines as the agency requires
- ❑ Demonstrate mature and professional behavior including flexibility with unexpected changes
- ❑ Strive to provide effective and evidence-based services to clients
- ❑ Prepare for meetings and client contacts
- ❑ Effectively prepare for and use supervision, and bring relevant questions to the AFI
- ❑ Actively engage with the Agency Field Instructor in the development of the learning contract
- ❑ Be open to feedback provided by the Agency Field Instructor and Liaison. Incorporate feedback into practice
- ❑ Effectively document all activities and hours during the practicum, as well as follow documentation protocol of the agency
- ❑ It is the student's responsibility to return all agency property prior to leaving the agency. This includes but is not limited to equipment, documents, and any other items issued by the agency. Failure to return agency property may result in financial responsibilities falling on the student.

Tips for Finding a Practicum

When searching for a practicum there are many factors to consider such as the following:

- ❑ the location, evening and/or weekends if applicable, hours of operation, etc.
- ❑ the level of opportunities the agency provides must match the student's academic level
- ❑ the type of learning activities available such as case management, observing counseling, prevention, micro, mezzo, macro
- ❑ the availability and qualifications of the Agency Field Instructor
- ❑ any special requirements/considerations
- ❑ pre-placement requirements, such as the type of background clearance required, immunizations, drug testing, etc. and length of time needed to complete these ahead of the internship
- ❑ populations served (ages, cultures, focus area)
- ❑ the type of service delivery (in-office, off-site, individual, group, family, etc.)
- ❑ the type of agency such as government, for-profit, non-profit
- ❑ personal interests and future goals
- ❑ personal experience, strengths and triggers

****If the student is needing assistance, they should contact the Field Education Office.**

Orientation/Onboarding Hours

If an agency requires students to attend orientation/training or other onboarding activities prior to the semester start date, those hours cannot be counted towards the field requirements/practicum hours. Students are not permitted to miss scheduled class times to participate in an agency orientation or activities during the semester.

Agency Educational Affiliation Agreement

In order for students to be placed at an agency, an Educational Affiliation Agreement (EAA) must be completed and on file with the Field Education Office. All agencies posted on handshake have an EAA in place.

Absences

Holidays

Students do not receive credit for holidays. Students are required to make up practicum hours due to agency being closed on holidays. Fall and Spring Break are not considered holidays.

Religious Observances

Students may observe religious holidays, but these are treated as absences to be made up during the semester.

Jury Duty

Students will be granted time from their practicum when summoned for jury duty. It is the student's responsibility to report jury duty to the AFI and make up the missed time.

Interruption of Practicum due to National or Local Events

In the event of an interruption of the student's practicum due to national or local events such as weather conditions, communicable diseases, natural disasters, civil unrest, acts of violence, or work stoppage, resulting in limited but not permanent closure of a placement site, the student will immediately notify the Liaison.

Illness

It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements to make-up missed time by the end of the semester, or at some other period by special arrangement with the AFI. Students may be eligible to request a Compassionate Withdrawal in special circumstances. Students should contact their Agency Field Instructor, Faculty Field Liaison and the BSW Coordinator, [Frances Young](#), regarding a possible compassionate withdrawal.

Military

In the event a student has received order to active duty/deployment, please communicate with your AFI, Liaison, and Field Directors to determine the best option for your currently enrolled practicum course. Please check [Military and Veteran Service Center](#) for forms to assist you with Leave of Absence from the University.

Special Note: Students MAY NOT do practicum hours during Summer Sessions, over Winter Break or prior to the start of the semester.

Petitions

Petition forms are required for the following circumstances:

- Students may petition to complete a practicum at their place of employment or at an agency that they have volunteered or previously worked for. Student should be employed for at least six months at the agency.
- Students may petition to repeat a practicum for their second practicum with an onsite AFI (SW 429).
- Student may petition to change practicum during the semester if educational needs are not being met.
- Students must complete one practicum with an onsite agency field instructor and are unable to submit a petition to continue at an agency with an offsite agency field instructor.
- Petitions related to the practicum for the following semester must be submitted by November 15th for Spring Semester and May 15th for Fall Semester.
- The student may be required to submit a petition per the Directors of Field if an unusual or extraordinary situation is requested.
- For all petitions, the student must provide written documentation clearly illustrating how the placement request complies with field objectives, policies and guidelines. Such documentation (like the employment site petition) must be submitted with the original signatures of the student, prospective Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and other individuals that may be closely linked to the situation.
- All petitions must be approved by the Directors of Field prior to the beginning of the field practicum. Failure to obtain this approval may interfere with the student's ability to successfully complete field requirements.

