



MSW Program Field Education Manual

2021-2022

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This field education manual is for MSW students, field agencies, and Preceptors. It is a compilation of Utica College, the Utica Graduate School, the Utica School of Health Professions & the Department of Social Work information, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures pertaining to the Master of Social Work Program's Field Education Program. All information, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures referred to and described herein are subject to review and evaluation and to change without notice. Although the Department of Social Work has made every reasonable effort to attain factual accuracy herein, no responsibility is assumed for editorial, clerical, or printing errors or errors occasioned by honest mistake.

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Welcome to Field Education

We are delighted to welcome you as you begin your practical, hands-on learning experience to discover what we do as social workers. We want your journey to be both exciting and rewarding. The MSW Field Program at Utica College comprises of a stellar team of faculty, staff, and administrators that will accompany you on your journey.

Thank you for choosing Utica College as your choice in advancing your skills and knowledge as a social worker. Our uniquely focused recovery-orientated program will focus not only on the content in the academic environment but also on your field experience. The field team will work closely with you to ensure that your field experience will allow you to bridge the theoretical knowledge of the recovery model learned in the classroom over into practice in the community with real clients.

The field experience with Utica College will be one to treasure indeed. We are a unique program that will allow you to engage in field learning with required courses simultaneously. You will have the ability to process your field experiences with your peers and social work faculty. We acknowledge how difficult it may be for some students to commit to a rigid field schedule that would mimic the time and commitment of a full-time job. Thus, we have designed a field program that allows students to work as little as 7 hours a week at an approved community agency. Even with such a minimum time commitment to field learning, we still expect students to professionally and maturely handle the complexities and rigors of managing school, work, and practicum (also referred to as field learning and internship). Your journey is no small feat; however, you will have a team of experienced professionals in which most have taken the same academic and field learning path towards becoming a skilled social worker.

Your success lies in your ability to commit to learning. Commit to building solid relationships with your peers, instructors, Preceptor, field team, and a host of others at Utica College and at your field site. Embrace feedback and constructive criticism, as you will find that it will aid you in becoming a better professional. Be mindful of your clients and their sensitive lives and stories. Embrace your field learning experience as a stepping stone to a brotherhood and sisterhood of social justice warriors.

This field education manual is the first descriptive and informative piece about the MSW Field Learning Program at Utica College. You are expected to read it in its entirety as you are responsible for being knowledgeable of the contents herein. While a host of other resources will be available to aid you on your field journey, you should refer back here for questions you have about the field learning process and experience.

We again welcome you, and we look forward to working with you as you grow and progress in the field program.

Jalonta Jackson, MSW, LSW
Director of Field Education



Department of Social Work
Field Education Program

Field Education Advisory Committee 2021-2022

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Department of Social Work
Field Education Program

About the Utica College MSW Program

Program Mission Statements

Program Mission Statement

The mission of the MSW program at Utica College is to prepare students for excellence in the practice of clinical social work using evidence-based, recovery-oriented approaches. The MSW program understands the challenges arising from tensions between the person and their environment, with cumulative traumas from developmental, social, and systemic forces building over the life course to impede upon individuals' ability to thrive and create vulnerabilities to illness. With this in mind, in order to build the human relationships that facilitate post-traumatic growth for individuals, families, and groups, it is essential for clinical social workers to consider historic and institutional pressures alongside personal and interpersonal experiences of distress, intervening through clinical practice while addressing the policy, economic, and institutional contexts of the work.

Field Education Mission Statement

The mission of the social work field education program is to create a fusion of classroom knowledge and real-world experiential learning to produce social work scholars and recovery model practitioners to carry on the traditions of social work practice that improves human well-being, empower the vulnerable & oppressed, promote social justice & social change, all while being sensitive to the needs of all systems- individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Planning for Field Work

Students in the MSW Program at UC need to plan for a successful educational process and graduation by becoming fully familiarized with the MSW curriculum and course sequencing. The field work courses require students to be performing tasks at an approved field agency with regular weekly supervision from an MSW who is approved by the UC MSW program. These tasks will be designed to assure student learning that will promote mastery of 9 competencies specified by CSWE. Students need to be aware when seeking admission to the MSW program that they will need to have the requisite attributes to promote successful outcomes in the field. These include sufficient time to fulfill all required field hours, willingness to undergo all required background checks and/or fingerprinting as specified, and ability to physically, emotionally and socially fulfill all required tasks assigned in the field education setting. Any concerns a student may have about what they require to be successful in the field should be discussed with the Field Education Director or Program Director to determine an individualized plan to best address any concerns identified.

Field Education Timeline and Summary

MSW Field Education Placement

First Year Field (Generalist):

- Spring Semester-SWK 531, 16 Weeks @ 7 hours per week = 112 hours
- Summer Semester-SWK 532, 16 Weeks @ 7 hours per week = 112 hours
- Fall Semester-SWK 522, 16 Weeks @ 14 hours per week = 224 hours

Total = 448 hours*

(Students are expected to have 450 hours completed by completing 2 additional hours during one of the three semesters during the first-year field placement.)

Second Year Field (Specialized/ Advanced Standing):

- Spring Semester-SWK 631, 16 Weeks @ 7 hours per week = 112 hours
- Summer Semester-SWK 632, 16 Weeks @ 7 hours per week = 112 hours
- Fall Semester-SWK 635, 16 Weeks @ 7 hours per week = 112 hours
- Spring Semester-SWK 636, 16 Weeks @ 7 hours per week = 112 hours

Total = 448 hours*

(Students are expected to have 450 hours completed by completing 2 additional hours during one of the three semesters during the first-year field placement.)

- ***Bi-Weekly supervision with Preceptor should be added to field placement hours.***
- ***Bi-Weekly group supervision with the instructor of field work should be added to field placement hours.***
-

Integration Between Classroom and Field

Throughout the generalist level, students will be taking field work seminars in which they will be synthesizing content from academic courses and learning to navigate their experiences in direct and macro level practice concurrently in the field agency. Through the specialization course sequence, beginning in the fifth semester, they will be offered the opportunity to reflect on what works and what doesn't work.

To integrate theory and practice, we use a model in which preceptors usher students through the journey of learning to make conscious and concrete their implicit values and beliefs that they developed in their educational pathways and experience. This is achieved through seminars in field instruction provided by Utica College. All approved agencies and identified preceptors must undergo an initial training referred to as Seminar Training in Field Instruction (SIFI). Additional on-going and optional training will be offered throughout the year for agencies and identified preceptors.

While participating in field education (field internship and field education course), the student social worker reflects on this through insight and self-awareness, understanding one's own cognitive and affective reactions, comparing and contrasting the experiences of the moment to those of the past that might be relevant. This is where practice knowledge comes from the generalized realm and becomes directly applicable to the professional situation in which the student and client find themselves. The final step is when the social worker is motivated to action and has a professional response. The social worker designs a course of action that may be appropriate for immediate action, or target a longer-term intervention plan that will ultimately suit the client's needs and concerns.

To achieve this, the Utica College Social Work Program works on a delayed model wherein students begin their academic coursework one semester before being placed in a field placement. Once they are placed in internships, **students will weekly receive 1.5 hours of individual or group supervision** from the on-site preceptor and field course instructor, as well as additional feedback and guidance from Utica College field personnel, including the field director, field coordinator, and field faculty members. Students will be on an alternating schedule for field supervision weekly. One week students will receive individual supervision from the Preceptor, the following week the student will participate in group supervision with the field course instructor.

A field seminar course must be completed every semester that students participate in field work, and beginning in the first semester in the field, students begin to conceptualize the ways in which traditional clinical social work models of practice are consistent with or divergent from recovery models of practice. Field seminars have both synchronous (live 1.5 hour zoom sessions) and asynchronous (discussion boards, content to review online, specific activities to engage in between live sessions).

Field Education Requirements

All field education experiences must be completed through placements at a Program-approved field site. Each facility has its own requirements that must be met before a student can be accepted for a field placement. Students are responsible for meeting the assigned facility's requirements. The Program is not responsible for securing placements for students who are unable to meet a facility's placement requirements. The financial cost to meet many requirements asked by the agency the responsibility of the student; these costs are mostly not included in tuition and fees and are generally not covered by financial aid. **Requirements may include, but are not limited to**

- Cover Letter & Resume
- Criminal background checks
- Fingerprinting
- Proof of Immunizations
- Tuberculosis Screening
- Seasonal Influenza Vaccine
- Covid-19 Vaccine
- Physical Health Examination
- Proof of Valid Driver's License
- Proof of Automobile Insurance

Students must sign the Background Check and other Field Requirements Disclosure form prior to field placement approval (Appendix I)

Along with the weekly field supervision and participation in the corresponding field seminar course mentioned in the above section, students are required to develop a Field Learning Agreement that articulates the tasks and responsibilities in which they will engage throughout the generalist year internship and specialization (advanced standing) internships (see Appendix II).

The Field Learning Agreement

The Field Learning Agreement will be due within the first two weeks of the internship

start date. Tasks must include direct practice with a caseload of clients and macro work (e.g., speaking at city council, grant writing, policy development, community needs).

A field site orientation must also commence within the two weeks of the internship start date. A required activities checklist will be provided to the student that will detail the minimum field site orientation topics (see Appendix III). In addition, as outlined in the activities checklist, the student shall provide the Preceptor with the following items:

- A copy of the field seminar course syllabus.
- A copy of the field learning agreement form.

Field Education Policy & Standards: CSWE 2015 Educational Policy and Standards (EPAS)

Graduates of the UC MSW Program will have successfully demonstrated competency in the 9 areas identified below by the Council on Social Work Education. These competencies are taught during both the generalist sequence and specialist sequence at field education sites and during accompanying field course. Mastery of each competency is displayed through a series of observable behaviors, which are outlined in the Learning Contract and Field Evaluation forms. More information about the Council on Social Work Education and the 2015 Educational and Policy Accreditation Standards can be found at www.cswe.org.

Generalist Sequence Competencies

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- 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;

- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including 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. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.

Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and

multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings;
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness.

Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies;
- and use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies,

including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter- professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use interprofessional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of

human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Specialization Sequence Competencies

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Clinical social workers take measures of self-care and seek support in developing awareness, insight, and resiliency to prevent past traumas and retraumatization from impacting their professional lives; they monitor roles and boundaries, understanding that boundary crossing, transparency, or disclosure may be helpful when executed carefully under specific circumstances with certain clients; and they leverage supervision and consultation to ensure continued personal and professional growth throughout their careers. Clinical social workers should be aware of their own lived experiences of trauma and distress; their personal journeys toward resilience and mental health; they should be aware of the impact of these experiences on their own lives; and also aware of how these experiences may affect their work and relationships. They understand the values of the social work profession, its ethical standards, and applicable laws and policies, and use these professional parameters to guide decision-making. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- prioritizing service user lived experience to inform the development of services, policy, administration procedures, and research;
- setting and monitoring appropriate boundaries;
- working toward developing self-awareness and insight;
- practicing self-care;
- seeking consultation and supervision;
- tolerating ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts;
- addressing macro and system-level concerns as part of delivering recovery-oriented clinical social work services; and
- articulating how recovery-oriented practice is supported by the NASW Code of Ethics.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Clinical social workers appreciate nuance and intersectionality of identity the ways in which institutional and interpersonal traumas converge with other factors to produce marginalization and otherness. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, lived experience of recovery, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, size, sex, and sexual orientation. They recognize that diversity and difference affect a person's experiences in life in ways that may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation or offer privilege, power, and acclaim. Clinical social workers understand historical, contemporary, and non-Western differences in constructions of mental health. They recognize

the role that internalized oppression and shame plays in clients' lives. Clinical social workers are also attuned to the role that bias plays in diagnosis and service provision. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- challenging racism and anti-black racism;
- exploring the meaning of labels, stigma, and shame inherent to all human diversity and difference;
- identifying the role that personal and institutional bias plays in service provision;
- practicing cultural humility; and
- respecting the perspectives and lived experience of others who are different.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Clinical social workers recognize that every person has basic human rights to freedom, safety, privacy, an acceptable standard of living, health care, and education. Clinical social workers advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They acknowledge that people with disabilities have the right to determine how to live their lives and recognize that people with lived experience of trauma have faced significant and overt and internalized oppression, stigma, and shame, including poverty, fear, despair resulting from medical misunderstanding, and structural entanglement with the mental health system. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- advocating for clients' legal, civil, and human rights;
- advocating for improvement in individuals' economic and living conditions;
- advocating for increasing equity in all aspects of life;
- confronting injustice and discrimination; and
- helping professionals replace shame-based language with recovery-oriented, strength-based, hope-building language and action.

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Clinical social workers use practice expertise to inform the selection and implementation of evidence-based interventions. They also evaluate their own practice and use research findings to improve services and policies. Recovery oriented clinical social workers understand that different kinds of "evidence" exist. Clinical social workers can differentiate between evidence-based practices, promising practices, and "community-informed practices". Clinical social workers include client perspectives and points of view in developing research agendas to establish new interventions and evaluate existing ones. This would be demonstrated by:

- staying informed about emerging and promising approaches to recovery-oriented practice;
- applying quantitative, qualitative, participatory action research, and first person narratives to show that people can and do recover; and
- promoting the inclusion of service users and their viewpoints in all levels of research and evaluation.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Clinical social workers recognize that mental health and substance use policy affects clinical service delivery, and actively engage in analyzing, developing, proposing, and altering mental health policy practice. Clinical social workers develop the professional judgement needed to determine whether mental health policies are consistent with the needs of diverse individuals. They understand the broad role that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA 1990) plays in protecting the rights of people with disabilities.

They encourage clients and their families and loved ones to advocate for themselves. They understand how policy can negatively exacerbate social determinants of health (e.g., policies that discriminate or keep people impoverished). Clinical social workers support mental health policies that facilitate life in the community rather than through the criminal justice system or other institutions. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- analyzing how policy impacts practice;
- promoting policies that enhance equity, inclusion, and access;
- identifying discrepancies between ADA regulations and agency, community, and regional policies;
- encouraging the involvement of people with relevant lived experience in the development of policy;

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, and Groups

Clinical social workers understand that people are more than the sum of their identities or diagnoses. Clinical social workers understand that each individual has a unique, self-determined pathway to resilience, flourishing, and well-being, and is the driver of their own recovery, which can be realized through shared decision-making and treatment-planning; and that these plans should remain flexible throughout the client's journey toward mental health. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- treating the voices of clients with primacy, dignity, and value;
- constructing safe, trusting, and hope-building relationships with clients and their families and other loved ones with permission;
- minimizing power differentials through the use of everyday language, transparency, authenticity, and shared decision-making;
- assuming the stance of learner and not expert;
- encouraging hope, a sense that people can change, and a commitment to personal development; and
- self-disclosing to a degree that is client-centered and yet comfortable for the clinical social worker and clients alike.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, and Groups

Clinical social workers assess client strengths and limitations while keeping in mind their life and environmental context, cultural background, and community norms alongside a clinical, yet critical comprehension of the DSM. They have a critical understanding of the epidemiology of psychiatric diagnoses, the multiple causes of psychiatric conditions, and the role that culture plays in defining psychiatric diagnoses and practitioner responses to them. They distinguish between strengths assessment and problem assessment, and understand the role of transference and countertransference in the process. They recognize the importance of trauma in assessment and take steps to mitigate retraumatization during the assessment process. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- first evaluating where clients might build on existing strengths to enhance efforts to live meaningfully despite current stressors by assessing client skills, abilities, resources, and goals;
- identifying several explanations for deficits and resilience, from biological to psychological to environmental to social;
- assessing for trauma, comorbidities, suicidality, and physical health; and
- last applying the DSM where appropriate, while recognizing its limitations.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, and Groups

Clinical social workers understand that education and support for family, friends, significant others, and perhaps other allies identified by clients in places of employment and community involvement can be key to supporting the client's process. They are knowledgeable about the importance of trauma-informed interventions. They understand reputable evidence-based interventions for mental health and for whom they are applicable. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- educating clients about the range of possible treatments, services, and pharmacological and nonpharmacological options, sharing potential positive and negative effects;
- setting expectations so that clients understand that both personal goal achievement and symptom management may take time;
- addressing any environmental needs identified from supports, accommodations, or adjustments;
- offering evidence-based symptom management techniques;
- encouraging service users to expand on existing social supports within the community, tap into existing resources, and surrounding him or herself with close supports around himself or herself;
- ensuring that clients are ultimately responsible for the decisions that will impact their lives; and
- establishing preventive measures to ensure client maintenance, well-being, and personal growth.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups

Clinical social workers evaluate the effects of their services and interventions for their success in achieving stated goals and consistency with recovery values and individual goal achievement. This would be demonstrated in the field by way of:

- monitoring achievement of client-established goals and outcomes;
- helping clients interpret data to inform their decision-making; and
- involving client points of view in service and program evaluation and quality improvement.



Department of Social Work **Field Education Program**

Purpose of Social Work Field Education

Overview and Objectives of Field Education

The field education program for MSW students at UC is designed to foster student learning transferability and application to practice settings. Through the generalist sequence of coursework, students gain a solid foundation of knowledge, values and skills that are cornerstones of the social work profession. The required courses in the sequence address issues including human lifespan development, environmental forces that impact people and how forces of oppression operate in societies to limit the life chances of individuals often based on their characteristics of human diversity .

During the specialization sequence, students are provided with knowledge, values and skills of the social work profession that uniquely intertwine with effectiveness of service delivery to clients in recovery oriented clinical social work settings. The types of specific knowledge and skill bases addressed include motivational interviewing, cognitive-behavioral approaches to intervention and the ways that mental health policy influences factors such as access to services, benefit structures for disability, etc.

Graduating students gain unique abilities for connecting social work theories to their practice settings. The use of evidence-based practices is learned both in courses and in the field. Field education offers students the opportunity to observe first-hand how the use of clinical assessment is essential for determining a best course of decision making to empower clients to reach their stated goals.

Roles & Responsibilities of all Parties Involved in Field Education

Utica College

Utica College is responsible for granting the MSW degree to students who complete all requirements set forth by the program. To foster an optimal learning environment across campus, the use of a faculty advisor is expected for all students at Utica College. The administrative offices of Utica College work collaboratively with the Social Work program to assure adequate budget resources to assure compliance with CSWE accreditation standards and to promote successful learning environments for students. Further, the administration of Utica College is available to assist the Social Work program, Field Education Agencies, Field Work Course Instructors, and Utica College students with any issues that are not first effectively resolved at the Social Work Program Director level.

Director of Field Education

The Director of Field Education has broad responsibilities to parties on and off campus to assure high quality field education placements that provide essential signature pedagogy experiences to foster mastery of the 9 CSWE competencies. To this end, the Director of Field Education monitors and evaluates the performance of field students, field faculty members and Preceptors. Further, the Director of Field Education is responsible to assure that the connection between social work theory and concepts learned in required coursework and the field education agency setting is achieved to promote highest quality educational learning outcomes. Field education components are structured, monitored, and evaluated to assure that students demonstrate the mastery of the CSWE competencies.

Specific duties of the Director of Field Education include:

- Monitoring the MSW Program's compliance with CSWE Accreditation Standards regarding the field components of the program.
- Assuring that an electronic copy of this Field Education Manual is posted on the Social Work Program's website and is distributed directly to all students, field faculty members and field agency preceptors.
- Working closely with Program faculty and Preceptors to assure integration of class and field education content.
- Creating expanded networks both locally and nationally to ensure that quality field education agency sites are available to students to meet growing areas of interest within the field of recovery oriented clinical social work.
- Providing the final approval of all field education related grading including any needs for incomplete and extension grades.
- Monitoring student performance in the field education component and intervening if necessary to maximize the likelihood of student success.
- Coordinating the work of the Preceptor and program faculty to monitor student performance in the field and afford the student opportunities for performance

improvement including developing a plan for corrective action and academic success in field education.