****Special Note:** Field Practicum Petition Forms can be found [here](#). Please note that petitions are not always granted, so students should be actively searching for other practicum placements while waiting for decisions to be made about the petition.

****Special Note:** The integrity of a student's education is most important. Students are unable to petition to repeat practicums at a previous practicum site and petition to complete their practicum at their place of employment simultaneously. Students are unable to submit a petition to continue a practicum at an agency with an offsite agency field instructor. Students are unable to petition to do a practicum at an agency where they have received services or a family member or friend is employed.

PRE-PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Background Checks and Fingerprinting

Some agencies (e.g. hospitals, federal agencies, Clark County, State of Nevada agencies, and etc.) may require students to obtain special background checks that could also include fingerprinting, and/or a medical clearance. It is very important to inquire about these checks and conditions at the time of the interview at the agency. The student is responsible to obtain, provide, and in some cases pay for the information required by the agency.

Please initiate the background check as soon as possible, some of the checks can take 4-8 weeks to complete. If a

student is held up because of incomplete requirements it may hurt the student's ability to accumulate the required number of practicum hours.

Special Note: Students are responsible for these expenses unless the agency mentions otherwise.

Medical Requirements

Each medical facility has different requirements, but they typically include immunizations, TB skin test, current and updated immunizations (includes COVID-19 vaccination), a health examination, drug screening, Health and Safety training modules, CPR/First Aid certification, HIPAA training, proof of health insurance, and criminal background clearance.

FIELD PRACTICUM FORMS and EVALUATIONS

All documents and forms for the Field Practicum can be found on the UNLV School of Social Work Webpage [Practicum Forms | School of Social Work | UNLV](#)

Petitions

There are 3 types of petitions which are used when a student wants to petition to complete their practicum at their place of employment or volunteer site (past or current), to petition to complete their 2ND practicum at the same agency as the 1ST practicum, and to petition to change their practicum site.

Placement Selection Form

Document used by student after selecting a Practicum site. Both student and agency field instructor must sign the document. The student is responsible for submitting the form to [the Field Education Department](#) and it becomes part of student's permanent education file. Students must submit their placement selection form and receive the confirmation email before starting their practicum.

Time Sheets

Documents the hours and activities student complete at their practicum site on a weekly basis. Regular review of the Field Practicum Time Sheet record will assist student, Agency Field Instructor and Faculty Field Liaison in monitoring the student's progress toward accomplishing these specific tasks. BSW students must complete a total of 240 hours per semester (16 hours per week for 15 weeks). All Students are expected to be at their practicum site a minimum of 15 weeks each semester. All students are required to maintain an accurate record of field practicum hours and learning contract practice behaviors. Hours and activities such as supervision, reading, agency meetings, client interviews, training, and all other learning activities conducted during placement are to be recorded daily on the Field Practicum Time Sheet. Students are to email their Field Practicum Time Sheets to their Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and preceptor if one is assigned each week. Once the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and preceptor have reviewed the activity sheet they will sign the timesheet and return it to the student. The student will electronically submit the document in their SW Field Supervision class in CANVAS by 5 pm on Monday. Recorded activities should relate to Learning Contract practice behaviors. Only (0.5) hours per week will be allotted for student's agency-related reading which must be completed on site. Students must cite the title of reading on the timesheet. Timesheets submitted more than one week late will not be counted towards the field requirements.

Please Note: Although students are encouraged to practice self-care, those self-care activities are not part of the practicum and cannot be included in their practicum hours.