- Responding promptly to any concerns about students, faculty and/or preceptors brought to their attention.
- Providing orientation and training for all parties engaged in the process of field education. These will provide a firm understanding of the need for ongoing student learning opportunities to master all 9 CSWE competencies.
- Providing training and ensuring the safety of students in the field.

Field Coordinator

The Field Coordinator carries an active role in the planning and placement processes for the field placement.

The Field Coordinator duties may include:

- Providing information to the Director of Field Education to help develop a database that includes descriptions of agency placement opportunities.
- Providing the Director of Field Education with information about the number, nature, and quality of practicum experiences available at agencies.
- Providing information to students clarifying the kinds of settings that support specific practice interests, etc.

Field Seminar Instructor

Field Seminar Faculty serves as a pivotal point of support and connection between the student, the field education agency-based site and the Social Work Program. Field Seminar Faculty provide guidance and support for the Preceptor and monitor the placement while being a primary source of support for the student. This support may include forms of field advisement, mentoring and facilitation of student learning through individualized contacts to offer the student strategies in field-based education so the student can best move towards mastering the CSWE competencies.

The Field Seminar Instructor duties may include:

- Working with students to assure timely connection with the Preceptor to assure all agency documents required for starting with maximum opportunity to provide service to clients is accomplished as best as possible.
- Monitoring student field activities and ensuring that they build competency in the CSWE specified EPAS categories. This is achieved through direct conversation and review as needed of field learning documents such as process recordings, journals, etc. as may be required at each field site.

- Assuring students and preceptors are familiar with all Field Education Policies and Procedures and monitoring compliance with these.
- Conducting site visits to monitor student progress and the relationship between Preceptor and student. These reports are documented in the field education file. Visits occur at least once per semester and may take place as needed to facilitate successful field education outcomes for students and field agencies. The visit will provide feedback to all parties as appropriate who are engaged in field education for the student including any suggestions for change to promote optimal mastery of CSWE competencies.

Field Agency

Each Field Agency that is approved by the UC Social Work Program provides students with field-based learning opportunities that can help to assure the satisfactory mastery of the 9 CSWE competencies. This includes the assignment of tasks appropriate for the student, a professional clinical environment that welcomes and supports student learners, a culture of excellence in the provision of clinical services to those in need, models adherence to the values of the social work profession and agrees to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics in principle and practice. The concept of professional credibility is reinforced during the student placement. This includes student appearance, work performance and ability to serve clients in accordance with all agency and UC Social Work Program policies and procedures.

Field agency responsibilities include:

- Providing students with adequate space to best assure ability to perform their assigned tasks.
- Helping students to understand the importance of confidentiality, avoiding dual relationships, and general professional ethics in practice.
- Allowing students to access appropriate client records and documentation systems.
- Providing a qualified staff member to become an approved Preceptor and part of the field education faculty of the UC Social Work Program. In addition, the agency will assure student access to appropriate clinical and administrative staff to supervise assigned duties during times when they do not have access to their designated and approved Preceptor.
- Furnishing a stable environment for student learning to be maximized. As new opportunities for learning may arise such as a new grant, etc., the agency will engage the student in new tasks that enhance their mastery of the CSWE competencies.
- Offering an initial orientation to students placed with them that includes safety protocols, agency policies and procedures, methods for documentation of time at the placement, resolution of any concerns at the field agency, etc.
- Affording the student multiple opportunities to immerse themselves into the professional culture of the site. This includes attending staff and treatment planning meetings, continuing education training, grand rounds, appropriate committee meetings such as professional ethics committees, institutional review boards, etc.

Preceptor

The Preceptor must hold a MSW from a CSWE accredited school, and a minimum of two (2) years post MSW experience and be formally approved by the UC Social Work Program. In the role of Preceptor, social workers enlist as contractors with HR, but they are an extension

of our field education faculty and the larger program community. They are the primary role models for our students who are learning to become professional social workers.

Their activities working with and teaching our students include the following:

- Completion of the student learning agreements
- Assignment of tasks to assure mastery of the CSWE competencies.
- Ongoing contact with all UC MSW Program field staff and faculty as indicated to assure successful student learning outcomes.
- Attendance and participation in all UC MSW Program required orientation and training activities.
- Timely completion of all required UC MSW Program required documentation.
- Willingness to be available to CSWE reviewers as necessary.
- Serving as a mentor and advocate for student learning success.
- Timely completion of all documentation needed for ongoing and final student evaluation and grading purposes. The Preceptor understands that their role is to work closely with UC MSW Program staff and faculty to eventually recommend a pass/fail grade for field education. Further, they understand that the final authority to make decisions about grading and to enter field education grades rests solely with the Field Work Course Instructor of the UC MSW Program.
- Agreement to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics, the Policies and Procedures of the UC Field Education program, field agency policies and procedures as well as all local, State and federal laws, policies and guidelines.
- Agreement to assure agency-sanctioned use of their time to provide at least 1.5 hours every other week and as needed to offer supervision to the student placed at their agency. During supervision the Preceptor will monitor student progress towards mastery of the CSWE competencies on a frequent and ongoing basis. They will work with students to provide guidance regarding time management of multiple learning assignments to achieve competency in all 9 specified areas.
- Agreement to review and comment as needed on all assigned student process recordings.
- Prompt notification of the Field Faculty faculty members and/or other UC Field Education staff or the Program Director of any unique situations or concerns that arise in the field that may have or may impact student field performance.

Student

Students at UC pursuing their MSW degree receive an intensive class and field-based learning experience. To this end, students are strongly encouraged to take time to engage in reflective practice skills to participate fully in assessing with Field Education staff and faculty, their own readiness to enter, participate fully in and successfully complete all requirements of the field education program. This self-reflection includes the examination of areas including physical, emotional, and social readiness for promoting best student learning outcomes.

The role of the field education student includes the following:

- Making sufficient time to assure completion of all weekly and semester totals of requisite field education hours.
- Discussing and having regular check-ins with UC Social Work Program faculty and staff regarding any personal or professional concerns about their experiences in field education.
- Agreeing to provide timely completion of all required paperwork to apply for admission to and continuation in the UC Social Work Program field education placement process. The types of documentation that may become part of student responsibilities may include such items as timesheets, learning contracts, process recordings and/or field journal entries, field portfolio, etc.
- Completing requisite background checks and fingerprinting, medical exams and forms of pre-service and in-service orientation programs provided by UC Social Work Program and/or the Field Agency within a timeframe specified by the UC MSW program. Students understand that some costs for these pre-requisite background and medical checks may be their own personal financial responsibility.
- Abiding by the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Adhering to all Field Agency and UC Social Work Program policies and procedures. Further the student agrees to abide by all local, as well as State and federal laws and regulations.
- Working closely with their Field Faculty, the Preceptor and other UC Social Work faculty and staff to assure timely entry into and completion of each field education course they are enrolled in.
- Ensuring that all field related concerns come to the attention of all appropriate parties including their Preceptor, Field Work Seminar Faculty, Field Education Director and/or MSW Program Director. All UC Field Education faculty and the Preceptor will work with the student to effectively resolve any identified concerns in the field.
- Assuring their own insurance coverage for health and automobile use.

Field Education Advisory Committee

The Field Education Advisory Committee serves in an advisory capacity. Members of the committee make recommendations to the Director of the MSW Program and the Director of Field Education regarding field education policies and procedures, and field education as the signature pedagogy. Advice may be given on such matters as field education syllabi, methods of evaluating student performance in their field education classes; professional development for field instructors; and procedures for recommending students for field placements. The Director of Field Education serves as the chair of this committee. The committee meets at least twice during the academic year. The committee is composed of members representing agencies, students, and faculty.

Preparing for Field

In general, preparation for field begins the semester before a student completes their field placement. For both the Generalist placement and Specialization placement, the Director of Field Education will provide information about the placement process during new student orientation and a series of webinars.

The Placement Process

During the semester before the student enters a field placement, they will participate in the following process. Due dates for each step in the process will be communicated by the Director of Field Education.

1. Students create an online field education profile using Exxat software. This profile communicates each student's preferences for client population and geographic location of the field placement. Students must identify 5 potential placement sites. Students can use this program to request field placements at specific agencies. Students are required to upload a general cover letter and resume to be available for viewing in their field personal profile.
2. Student is required to request a field placement conference with either the Director of Field Education or Field Coordinator. During this conference, a review of the student's profile will commence along with discussion on the identified 5 potential placement sites. The Director of Field Education and Field Coordinator will communicate with students about recommended placement sites and review the placement process and timeline. This communication may happen in person, through a virtual platform, or by phone. Students can request additional individual meetings with the Director of Field Education and Field Coordinator after the completion of the initial mandatory field placement conference.
3. Students should send out their Exxat profile link to field placement agencies and interview for field placement opportunities. Field placements can be competitive, and students should present themselves as they would for professional employment.
4. Students are offered field placement opportunities. When a student and an agency agree that a good fit has been found, the Director of Field Education will approve the placement and provide an External Clinical Agreement (Field Contract) for the Field Agency Director/Supervisor to sign and request a copy of the agency's certificate professional liability coverage. If a student is not offered their first-choice placement, students should continue to apply for potential opportunities. The Director of Field Education and Field Coordinator will assist students in setting up interviews with additional agencies, if needed.
5. Students complete all required paperwork. Before field placements begin, a signed External Clinical Agreement and certificate of professional liability coverage must be returned by the agency. The Director of Field Education and Field Coordinator will inform students when the contract has been received. Students will then complete all required paperwork and any additional requirements of the field agency. These can include, but are not limited to, TB tests, drug screens, and provision of immunization records and are the student's responsibility to complete and pay for as required.