Learning Contract

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires that students develop competencies in various skills and abilities as part of the preparation for new social workers. Learning contracts provide structure to assist in attaining competency in the profession. The learning contract is a required assignment that guides the practicum experience and provides a framework for the student's learning. It is to be completed with the student, AFI and Liaison. At the end of each semester the AFI evaluates the student's performance.

The Learning Contract/Evaluation is a formal document that consists of three (3) parts which require three (3) submissions: 1. First submission: (Learning Contract) The student must pick 4 specific activities (Practice Behaviors) for each competency from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) - Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for a total of 36 activities chosen. 2. Second submission: (Midterm Evaluation) The student is evaluated on each selected activities. 3. Third submission: (Final Evaluation) The student will be evaluated on completion of each activity/practice behavior.

Special Note: There MUST be comments for each activity on the Midterm, and Final Evaluation explaining how the student will or has completed each practice behavior. The learning contract, midterm and final comments are to be completed by the Agency Field Instructor and student. The AFI completes the midterm and final as this is their evaluation of the student.

The Learning Contract, completed by the student and Agency Field Instructor is prepared early in the practicum, identifying the specific practice behaviors that will be accomplished throughout the field practicum experience. The document is designed to assist the student in accomplishing the course objectives. In developing the Learning Contract, students are to select 4 activities from the list provided for each Core Competency. Students can earn up to 2 hours for developing the learning contract and up to 2 hours for the midterm and up to 2 hours for the final evaluation. Revisions may be suggested by the Faculty Field Liaison and should be resubmitted in a timely manner. Once reviewed with the Agency Field Instructor, the document will **be electronically submitted by the Agency Field Instructor to the assigned Field Liaison.**

Special Note: Students who do not submit the learning contract by the due date are unable to continue in their practicum until the learning contract is accepted by the Field Office.

Special Note: Students are able to identify practicum activities outside of their agency at a maximum of 10% of their total practicum hours each semester. These activities must be approved by the agency field instructor. These activities can include non-agency sponsored events (i.e., conferences, community trainings, and workshops that your agency isn't participating directly in.

Review of Evaluation Process

The evaluation of student learning in field practicum is an ongoing process and is the responsibility of the Agency Field Instructor, Field Liaison, and the Directors of Field. Evaluation is based on student's timely completion of field practicum responsibilities, which include class attendance and assignments, successful completion of the practice behaviors outlined in the Learning Contract, hours and activities indicated on the Field Practicum Time Sheet, Monthly Check-ins and the Field Practicum Evaluations. It is the student's responsibility to initiate each document in collaboration with their Agency Field Instructor (AFI). Students and AFI should prepare a rough draft of comments prior to supervision and completion of the midterm and final evaluations. Students have the responsibility to add comments for each of the core competencies explaining what they have done to develop their skills. It is the AFI's responsibility to add the comments to the evaluations and determine if the student has developed the CORE Competency Skills identified in the learning contract.

The AFI will then have the student review and sign the evaluation prior to signing each document. It is the responsibility of the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) to electronically submit each document to the Field Liaison. Evaluation begins at the onset of the semester when the student and the AFI review expected outcomes for the field practicum. At midterm and at the end of the semester, the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) awards a pass, in-progress, or fail for each competency listed on the Learning Contract/Evaluation form. The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) will then award a passing or failing grade which awards points to the student evaluation. If the student does not receive a passing score for an evaluation, the student is not awarded any points.

****Midterm Evaluation:** If student has at 40% (14) out of 36 at "in-progress" student receives "PASS" Pass = 15 points at Midterm Evaluation.

****Final Evaluation:** If student has at least 90% of total practice behaviors (32 out of 36) at "pass" student receives "PASS" Pass = 20 points at Final Evaluation. Students must receive a grade of C or higher in order to pass the course.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING

Evaluation will be based on a variety of criteria designed to allow the student to demonstrate mastery of course objectives. These include accomplishment of Learning Contract tasks, the Field Practicum Evaluation, the Experiential Journal, Field Practicum Time Sheet, and other written assignments, as well as seminar classroom participation in the field seminar class. Students are expected to attend and participate in monthly field seminar classes (in-person) that are designed to assist the student in integrating field practicum experiences with curriculum content. The seminar classes provide students the opportunity to broaden their own experience and knowledge through exposure to the experiences of other students. The Field Liaison will conduct their monthly check ins in the Social Work seminar courses.