Department of Social Work **Field Education Program**

Criteria for Admission into Field Education

The field education director is responsible for granting admission into the field education courses. For students entering without advanced standing, performance in courses at UC, prior to requesting admission to field education courses, will be evaluated by the Director of Field Education and the social work program director, who teach the first two courses in the sequences of courses offered just before students enter the field.

If any concerns are identified, the student will be asked to meet with the Field Education Director to review these concerns and determine the best course of action for the student. Students are reviewed based on their ability to demonstrate readiness for work in agencies with clients.

Specific criteria for field education course readiness include:

- Demonstration of professional and appropriate dress and behaviors.
- Self-Awareness including being able to accurately assess your own strengths and limitations and display a willingness to examine and change; being aware of behaviors that interfere with your work in field placement, in the classroom, on campus, and in the larger community; being able to actively examine your own biases; being able to seek supervision and use constructive feedback to inform practice; demonstrating the ability to take responsibility for your own actions and consider the impact of these actions on others; demonstrating a willingness to examine and assess the relationship between your own personal values and their alignment with expected professional ethics and to be able to reconcile conflicts between your personal values and those of the profession, as required by the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Emotion and stress regulation skills and demonstration of self-care physically and psychologically in order to provide effective services to clients and the agency.
- Demonstration of communication skills which include the ability to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings clearly in the classroom and in field placement; to produce written work that communicates clearly and at a level that reflects the academic standards of the MSW program; demonstrating a willingness and ability to actively listen to others with objectivity and openness; showing the ability to communicate responsibly and respectfully, with speech that is free of bias, discriminatory language, or stereotyping in all interactions with colleagues, faculty, Preceptors, staff, and clients; and demonstrating the capacity to advocate for yourself in an ethical, direct,

respectful, and responsible manner using either UC and/or agency specific channels for grievance and conflict management.

- Demonstrated capacity for openness and willingness to learn; flexibility and adaptability that includes a demonstrated openness to learning new ideas and perspectives as required by the demands of professional practice; showing the capacity to be flexible and adaptable in new situations and as circumstances change; ability to assume the stance of a learner with humility; demonstrated capacity to avoid solely relying on current or past professional experiences to inform your judgment or decision-making in the field and in the classroom; and a demonstrated willingness to effectively communicate your learning needs and request clarification to understand requirements.
- Ability to utilize feedback from others to develop changes that address any concerns raised in such feedback.
- Possession of critical thinking skills suitable for development of creative approaches to client engagement and movement towards achievement of stated client goals.
- Patience
- A demonstrated respect for diversity and social justice evidenced by exhibiting a willingness to relate and work nonjudgmentally across differences with others and by demonstrating knowledge of, and sensitivity to: diversity, oppression, and privilege, including a willingness to examine personal beliefs, values and assumptions that perpetuate oppression.

Students who are admitted to the Advanced Standing Program must submit a copy of their undergraduate transcript(s) and may be asked to submit previous field education evaluations to our program. These grades and field performance evaluations will be reviewed along with academic and professional references and if any concerns regarding readiness for MSW field education courses are identified, the student will be contacted by the Director of Field Education to determine if the concerns can be addressed.

Further information may include letters and/or direct verbal contact from faculty teaching major BSW courses with grades of concern and/or letters and/or direct verbal contact with field instructors or other appropriate agency staff and/or BSW program faculty and staff who observed and/or were aware of the student's performance in the field. Any student denied admission to field education courses may appeal that decision to the MSW Program Director at UC.

Process for Continuation in Field Education

All students seeking admission into the MSW program at Utica College must also be approved for admission into the field education courses. This process is front loaded simultaneously with the admissions process to the MSW program. This is done using scoring sheet that reference

providers complete that assesses applicant against core dimensions of social work skills including:

- Empathy
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Communication Skills
- Self-Awareness
- Openness to Feedback
- Patience
- Emotion and Stress Regulation/Self-Care
- Cultural Humility and Appreciation of Diversity and Difference

Students are evaluated by the Field Seminar Instructor along the dimensions listed above at mid- semester. Preceptors will also complete evaluations of student achievement on each of the nine CSWE competencies during the midpoint of the internship and just before termination of the internship. During the midpoint evaluation, students who score two “needs a good deal of improvement” or one “needs a great deal of improvement” will be required to work with the Director of Field Education to develop a recovery plan to remediate the deficits in basic social work skills over the course of the following half of the internship. Students who do not meet these expectations or remediate skills deficits will be asked to take a leave of absence to work on strengthening their professional skill set.

Field Education faculty and staff at UC monitor and review course and field performance of all students involved in field education courses. In any situation of concern involving such things as problematic course grades and/or field education course evaluations that reflect inability of the student to reach competency in any of the 9 core CSWE competencies, field education faculty and staff will be in contact with the student and Preceptor to gain as complete a picture as possible as to why one or more competency ratings reflect student inability to demonstrate at least satisfactory mastery.

Efforts will be made to design a resolution plan that will result in student ability to continue in field education courses. Final decisions regarding the student’s ability to continue in the field education courses will be made by the Field Education Director in consultation with the MSW Program Director.



Department of Social Work Field Education Program

Selection of Preceptors

Criteria for the Selection of Preceptors

The critical importance of the role of the Preceptor as a field-based educator must be emphasized. This field faculty member is the crucial link in the student educational process for translating social work theory and concepts into day to day practice. Therefore, the standards set by CSWE for selection criteria are strictly upheld by the UC MSW program.

The following criteria will be used to select field instructors:

- **The Preceptor must hold a MSW degree from a CSWE accredited program. In addition, the Preceptor must have completed a minimum of two (2) years of post-masters professional experience in the field since.**
- All Preceptors must demonstrate professional commitment to the values and ethics of social work in alignment with their specification in the NASW Code of Ethics.
- The Preceptor agrees to comply with any applicable licensing laws and/or regulations in the jurisdiction where they are practicing professional social work.
- The Preceptor will demonstrate an ability and willingness to fulfill the role of social work educator, including respect for scientific inquiry, knowledge of the population served and effective communication skills. To this end the Preceptor must agree to participate in the required Seminar in Field Instruction and training sessions held by the UC MSW Program. These orientation and training sessions are specifically designed to impart knowledge and skills to Preceptors to best assure they will convey a social work and recovery learning perspective. Preceptor capacity to translate this instruction by UC MSW faculty and staff will be regularly assessed with faculty, staff, and student input.
- All Preceptors must display a willingness to cooperate with the Director of Field Education and students to design a mutually acceptable educational experience.
- Preceptors will show the ability to recognize differing student learning styles and respond by developing individualized learning tasks with students.
- The Preceptor provides students with an agency orientation, provides ongoing monitoring of the student's experiences at the field agency and participates in all required UC MSW program student evaluation activities in a timely fashion.
- The Preceptor agrees to provide sufficient opportunities for learning to address the 9 CSWE competencies students need to master. The Preceptor agrees to provide regularly scheduled

bi-weekly supervision to the student (a minimum of 60 minutes/bi-weekly) and as necessary beyond that to best promote successful field education outcomes.

- The Preceptor agrees to read and comment on the student's process recordings and/or journal entries. During weekly supervisory meetings with the student, the process recordings/ journal entries will be reviewed.
- The Preceptor completes the required Field Evaluation(s) collaboratively with the student and meets the deadline for submission to the School.
- The Preceptor understands that their role is to work closely with UC MSW Program staff and faculty to eventually recommend a pass/fail grade for field education. Further, they understand that the final authority to make decisions about grading and to enter field education grades rests solely with the Field Faculty, Field Education Director and the Program Director of the UC MSW Program.
- Preceptors agree to contacting the Field faculty members and/or the Field Education Director if there are any student related concerns, and/or if consultation is desired.

The methods of screening potential Preceptors for approval include the following:

- If asked, potential Preceptors to submit a CV along with a transcript from their CSWE accredited MSW program. These are reviewed by the Field Education Director and kept in a permanent database file.
- A direct screening performed by the Field Education Director or their designee that involves an interview with the candidate for approval as a Preceptor and selected interviews as indicated with other agency administrators.
- A review performed by the Director of Field Education of the screening form completed by the potential agency or Preceptor.

Preceptor Who Does Not Meet Field Education Requirements to Provide Supervision (or Cannot Continue with Supervision During Active Placement)

The UC MSW program realizes that situations can arise where a quality field education agency may not be able to provide a Preceptor for approval. Such types of situations may include but are not limited to:

- High quality clinical placements at which there is no properly credentialed Preceptor to apply for program approval.
- Factors preventing an approved Preceptor from completing their work commitments during a term with the MSW student in placement may include extended sick or other forms of leave, military service, change of jobs, etc.

Our program is prepared to assure that a social work perspective is provided directly to the MSW student through other means when such a situation arises. The mechanisms the program is prepared to utilize to assure the social work perspective is a part of the ongoing field education process include:

- Recruitment of a Secondary Preceptor who will meet the specified CSWE criteria for MSW Preceptors. This person is recruited and screened by the Director of Field Education. This person will have direct contact with the MSW student and collaborate with the approved on-site Task Preceptor who may possess other qualifications that include clinical education and experience in another discipline. The on-site approved Task Preceptor is responsible for providing day to day and regular weekly supervision for the student as well as for collaborating with the Secondary Preceptor to assure learning outcomes are maximized and to participate in the student evaluative processes. Sources for recruitment of Secondary Preceptors include program alumni, properly credentialed community social work practitioners, fully approved Preceptors at other placement sites, members of the MSW program's advisory board, etc.
- This Secondary Preceptor will provide regular weekly supervision to the student in addition to the weekly supervision provided by the on-site Task Preceptor.
- The Secondary Preceptor must undergo the same required SIFI training as all approved agencies and preceptors. The Director of Field Education will work to orient and train the Task Preceptor so they are qualified to work with the student to gain knowledge, values and skills along with learning about cognitive affective components of social work practice as related to achieving mastery of the required CSWE competencies. The Secondary Preceptor will collaborate with the Secondary Task Preceptor to assure that all evaluative functions of student performance include direct on-site observation of student performance as well as are performed with a dominant social work lens in the evaluative processes.
- While there are situations where it may become necessary for a member of the UC social work faculty to assume the role of Secondary Preceptor, under no circumstances will this be the assigned Field Faculty. This is done to prevent conflicts of interest due to dual roles that would be involved in the process.