Specific criteria for grading are as follows:

Class Attendance and Participation (25 Points)

- Attendance (12.5) Participation (12.5)

Learning Contract (10 Points)

Timesheet (15)

- (7 Midterm and 8 Final)

Monthly Check-in (15)

- (7 Midterm and 8 Final)

Field Practicum Evaluation (35 Points)

- Midterm (15) and Final (20)

Submitted assignments will be evaluated and graded on: content, clarity, specificity of social work concepts, values, and ethics, personal insight, originality, and grammar spelling, and promptness.

All hours of field practicum experience must be completed, as well as all Field Practicum Time Sheets, and Evaluation Forms submitted, to fulfill course requirements for grade assignment. The practicum is a 15-week course. Practicum hours and weekly assignments are expected to be distributed throughout the semester time frame. Therefore, anything less than 15 weeks of practicum experience will result in a failing grade.

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) can only be requested by a field instructor when a field student, who is doing otherwise acceptable work, and has completed 75% of the requirements but is unable to complete a course because

of illness or other conditions beyond the field student's control. The request for a grade of incomplete can be found on the UNLV School of Social Work Webpage [Practicum Forms | School of Social Work | UNLV](#). Unfinished work must be completed with the same field instructor except under extenuating circumstances. The field student has one calendar year from the date the mark of "I" is recorded to complete the course. Students must clear the "I" before proceeding with other practicum courses.

Corrective Action Plan – required only if a placement is jeopardized due to student behavior. The Liaison will facilitate the process of developing a corrective action plan in conjunction with the AFI. The plan is to include specific behavioral expectations the student must meet if the practicum placement is to be continued. A timetable, not to exceed 30 days, will be specified during which time the student must meet the performance expectations.

FIELD EDUCATION POLICIES

Professional Liability Insurance

UNLV carries malpractice liability insurance that provides coverage for students during the practicum enrollment period. However, under NO circumstances should a field practicum student be left alone and responsible in an office or agency setting. At least one (1) agency staff member must be present and available. Supervising agency field instructors may be subject to vicarious liability for the performance of the student like any other supervisee. If the student travels for agency purposes in his/her own or agency vehicle pursuant to field course activities, he/she should be quite clear about the coverage by agency insurance and his/her personal liability in case of accident.

Special Note: Under NO circumstances should students transport agency clients in their own personal vehicles.

Home Visit Policy

Home visits are a regular part of most placements. Even if they are not, a home visit may be clinically indicated in certain situations. Agencies will be expected to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of students. At a minimum, the same safeguards provided to staff must be provided to students. However, students may need additional support and security provisions. The Director of Field Education should be consulted if safety is a concern. Under NO circumstances should students conduct home visits on their own.

Transportation Policy

Student Commute

It is the student's responsibility to secure transportation to and from the field setting. The University 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.

Transporting Clients

Students are not allowed to use their own vehicles to transport clients. Students may drive an agency vehicle if accompanied by a staff member if transporting clients is part of the service delivery.

Field Practicum Weekly Supervision

BSW students are responsible for being prepared for educational supervision with the Agency Field Instructor. BSW students must prepare an agenda prior to meeting with the AFI for supervision. Regular supervision will assist the student and AFI in monitoring the student's progress toward accomplishing specific tasks and

integrating classroom knowledge to the field experience. Students will review their progress with regard to the core competencies with the AFI. The AFI will track the student's progress weekly and indicate on the midterm evaluation whether the student has had the opportunity to practice (or not) specific learning activities to develop the needed core competencies and for the final evaluation will give the student the appropriate score of 0 thru 4, the Agency Field Instructor will provide rationale for the score. If a student is struggling with a specific behavior or core competency skill, the AFI will complete action plan with the student to explain the steps that will be taken to assist the student in developing the required core competency skill. All students enrolled in field practicum must participate in formal, face-to-face supervision for at least one (1) hour weekly with the assigned AFI.