Department of Social Work **Field Education Program**

Selection of Field Agencies

The Criteria for the Selection of Field Agencies

Students are given an introduction on how to identify appropriate targets for field placements and how to start preliminary conversations. They are then asked to identify their top five choices based on interest and geography for the Director of Field Education, who ultimately determines whether the agency meets the criteria for field education (See Appendix IV). The Director of Field Education will contact the agency to speak with agency executives and social work staff, and be apprised of the agency's philosophy, program, policies, services and procedures. The following criteria will be used to select field education agencies:

- The mission of the agency should be consistent with the values and ethics of the social work profession as stated in the NASW Code of Ethics.
- The agency board, administration and staff should be committed to field education as an important function of the agency.
- The potential Preceptors should be qualified by education, training and experience to undertake the responsibilities of field supervision. Qualified MSW staff members are required unless otherwise specified by the Field Education Director and the Program Director of the UC MSW program.
- The agency should be in good professional standing in the community. In some cases, this may mean accreditation or licensing by appropriate local or national standard-setting bodies.
- The agency must have clear written policies regarding safety of all parties and assure that they will provide safety training to any MSW student placed at their site.
- The agency or program within the agency should be able to offer the student a range of educational experiences to assure exposure to the 9 CSWE competencies.
- The agency or program staff should be of sufficient size so as not to rely on student field work to provide core functions of the agency normally provided by agency employees.
- Physical resources should be available to provide necessary desk space, access to telephones, and other support materials and supplies.
- The designated Preceptor should be available at least one hour per week for student supervision.

- The agency must agree to participate in all aspects of UC MSW Field Education including being available to participate in ongoing monitoring of student progress with Field Faculty members, attend required training and orientation sessions, submit all required documentation on students in a timely fashion and be proactive about informing the MSW program of any observations which suggest that the student may not be able to demonstrate competency satisfactorily regarding any of the 9 CSWE competencies.

Procedures for Becoming an Approved Field Education Site

Agencies for placement may be additionally identified for screening and approval by the Field Education Director through various means. These include identification by UC MSW Program faculty and/or staff, students, and some agencies will initiate contact with the MSW Program expressing an interest in becoming an approved field education site (see Appendix V).

The Director of Field Education will screen the agency to assure the aforementioned criteria for agency selection are satisfactorily met. This screening may include contact with agency administrators and/or the MSW staff person wanting to become a Preceptor. If the agency is approved, the Director of Field Education will make an effort to identify best fit matches between students and that field site and preceptor. A formal contract drawn up by Utica College counsel, must be reviewed, signed, and agreed upon by the agency before a student can agree to continue with placement with the identified approved agency.

Evaluating Field Agency Effectiveness

Every approved field education agency and Preceptor will be evaluated both on an formative and summative basis. The purpose of this evaluative process is to assure that the expectations specified in the affiliation agreement documentation are being met with a satisfactory level of quality in order to promote student learning and mastery of the CSWE competencies (See Appendices VI & VII) .

The evaluative procedures include but are not limited to:

- Feedback provided to the Field Seminar Instructor received from the student, Preceptor and/or other appropriate parties.
- Assessment based on observation by the Field Faculty and the Director of Field Education. These observations are made to assess the ability of the agency and/or Preceptor to provide effective field education opportunities and instruction to students to assure students are being taught in an environment that facilitates maximum learning attainment for mastery of the CSWE competencies.

The types of criteria that are utilized for the UC MSW program's ongoing evaluation of field agency effectiveness include:

- Documented progress of attainment of CSWE competency mastery on both mid-semester and final student evaluations.
- Documented ability of the agency and Preceptor to provide the agreed to specified amount of weekly supervision to students that are in placement.
- Demonstrated ability for the agency and Preceptor provide timely responses to contacts by the UC MSW program faculty including the submission of required documents such as evaluation material on students placed with them.

Credit for Work Experience

Students cannot receive credit or field placement hours for work experience obtained prior to entry into their field placement.

Employment-Based Field Education Placements

The MSW program at UC will not permit students to complete their field education courses in their regular employment setting unless the internship hours are completed within a different department from their primary department of employment within the organization, and the supervision is provided by a different supervisor.

This new assignment must meet the student's learning needs and comply with all of the MSW Program's requirements. The new field education assignment must clearly reflect learning tasks that are different from the duties and responsibilities of the paid position. The Director of Field Education will determine the suitability and render a decision of approval or disapproval of any proposed Employment-Based Field Practicum Plan.

The student is asked to develop a plan including the following components no later than the prior semester:

1. General information
 - Student's name and contact information.
 - Agency name and contact information.
 - Current Supervisor and contact information.
 - Proposed Preceptor for the MSW field education course different from their current supervisor.

2. Agency/Program information

- Brief description of agency mission, client population, & services provided.
- Description of student's current employed role (include title) and duties.
- Description of student's proposed experience within the setting. Highlight how the experience must also provide the student with a field education experience that will address tasks reflecting all 9 CSWE required learning competencies.
- Describe how student's paid employment workload will be adjusted to accommodate the full complement of required field education course hours.

3. Preceptor

- The student's employment supervisor cannot be the Preceptor.
- Approved Preceptors must meet all UC MSW program specified criteria for approval.
- The Preceptor must agree to provide one hour of bi-weekly direct supervision and agree to attend and participate in all UC MSW program orientation, training, monitoring and evaluation activities including the required SIFI training.

4. Field Education Agency/Program

- The agency must agree to the reassignment of the student for the required hours of field education course(s) and the newly defined proposed tasks to address the 9 CSWE competencies.
- This reassignment must assure that the tasks, role and supervision of the student for field education are discretely different from the work performed and supervision provided to them as an employee.

5. Acknowledgement of Plan

- The student will obtain the signatures of his/her current employment supervisor, agency representative, and proposed Preceptor. The student must also sign the plan.
- The student will turn the plan in to the Director of Field Education for review and approval. The Director of Field Education will assure the Preceptor meets all program requirements for approval. The Director of Field Education may elect to contact agency administrators and/or the proposed Preceptor to determine the ability of the agency to comply with all UC MSW Program requirements for approval of an employment-based field education site. See Appendix VIII.



Policies and Procedures in Field Education

Placement of Students into Field Agencies

During the semester prior to Field Work 1 and Field Work 3, the Director of Field Education reviews all students who are preparing to locate appropriate and proper agencies for field placement consideration. The Director of Field Education and Field Coordinator will work closely with each other and all students in order to place students into agencies with Preceptors would be a best matching of student learning styles and professional interests. Only students who have demonstrated satisfactory performance in courses prior to being placed will be approved for placement into field education courses.

The goal of the program's procedure for placement is to assess student readiness for field education placement, assist students with finding suitable potential field placement sites, and to determine what type of field setting will provide the necessary tasks and Preceptor support that each student will require. It is through these procedures listed below that our program strives to promote student success in the field prior to the first day of entry into the assigned agency.

The goal of this procedure for placement of UC MSW students is to strive to achieve a best match of student to agency and Preceptor which is a final decision made by the Field Education Director. Students participate in this process by completing a Student Field Placement Questionnaire. This document requests information on each student including such things as student areas of interest in social work practice, identification of five specific agencies of interest for internship, types of life and work experiences that have sparked their interest in becoming a social worker, as well as types of logistical considerations such as owning a vehicle, ability to pay for public transportation, etc. From this individualized information on students, the Director of Field Education in consultation with the Field Coordinator and other UC MSW faculty strives to determine the best fit in field practice agency sites in accord with the factors the student identified. While field faculty try to address student desires for field placement, students are required to go to any field site they are referred to by the Field Education Director.

Field faculty work closely with students to help them gain understanding of the role and function of field education in their MSW course of study. Students often have a preconceived idea about

where they will practice social work once they have completed their degree. Our Field Education faculty and Preceptors work with students to offer them a perspective on how remaining open to new ideas and types of places where social work services can be provided can help them maximize their learning in both a generalist and specialist fashion will afford them greater opportunities for educational growth and employment.

After the student has prioritized and the Field Education Director has identified suitable site for application, and approved a student for admission into field education courses, the student is contacted so they can begin the process of learning as much about the agency as possible prior to their interview at this potential placement site. The student once informed of the potential placement site should study the website and annual report of the agency and develop a written list of questions they wish to ask at the interview.

Following the interview, if the Preceptor and agency approve the student for placement, the student will complete all additional requirements established by the agency including any required paperwork and submission of documentation which the Field Education Director will keep on file that documents the responsibilities of all parties. An external clinical agreement/contract between Utica College and the agency must be signed by both parties. The Director of Field Education will work collaboratively with Utica College's Internal Liaison and the agency director to ensure proper signatures. Once this is signed and finalized, the student can plan a start date in accordance with UC course dates and the agency.

This planning should map out a schedule that provides sufficient hours to meet the specified field education requirements and allows for the required weekly supervision by the Preceptor the instructor of field education course. All students and Preceptors are expected to familiarize themselves with the Field Education manual and fully understand the need to begin to plan for tasks in the field that support the learning of each of the 9 CSWE competencies.

Monitoring Students in Field Education Placements

The MSW program is responsible in partnership with the Preceptor at the placement agency for monitoring students in several ways. Some of the mechanisms for monitoring involve the completion of required documentation by the student, the Preceptor and the Field Faculty assigned to the student.

Students will be monitored using the processes listed below:

- The field learning agreement is a written document which outlines specific tasks that the student will be engaged in. This document addresses all of the required CSWE placement competencies. It becomes the basis for the Preceptor and Field Faculty to monitor student progress towards mastery of the competencies.
- The learning agreement should have assigned tasks that can be readily evaluated and measured to determine if student field-based learning is taking place at a satisfactory level. The learning agreement task progress is used during formal supervision sessions with the Preceptor and also for formalized evaluation functions.
- Students will document their weekly time in the field as prescribed by the field education program. In addition, the agency may elect to have the student complete their system of time documentation as well. Hours are reviewed regularly between the student and Preceptor to assure that hours planned are being accomplished according to plan. In situations where hours for an on-time field course completion are uncertain, the student and Preceptor must explore options in assigned tasks to complete more required field hours as is the program requirement for field based placement. See Appendix IX.
- The Field Faculty and the Preceptor meet at least two times over the course of the internship. One is at the mid-point and one is towards the scheduled end of the internship. The Field Learning Agreement becomes a focal point for evaluation of student learning in the field placement. This is part of the process of monitoring student field education performance that will result in the Field Faculty making a final determination after receiving the grade recommendation from the Preceptor as to if the student performance warrants a passing grade.
- All students in field education are encouraged to complete process recordings during placement. The process recordings are written by the student and reviewed during scheduled supervision with the Preceptor. The reviewed recording will be shared with the Field Faculty for their monitoring of student performance. The process recording not only contributes to student ability to gain reflective practice skills, it also is a tool for Preceptor and Field Faculty to use to gain an understanding of how a student is thinking or feeling as they are working with clients in the field.

Required Paperwork

Students and Field Instructors will be asked to complete and submit the following forms during the course of the field placement. Deadlines for each will be communicated by the Director of Field Education and Field Course Instructor.

- **Field Learning Agreement:** This form defines the scope and focus of each student's individual field experience. At the beginning of the field placement, the student and Field Instructor list the

tasks, activities, and projects in which the student will engage, and relate each to the CSWE competencies and behaviors. Submitted through Exxat at the end of the third week in field.

- **Mid-term Evaluation:** Mid-way through the field placement, the student, Preceptor, and Field Instructor complete a mid-term evaluation to rate the student's ability to demonstrate each behavior listed on the Learning Contract. Submitted through Exxat.
- **Final Evaluation:** At the end of the field placement, the student, Preceptor, and Field Instructor revisit the mid-term evaluation and update the student's scores based on their continued learning and development. Submitted through Exxat.
- **Field Evaluation Survey (students):** At the end of the field placement, students will complete an online evaluation of the Field Education Program and the field agency in which the student was placed. Submitted through Exxat.

Orientation to the Field

Each faculty member of the UC Social Work Program who serves as a Field faculty member is dedicated to promoting best outcomes for all parties in the field education process. Under the direction of the Field Education Director, Field Education Coordinator and the MSW Program Director, these instructors bear the primary responsibility for interfacing at regularly scheduled intervals with the agency, the Preceptor, and the student.

Orientation and training sessions are held each year at least once and are designed to familiarize new Field Faculty with core program policies such as travel, student learning agreements, CSWE requirements, and learning the knowledge and skills required to become a field faculty member of high caliber. This type of learning includes issues of student learning styles, the range of field based activities that Preceptors may elect to assign to maximize student learning processes and outcomes, and an overview of the tasks and timelines for documentation and implementation and completion of field-based education at their agency. Preceptors are oriented and trained to understand the competency-based education model that the UC MSW program utilizes in adherence to the CSWE accreditation standards. Field faculty members provide Preceptors with the necessary knowledge to be conversant with their assigned students regarding completion of their assigned field education tasks and how to provide instruction for students to link field tasks to knowledge gained in courses. This includes application of concepts embedded in the NASW Code of Ethics as well as the core concepts of recovery.

Monitoring of student field learning performance is a foremost function of the Faculty faculty members. The monitoring of student performance is accomplished through various methods.

These include:

- Weekly contact with students assigned to them to monitor all aspects of learning and other related field education items.
- Regular and ongoing monitoring of student safety in the field and intervening into any concern/incident that may take place is a core duty of the Faculty Field faculty members.
- Frequent contact with Preceptors to gain their perspectives and observations of student field education performance as related to progress on tasks identified for students to gain mastery of the 9 CSWE competency areas.
- Scheduling mid-semester field meetings to monitor with the Preceptor and the student how things are going and to complete a formal mid-semester evaluation.
- Regular review of required student learning documentation including process recordings.
- The Field Faculty is a primary person who is monitoring student and Preceptor compliance with all UC MSW Field Education policies and procedures.
- The Field Faculty is the party from the UC MSW program who will work with the Preceptor and student to prepare and implement formal evaluation of the progress made towards mastery of the 9 CSWE competencies both mid-semester and in the final field evaluation for the semester.

Every approved UC MSW Preceptor becomes the pivotal link between course competency success and the effective transfer of knowledge, values, and skills into applied social work settings. The Preceptor plays an essential role for student learning processes and outcomes.

The role of the Preceptor in monitoring and evaluation of UC MSW students is critical to the realization of the model of field education as signature pedagogy. It is this field faculty member who provides the day to day ongoing observation and supervision of field education students. The feedback that they provide weekly to students regarding their performance is key to students demonstrating their ability to participate in reflective practice skill development in order to make needed adjustments to their social work practice knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective components necessary for being a professional social worker.

To help create a learning environment in the field that is most conducive to student success, Preceptors are trained to provide the following opportunities for students assigned to them:

- The Preceptor will provide a thorough agency orientation for each assigned student upon entry into the field placement. This agency orientation must include safety and risk management training, agencies policies on a range of issues including confidentiality and informed consent, harassment, non-discrimination, grievance resolution, in addition to the types of regularly scheduled events that will become part of a student's ongoing duties. These types of activities may include attendance at staff meetings, treatment planning meetings, grand rounds and other forms of in-service training sessions, required paperwork such as time sheets, etc.
- It is the Preceptor who will ensure that students receive a variety of opportunities during their field placement. This involves at least two major components. First, the Preceptor will work with other agency parties to assure student access into in-service learning opportunities afforded to agency staff. These types of training can be either in-house and/or external forms of training seminars. The second involves an ongoing teaching function. While the the UC MSW Program will accept faculty with generalist training and expertise at the generalist sequence level, the program will only approve Preceptors at the specialization level who have a demonstrated knowledge base in core clinical social work concepts that may include such things as behavioral and developmental theory, concepts of transference and countertransference, trauma informed treatment principles, recovery oriented social work practice, empowerment theory, motivational interviewing, person-in-environment theory (ecological theory), and social justice and client advocacy.
- It is the Preceptor who assumes primary responsibility for providing the mid-semester and final semester field education learning evaluation documentation. Their role in working closely with students makes them the most crucial party in social work field education at the UC MSW program to have the observed knowledge of student capacity for demonstrating mastery of required CSWE competencies.

Continuing Dialogue with Field Settings and Field Instructors

The MSW program realizes the importance of ongoing contact between the Field Education faculty on campus and the agency and Preceptor where the student is placed. To promote this close collaborative relationship the Director of Field Education assures that:

- Field Faculty are in regular and ongoing forms of contact that include monitoring of student performance and mastery of the CSWE competencies.
- Communication between the Field Education Director, Field Faculty and the Preceptor is undertaken on a regular interval and as needed. The required forms of contact administratively involve orientation, training and transmission of important dates for such events along with academic calendar information and Field Education dates when mid-semester and final student evaluation meetings and/or documents are due.
- Planning processes are a continual process with field agencies and Preceptors in efforts to ascertain agency desire and willingness to accommodate student placements in future semesters.
- Feedback from field agencies and Preceptors is received during individual and/or group training meetings in order to determine any quality improvement needed within the structure of the field education program system to best meet desired student outcomes in the field.

Safety and Risk Management

Student safety is of paramount importance at Utica College and within the Social Work Program. The field education manual provides all parties with an in-depth review of the many factors to attend to in effort to boost protective factors for students. The following is an excerpt from the field education manual regarding student safety.

Student safety and risk management are essential components of the field education program at the UC Social Work program. The Director of Field Education works to assure that all approved agencies and Preceptors understand and take proactive measures to best assure the safety of students, as well as other parties that are affiliated with their agency. This includes orientation for students upon field entry to all forms of safety including fire safety, universal precautions, de-escalation of agitated clients, home visit protocols, etc.

Regarding risk management, agencies are aware that students become subject to types of risks common to employees once working with and/or providing permanent documentation in agency records regarding their work with clients. Training for students at field agencies will include Preceptors reviewing their daily work with clients and their documentation. Field instruction provided by the Preceptor should include knowledge about the types of language used in documentation to protect all parties and including wording used in clinical documentation, to promote proper risk management.

The Utica College has adopted the following policy and procedures regarding the safety of students in field education placements. This policy has been created to recognize that violence in the lives of clients can create potential dangers to professional social workers and students engaged in the study of the profession. Students are required to acknowledge the risks associated with field placement prior seeking placement (see Appendix X). While social workers and interns may be more aware of these issues in urban areas, we believe issues of safety are relevant in all communities and settings. We urge our MSW students in field education placements to become familiar with this policy regardless of the location of your internship placement.