Students must participate in monthly check in with their Faculty Field Liaison. The student should be prepared to discuss how your practicum experiences and feelings and observations have led to changes in the way you integrate and apply practice skills, review how supervision, reading, and/or concepts from course work enriched your practicum experience, discuss how your experiences in the field enhanced your commitment to particular values of the profession or shaped your career goals and interests, and evaluate the need for developing new skills and knowledge. Check ins will occur in the social work seminar courses (SW 419 and SW 429).

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Completing Practicum Early

Students are expected to attend the practicum for 15 weeks out of the semester.

Dual Relationships at Practicum

UNLV School of Social Work will not approve placements where students have previously received services as a client, have been employed, or where family members or friends are employed or are receiving services with their proposed practicum site/agency.

Should there be a question about the existence of a dual relationship, the student has the responsibility to inform the Director of Field Education to determine if the placement can be approved. These recommendations exist to protect students, agency employees, and clients from conflicts that may arise due to dual relationships. The consequences of non-disclosure may include terminating the practicum and/or disciplinary action.

Change or Loss of Agency Field Instructor

When the Field Education Office is notified of a change in the AFI, either by the student, Supervisor, or Liaison, the other parties will also be notified. If the proposed AFI has not previously been vetted and approved, the Field Education Office will notify them of the protocol for approval. If they are already approved, the student will submit a new form with the new AFI's signature.

The Director of Field Education will send a confirmation email to the student, AFI and Liaison.

When the Director of Field Education is notified of the loss, resignation, or termination of an AFI either by the student, AFI, or Liaison, they will contact the agency to ascertain what the agency's plan is to provide a new AFI for the student. If the agency does not have the capacity to replace with either an on-site or off-site AFI, the student will be removed from practicum and a new practicum will be identified.

Illness or Incident Preventing Hours

It is the student's responsibility to notify the AFI, Liaison and Field Office to determine next steps based on the specific situation and length of absence. The student may be referred to the School of Social Work's Academic Services department to consider a medical withdrawal from the course if the hours are unable to be made up during the semester or with an incomplete grade.

Incidents That Impact Student Safety

Circumstances involving a student and any emergency situation require that a Field Practicum Incident Report be completed and routed to the appropriate parties listed on the form. The form is available on the Field Education Department website. Students, AFIs and Liaison should immediately report the incident to the Field Education Office. The Field Education Office will investigate and complete an incident report which is used to document the situation and steps to be taken to ensure the safety of the student.

Incidents That Impact Student Mental Health

Students, AFIs and Liaisons should document any incident which impacts the mental health of the student while in the practicum. Processing of trauma should be conducted in weekly supervision with the AFI. Students may access therapeutic services on-campus or online.

At times the ability to balance the demands of a rigorous academic program, other life responsibilities, and internal stressors may become difficult thereby requiring professional intervention. The [Student Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) (702-895-3627) is available on campus to help students with concerns before these become more serious problems and to address crises. As a part of being self-aware, it is incumbent upon each social work student to understand his or her personal issues and limitations and to seek assistance through CAPS or other community resources when these have the potential to interfere with appropriate social work practice. Field faculty or their designees who identify or suspect significant mental health issues are encouraged to direct students to appropriate resources.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

University of Nevada Las Vegas – School of Social Work is committed to the preparation of professional social workers who take pride in their practice, who place the highest value on excellence and who are willing to devote their careers to finding the most effective methods to understanding and serving those most in need. The School of Social Work prepares professional social workers who are committed to empowering individuals, families and communities. The Master of Social Work Degree Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program Objectives

The BSW program prepares social work students by providing a generalist social work education for beginning-level social workers who will deliver human services to diverse urban populations.