I. Policy

- a) The UC Social Work Program is responsible for providing all students and field faculty with general written information about safety in field placement.
- b) The Social Work program expects each agency to be responsible for orienting student interns to the safety policies and procedures of that agency and setting. Such orientation should include, but not be limited to, discussion of safety issues in the community, within the agency building(s), with particular clients prone to violent behavior, and about clients who may be sharing living quarters with persons prone to violent behavior, to the extent that such information is known. Security of personal belongings of the student in the field education placement while at the agency should be also covered. Procedures for the student(s) to follow in the event of a safety or security problem should be reviewed at the beginning of the placement with ample opportunity for questions and discussion as needed.
- c) MSW students should not be required to engage or to remain in assignments or at placements in which they feel physically at risk. The MSW program urges all agencies to make the same accommodations to ensure students' safety as they make for their own agency staff and in some situations the agency may need to make even greater accommodation for a student. If a student's concerns about safety interfere in whole or in part with the learning process, the field faculty should be contacted by the Preceptor to facilitate prompt exploration of the concerns and to seek a mutually satisfying resolution.

II. Procedures

- a) If an incident occurs in which a student is personally threatened or hurt it is the student's responsibility to notify the field instructor immediately. The Preceptor, agency contact person, or agency director should then contact the Director of Field Education immediately to discuss what actions the agency and Utica College should take to ensure the student's physical and emotional well-being in the wake of the incident and on a going-forward basis.
- b) The Director of Field Education will document the incident and the steps taken to address it and will meet with the student and faculty advisor to assess the student's readiness to return to the field, and any other issues relevant to the situation. The Director of Field Education may alert the MSW Program Director about incidents and concerns on an as-needed basis.

III. Safety Guidelines for Students in the Field

a) Agency Protocol

It is important for students to know the Agency's safety and security protocol for office and home visits with clients prior to the start of the placement. If the agency does not have safety and security policies and/or procedures the field instructor and student should review and discuss any issues related to safety and security in the setting. MSW students are urged to bring their questions and concerns to the field instructor. Regular communication particularly about safety concerns is strongly encouraged.

The following are guidelines and suggestions that may be helpful to students, Preceptors, and field faculty as they consider the particular safety issues in their settings. Specific steps taken by students or agency personnel will obviously have to be determined by the individual situation, the nature of the setting, etc.

b) Security of Belongings

All students in the field are expected to have a secure place to keep coats, handbags, cell phones, laptops, and other belongings while at placement. It is preferable that the space be one that can be locked, and could be in a desk drawer or filing cabinet. Students should not leave handbags and other personal articles visible and unattended, even in an office with the door closed.

Valuables should not be brought to placement settings. Items of value should not be left in cars, and should not be placed out of view just prior to leaving a vehicle. Neither the agency nor Utica College can be responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal items.

c) Safety Issues Related to Working with Clients

When working with clients, it is important to remember that the treatment process often makes people feel vulnerable and may challenge their usual coping mechanisms. With some people, this can contribute to problems with impulse control, and can raise issues of safety for the client, the student social worker, and others.

There may be times when students work with individuals who have difficulty with reality testing, dealing with overwhelming emotions, and controlling their anger. Some of them may be prone to violence and may possess a weapon. Other clients may be intoxicated, high on drugs, in withdrawal, or may have other medical or neurological disorders. Again, we urge all MSW students to consult with your agency Preceptors to prepare adequately for handling of specific situations that are potentially difficult or threatening, such as medical emergencies, suicide or homicide risks, potential abuse of others, and the presence of weapons.

d) Safety Guidelines for Office Meetings

If a student will be meeting with a client with whom the student does not feel safe, it is important for the student to discuss the situation promptly and fully with the agency field instructor. Based on the outcome of this discussion, there may be a decision that a student will not see the client or see the client under specific circumstances or controls. However, if it is decided that a student will see the client, several points should be considered. A client's mental status should be assessed. When considering the location of the meeting, it might be helpful to think about what is in the room, whether there is more than one exit, and where each person might sit. It may also be helpful to think about whether to include someone else in the meeting, and what to wear. When discussing the time of the appointment, it can be helpful to think about whether or not many people are around at the time being considered for the meeting. It is also important to discuss the plan for backup and assistance in the event that the client becomes agitated. A student should never see a potentially dangerous client alone without someone else in the agency knowing about the client, the appointment time and the location of the appointment. Students should keep supervisors informed about their schedules at the agencies at all times.

e) Safety Guidelines for Travel by Car

When a student is traveling by car to an agency or to home visits, it is advisable to know where he or she is going, and to look at a map before driving to unfamiliar areas. In general, remember to be alert, and to lock doors and close windows. The student should tell someone where he or she is going and the expected amount of time she/he will be away from the office. The agency should have your cell phone number or other information on how to contact you in the event of an emergency.

f) Safety Guidelines for Travel by Foot or Public Transportation

When traveling by foot or public transportation, it is advisable that students know where they are going and the route by which they will travel. Students are encouraged to carry the least amount of valuables with them as possible. Money, license, keys, and other essentials might be carried in a pocket. If a handbag carried under the arm is grabbed, it is best to let go of it. It is helpful to dress in comfortable clothes that are loose fitting, and to wear sturdy, flat walking shoes. It is also helpful to be alert, and to walk with a purpose, as if one has a clear destination. One should be aware of people in the immediate area.

g) Safety Guidelines for Home Visits

It is important to familiarize yourself with the clients' file prior to the home visit. If there is a question of safety, plan accordingly with Preceptors. It might be decided that meeting at a neutral place or going with another worker is the appropriate plan. Someone at the agency should always know the student's itinerary. It is helpful to stay alert and to think about what to wear, which room to meet in, and where to sit. If a student ever feels threatened at any point during the interview, they are encouraged to err on the side of caution and appropriately terminate the visit. If clients seem to feel threatened by the student entering their dwelling, the student should desist and not force the issue. If a student hears a heated argument from inside the house or apartment, the student may decide to reschedule the visit or call to assess the

situation before entering the dwelling. A student should never see a potentially dangerous client alone without someone else in the agency knowing about it. In general, a cell phone is very useful for students doing home visits.

h) Health Safety

Students should be alerted to the existence of biohazards. They should receive training and information about how to protect themselves from infectious diseases.

IV. Post Incident Protocol

If an incident occurs in which a student is personally threatened or hurt, the Preceptor, agency contact person, or agency director should contact the Director of Field Education immediately to discuss what actions the agency and Utica College should take to ensure the student's physical and emotional well-being.

The Director of Field Education will document the incident and the steps taken to address it, and will meet with the student and faculty advisor. Together, they will assess the student's readiness to return to the field and any other issues relevant to the situation.

Utica College Social Work Program thanks Simmons University School of Social Work for sharing their safety policy which was used in developing the MSW safety policy.

Best Practices to Promote a Successful Placement

There are both protective and risk factors that can impact students related to successful outcomes in field education.

- Adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics which sets forth values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. Students are urged to pay particular attention to the confidentiality provision.
- Assuring regular and on-time attendance; missing scheduled field education time is seen as evidence of a lack of professionalism (time missed for any reason must be made up).
- Demonstrating a willingness to learn and to take initiative.
- Asking questions – especially when in doubt about policies and procedures.
- Maintaining appropriate professional dress and behaviors (Check with the Preceptor, your Field Seminar Instructor and/or the Director of Field Education if in doubt about appropriate dress).
- Being sure that your self-care plan includes satisfactorily addressing any physical, emotional/psychological and/or social factors that may impair your capacity to perform all required tasks in a timely and professional manner.
- Obeying all agency policies, UC field education policies and local, State and federal laws and regulations.
- Remembering that you are representing Utica College's Social Work Program. Your performance in field education can foster continuing good relationships between the agency and UC social work program.

- Being proactive in bringing any concerns right away to your Preceptor, field faculty faculty members and/or the director of field education in effort to promote a quality resolution to any issues of concern to you about the field education process.
- Accessing and utilizing various supports on and off campus that enhance your well-being and optimal educational performance. These may include the use of health and mental health care providers, exercise, social engagement with friends, students in your cohort, family, faith communities, etc.



Department of Social Work
Field Education Program

Health, Medical, and Background

Students are expected to fully comply with all prerequisite tasks such as a background check, a physical exam, etc. Students who have an assigned placement setting must learn as soon as possible about what types of policies regarding new student required checks, testing, immunizations, etc. that the agency requires of anyone working there. Students should be proactive in completing these requisite checks and testing to prevent non-compliance with these policies hinder their ability to begin placement hours and work with clients as soon as it is possible.

Students are encouraged to have health insurance and some placement sites will require it.

Agencies have a range of policies and protocols. UC MSW students are expected to comply fully with all agency policies and procedures. Any concerns a student may have about such compliance should be raised to one or more of the parties involved in field education.

Use of Personal Automobile and Automobile Insurance

The UC MSW program does not allow students in field placements to transport clients in their personal vehicles. If a student is requesting to operate an agency vehicle for any purpose including transport of clients served, the UC MSW requires students to submit a copy of their current personal auto insurance policy that specifies coverage while they are using an agency owned vehicle including for client transport.

Liability Insurance

Utica College provides liability insurance on all students that covers MSW field education sanctioned activities at agency placement sites.

Students must be enrolled in the field education course before setting foot in the field placement agency partly due to student unintentional negligence that may cause harm, impairment, or injury to a client at a field site. Students are only covered by Utica College's liability insurance if they are an actively enrolled student for the given semester.

Utica College provides for its students liability coverage that meets the minimum expected standards set forth by the profession. Copies of the certificate of liability can be given upon

request. In some situations, students may be required to carry additional professional liability insurance by their field practicum site. This request would mean that the students would be covered through inclusion in the School's blanket Professional Liability policy and their personal student liability policy as well.

Situations that can lead to civil or criminal action against a student include:

1. Misrepresenting qualifications, such as failing to inform the client of student status.
2. Providing treatment without obtaining proper consent.
3. Keeping inaccurate or inadequate records.
4. Administering inappropriate or radical treatment.
5. Failing to consult with or refer to specialists.
6. Failing to seek proper supervision.
7. Failing to take action to prevent a client's suicide.
8. Failing to warn third parties of potential harm.

Internet Access, Computers and Electronic Devices

All students in the UC MSW program are expected to have adequate access to the internet and a computer and/or other forms of electronic communication during the time of their field work.



Department of Social Work
Field Education Program

Professional Ethics and the NASW Ethical Principles

All UC MSW students are expected to continue to execute the ethical principles of the NASW Code of Ethics throughout their field education experiences and their social work career. This includes a range of issues and most notably applicable to most student learning tasks are the principles of confidentiality. It is important to note that in the core foundational ethical precepts of any profession, the concept of “Do no harm” is central. This is true in the profession of social work and, in fact, the emphasis on strict adherence to the concept of confidentiality is a key element of doing no harm in our work. We strive to protect client privacy with only a few types of exceptions which clients must be advised of along with their client Bill of Rights information. These types of exceptions include reasonable compliance with subpoenas and court orders after proper client consultation, third party payor rights to review record content, most notably in situations where harm may come to any party, and in social work with minors and individuals with court approved legal guardianship or conservatorship, etc. When the concept of confidentiality is compromised due to reasonable suspicion of harm to some party, the do no harm principle will supersede the principle of privacy and confidentiality in clinical decision making. Students are expected to comply with the NASW Code of Ethics found at www.socialworkers.org

Dual Relationships

The NASW Code of Ethics also addresses the frequent situation of dual relationships in practice. Students must adhere to this most carefully as it contains many nuances. A common issue is when, for example, an employee of Utica College is utilizing services themselves or for a family member and the student does not know them. Best practice suggests the student should not work with someone who is an employee of Utica College. That therefore is the policy regarding dual relationship student responsibilities. Students will notify their Preceptor immediately of any known connections to clients being served by the agency. Further, if unbeknownst prior to a student during client treatment reviews, a name of someone known in fact to them is up for review, the student must immediately stand, interrupt and state the need to leave the room and recuse themselves due to dual relationship ethical concerns.

Supervision

The profession of social work realizes the need for competent professionals and students to have regular and ongoing access to skilled clinical supervision. To this end, all students at the

UC MSW program shall participate fully in supervision requirements to meet 1.5 hours every other week with their Preceptor, and 1.5 hours each other week with thier Field Work Seminar faculty member, to review their progress towards competency achievement along with review of all assigned clients and other tasks. This review is conducted in a fashion that understands the value of such supervision processes beyond simply meeting this program requirement. Specifically, students will embrace the notion that the pursuit of continual growth and improvement in our work requires supervision so that an objective skilled professional can monitor and evaluate our practice situations and provide valuable feedback. This feedback can then be used by students as it is by all trained social workers, to adjust approaches to working with each unique client situation. Such adjustments are made to optimize desired client outcomes. A weekly supervision form is provided for completion by the Preceptor and field course instructor as applicable during weekly supervision (see Appendix XI).

Stability of Field Settings

Students have the obligation to identify as soon as they become aware of any factors that make them feel that their field education placement is not feeling like a proper fit for them. This should be brought to the immediate attention of their Field Faculty faculty members. Each student concern will be thoroughly assessed and shared with other members of the MSW faculty in an effort to satisfactorily resolve the concern while making effort to keep the student on track to complete required field education course expectations during the semester they are registered in.

Factors that may destabilize field placements can occur both in the agency, in other UC MSW courses and/or in a student's life beyond their role as a UC MSW student. Some of these factors may include unforeseen incidents that could arise at a placement setting either directly with the student or that impact the Preceptor and/or the agency. Examples of this may include a Preceptor changing positions intra-agency or taking a new position elsewhere, damage to the physical plant of the building making it a site that must be closed for repair, student personal financial concerns, student family or personal emergencies, etc.

It is best for students to make efforts towards raising awareness of situations that could pose serious challenges to completion of field education course requirements. Students must immediately share these concerns with the Field Faculty faculty members and their Preceptor.

Field Termination

Termination is a component part of clinical social work practice. The issue of student termination from a field education course agency setting could take place for a variety of reasons. These include planned termination by successful course completion, planned termination due to other reasons such as unforeseen circumstances in a student's life, and termination by the MSW program for any reason as well as termination of the student placement by the field agency.

Termination may be either planned or unplanned, voluntary by the student or involuntary by the agency and/or MSW program and may be unilaterally decided by any of the parties involved or may be done in a collaborative fashion. Under any of these possible scenarios the UC MSW program faculty will be able to work with the student to review how any concerns by any party regarding the termination can be evaluated and addressed for final resolution by all parties if desired and possible. See Appendix XII.

Required Field Hours and Progress in Field

Students in the MSW program at UC are mandated to complete all required field hours in each Field Work course, per CSWE requirements. When situations arise that may pose challenges to successful completion of all required hours within the time the course is registered for, the student must again notify their Preceptor and Field Faculty immediately of these challenges. These UC MSW field education faculty and staff will work with the student to develop a plan to attempt to meet the requirements within the regular semester time frame. Such challenges may include inclement weather and sickness. In these situations, Preceptors will work to identify tasks that can be performed when not on site to still receive credit for field education hours worked. These tasks must be approved by the field faculty member. Such tasks may include researching databases for scholarly articles related to areas addressed with the agency target client populations, written work such as process recordings, field journals and practice treatment plans, etc.

The MSW program strongly advises students to not withdraw from field education courses before speaking to their Field Faculty and/or other faculty members of the field education

program and the Program Director. Any situation a student feels is warranting withdrawal from a field education course should be done carefully and with consultation from our faculty. The reason for this is to explore other alternative methods of dealing with the situation including possible incomplete grades and/or extension grades for the field education placement.

The role of the Preceptor is to formally evaluate student performance at the end of the semester including a recommendation to the program for the PASS/FAIL grade in the course. The Preceptor is not authorized by UC to enter any student grades into the grading system. The Preceptor is required to review their formal UC MSW program student field evaluations with the student who is entitled to comment on the document if they wish. It is only the Director of Field Education or their faculty designee that is authorized to enter a grade. This format is designed to provide a system of checks and balances regarding student field education performance. Any student concerns about grading will abide by the UC policies regarding grading and student appeals of grades.

Academic, Professional and Ethical Conduct

The UC policy on academic integrity follows a student through all coursework including field education courses. Any violations of this policy are taken seriously by our field education faculty and they will act in accordance with the UC policy. This includes instances of plagiarism or cheating on any required assignments, or misrepresentation of field hours performed, etc.

Further, the UC policies governing the professional and ethical conduct of all admitted students will apply to work performed by UC MSW students in their field education courses. For example, any student behaving in an unethical fashion in the field education course may be not only subject to evaluation by the MSW program faculty and staff regarding adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics but is simultaneously subject to review by the UC administration for possible academic action which in egregious situations could result in suspension and/or expulsion from UC.

Problem Resolution

Performance Improvement Plans

The UC MSW program is dedicated to the promotion of student success. In field education this includes the use of performance improvement plans as needed that are usually developed by the Field Faculty, the Preceptor and with the student. These plans are monitored in field supervision and with the Field Faculty. In many instances, consultation with the Field Director and/or Coordinator of Field Education and the MSW Program Director is indicated.

Grievance Procedures

Student grievances may arise for any number of issues. UC has an established complaint policy for students. The MSW program adheres to this policy and is prepared to always work with students to assist them in both the examination of and development of an action plan to address the grievance with the appropriate parties. The UC MSW program strongly urges students to discuss any situation that makes them feel uncomfortable with program faculty immediately in effort to remediate situations that could result in the need for formal grievance procedures to be undertaken by the student.

The Utica College Student Complaint Process states the following:

“Any student who has been treated unfairly will have the right to be heard fairly and promptly. The college recognizes that disputes may sometimes arise and requires the parties involved to resolve the conflict informally whenever possible. If resolution cannot be reached, a formal complaint can be submitted to assure impartial and equitable resolution.

This complaint process may not be invoked for matters that have independent appeal processes that are already established. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- Student Conduct
- Title IX
- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Academic Appeals
- Academic Integrity
- Financial Aid

MSW students are encouraged to visit the UC Student Complaint Process at the following link:

<https://www.utica.edu/student-complaint-process>

Evaluation of Student Learning

The MSW program views the signature pedagogy of Field Education as essential for student learning and therefore creates multiple methods for conducting both process and outcome oriented forms of student evaluation of field performance. Evaluation of MSW student performance takes place in accordance with CSWE specified competencies that are required to be demonstrated through student performance in the field. This evaluation process is conducted by both the Preceptor and the Field Faculty.

Students will be admitted to field instruction and evaluated against the following standards at the conclusion of every level of Field Work coursework (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4).

1. Empathy
2. Critical Thinking
3. Communication Skills
4. Self-Awareness
5. Openness to Feedback
6. Patience
7. Emotion and Stress Regulation/Self-Care
8. Cultural Humility and Appreciation of Diversity and Difference

The methods for ongoing process evaluation include weekly supervision meetings between the Preceptor, instructor of field education course, and the student; the use of process recordings by both the Preceptor and the Field Faculty; development and ongoing use of the field learning agreement for monitoring progress towards mastery of the CSWE competencies; monitoring through the field seminar co-requisite course and through the mid-semester visit performed with the student, Preceptor and the Field Faculty.

MSW field faculty are prepared to work closely with any student experiencing difficulties in achieving such mastery of these required competencies. In some cases, concerns are readily resolved by revisiting the initial learning agreement tasks and considering revised tasks that are better fits with student learning style and still meet the required rigor for demonstration of mastery of the CSWE competencies.

The outcome evaluation is the final field evaluation completed by the Preceptor and reviewed with the student and given to the Field Faculty for review and determination of the student final grade for the field course. Final evaluations rate student performance in detail as related to student degree of mastery of the nine CSWE competencies.



Department of Social Work
Field Education Program