Upon completion of the Bachelor of Social Work degree, BSW students will be able to achieve the following competencies that are based upon the standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) - Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

The program course assignments, practicum experiences and seminars will allow students the opportunity to achieve the following competencies:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.
3. Engage anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in Practice
4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
5. Engage in policy practice.
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

THE FIELD PRACTICUM IS DESIGNED TO:

1. Help students develop skills in theory application at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
2. Provide students with real world experiences of how social service agencies work with client systems and observe a social worker in practice.
3. Help students investigate how concepts of social justice and multiculturalism are implemented in the field.
4. Assist students in identifying how generalist social work practice is based on the core mission of the profession.
5. Help students identify strengths and resources for client systems.
6. Support students in integrating concepts about human behavior in the social environment into proficiency in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
7. Guide students in initiating and building upon client-worker relationships.
8. Help students understand the tasks of collecting and assessing information related to client concerns.
9. Aid students in recognizing client issues, problems, needs, resources and assets.
10. Facilitate students' use of empirical knowledge and technological advances in working with client systems.
11. Help students become familiar with program outcome evaluations and informing practice effectiveness.

INFORMATION FOR AGENCIES

UNLV School of Social Work welcomes agencies interested in partnering as practicum placement sites. The opportunity that affiliated agencies provide reinforce our students' academic study with real life experience. We value the commitment, time, and expertise that is devoted to the professional development of new social workers.

A Field Agency that agrees to participate in the education of social work students is responsible for:

- Providing an environment which is conducive to educational goals and objectives.
- Accepting the student as contributing services related to the function of the agency.
- Affording the student significant responsibility in assignments with clients, sufficient to enable meaningful

practice behavior opportunities appropriate to the field objectives and Learning Contract/Evaluation.

- Making adjustments as necessary to enable the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) sufficient time for planning of the student's activities, regular weekly and emergency conferences with the student, meetings with the Directors of Field and/or Faculty Field Liaison, writing of evaluations, and other duties connected with this responsibility.
- Providing the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and student suitable physical facilities and work items including adequate desk space, telephone, supplies, clerical support, and privacy for client interviewing, group meetings, and supervision conferences.
- Assuring that a student is not, under any circumstances, left alone or solely responsible in an office, agency, or institutional setting. At least one (1) agency staff member must be available at all times. This includes during home visits. Students cannot make a home visit by themselves.
- Agency Orientation: Students are required to have an agency orientation that includes dress code, parking, hours of work, overtime expectations, flexibility of hours, times and dates of staff meetings, policies regarding client care, reimbursement procedures for expenses, student safety plan, emergency contact information, policies and procedures related to social work activities.

Special Note: Agencies must have a safety plan in place for students in case of emergencies such as fire, police, medical, and any possible unruly/violent client issues.

Educational Affiliation Agreement (EAA)

An educational affiliation agreement must be signed by a representative of the agency which outlines agency and school responsibilities. The EAA, once reviewed and approved by the agency, is document that will be sent to the persons at UNLV named as the authorized signer for final approval. EAA's are valid for 5 years. To process this agreement the agency will submit the following documents to the Field Education Office:

- New Agency Interest Packet
- Resume of qualified Agency Field Instructor

INFORMATION FOR AGENCY FIELD INSTRUCTORS

An Agency Field Instructor (AFI) is an employee of the agency selected to be the primary provider of instruction and supervision for social work students. The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) holds at least a Master's in Social Work and has two (2) years post-masters' clinical and/or administrative experience. Additionally, the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) is required to submit a current resume to the Field Education Department.

Recognizing that the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) has other responsibilities besides student supervision, she/he should, however, allot a sufficient portion of her/his time for each student on designated field practicum days. This will include time for student instruction, program development, and occasional meetings with the Directors of Field and/or Faculty Field Liaison, program and student evaluation, and other related activities. The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) must schedule at least one hour of formal face-to-face supervision with students (individual or group) on a weekly basis and complete documentation of the supervision.

The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) should monitor practicum related documentation particularly Field

Practicum Time Sheets, Student Evaluations and documents specific to the student's role in the agency. She or he is responsible for making sure that the student has access to guidance and consultation by other agency professionals in the Agency Field Instructor's (AFI's) absence (e.g., during vacation or illness). The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) is also expected to immediately notify the school if there is a significant change in the Agency Field Instructor's (AFI's) availability due to a change of employment status, staffing, etc.

To provide a meaningful field experience, the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) should:

- Understand how the overall objectives and specific curriculum of the School relate to the objectives of field instruction.
- Integrate these objectives with those of the agency and its policies and procedures.
- Assist the student to formulate a comprehensive educational plan through the Learning Contract/Evaluation.
- Integrate the student into her/his practice unit and set up an orientation program that will present a total picture of the agency.
- Select appropriate cases, objectives, learning tasks, and assignments for the student.
- Plan conferences and unit meetings.
- Assign written work (process and summary recordings, psychosocial summaries, case notes, etc.) and review them with the student.
- Encourage the student to participate fully in the life of the agency.
- Provide a minimum of 1 hour face to face supervision to provide feedback to the student on a regular weekly basis.
- Communicate with the student, Directors of Field, and/or Field Liaison any unusual opportunities, conditions, or problems as soon as they are evident.
- Participate with the student in the preparation of the Field Practicum Evaluations during the semester.
- Participate in training seminars for all agency-based field instruction.

Criteria

Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) are vital members of the field training team and, with the support of the Directors of Field Education, are charged with the responsibility to assure that the planning, teaching, and evaluation components of students' field practicum experiences have a social work focus and are professionally sound.

The criteria for selection of Agency Field Instructors are as follows:

- Bachelor or Master of Social Work degree.
- Two (2) years postmaster's experience in the field.
- Six (6) months experience with the current agency.
- Licensed to practice professionally in the state of Nevada (preferred).
- Reputation for professional competence.
- Attitude of respect for students' competencies and needs.
- Ability and desire to teach social work theory and its application to professional practice.
- Demonstrated identification with the social work profession.
- Thorough knowledge of the purposes, policies, and procedures of the agency.
- Willingness to advance professional development as demonstrated by successful completion of the MANDATORY Agency Field Instructor (AFI) Orientation as well as participation in other continuing education opportunities.

****Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) must have a current resume on file with the Field Education Department.**

PROBLEM RESOLUTION PROTOCOL

Field Practicum Challenges

The Field Education Department promotes the view that problems encountered in the field practicum can be opportunities for learning, expansion of self-awareness and professional development. When a student encounters problems at the practicum site, the following procedures are to be followed and can be initiated either by the student, Preceptor, Agency Field Instructor (AFI), Faculty Field Liaison, or field or social work faculty as appropriate:

1. The problem should initially be addressed between the student and Agency Field Instructor (AFI) – preferably in the course of supervision. The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) is advised to keep a record of observed problems and interventions they have attempted.
2. If the student and Agency Field Instructor (AFI) are unsuccessful at arriving at a resolution to the problem, either party should immediately contact the Faculty Field Liaison for consultation, mediation or other action. Additional face-to-face meetings or other interventions may be mandated at the discretion of the Liaison toward problem resolution.
3. If the problem cannot be resolved with the assistance of the Faculty Field Liaison, the Directors of Field must be contacted immediately. The decisions of the Directors of Field are final. Intervention at this level could take several courses, but may include as a last resort, reassignment of the student to another practicum site.
4. If a practicum site terminates a student's placement at their agency, the student will be referred to the UNLV Field Education Committee for review prior to continuing in the program.

Special Note: Circumstances involving a student and any emergency situation require that a Field Practicum Incident Report be completed and routed to the appropriate parties listed on the form available on the Field Education Department website.

EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

In order to ensure quality experiences, the Field Education Office encourages feedback from students regarding the practicum experience. Students are able to provide feedback on the overall experience, including the agency, the AFI, Liaison, and the Field Education Office. Surveys are sent to students through Qualtrics.



BEING A SOCIAL WORKER MEANS...

You will never be bored.

You will always be frustrated.

You will always be surrounded by challenges.

So much to do and so little time.

You will carry immense responsibility and very little authority.

You will step into people's lives. And you will make a difference.

Some will bless you. Some will curse you.

You will see people at their worst and their best.

You will never cease to be amazed at people's capacity for
love, courage, and endurance.

You will see life begin and end.

You will experience resounding triumphs and devastating failures.

You will cry a lot.

You will laugh a lot.

You will know what it is to be human and to be humane.

--author unknown