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**Appendix A**

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Introduction

Students

Welcome to the BSW Field Education Program at the University of Georgia School of Social Work. Field education is a formative and often positively memorable experience in shaping your academic and practice career as a social worker. This manual provides students with pertinent information about the field education curriculum, policies, and procedures. This manual contains information on field education courses, field placement policies, procedures, and information regarding the various processes of the field placement experience. The manual was designed to help students, field liaisons, and field instructors by addressing the necessary information to help students complete their BSW degree, as well as provide information for field instructors to help prepare them as supervisors for the student’s field experience. It is important that students thoroughly read through this manual and keep it on hand as it will be needed throughout your senior year.

Field Instructors

Welcome to the BSW Field Education Program. Through your participation in the BSW Field Education Program, our students are provided with the opportunity to integrate their conceptually-based classroom knowledge with educationally-directed field practice. Students are able to bring their internship practice experiences into the classroom to further the processes of integrating knowledge, values, and skills. This manual was designed with your specific role as a field instructor in mind to help assist you with your responsibilities in co-educating our students and to help you in providing them with the very best field placement experience. With your commitment to training and to supervising our students, our students will achieve competencies in practicing generalist social work.

Faculty Field Liaisons

Welcome to the BSW Field Education Program. Your interests and abilities to guide, instruct, and support students in their field placements and in their integrative seminars are appreciated. Your commitment to social work field education as the signature pedagogy in social work education is appreciated. This manual will provide you with information, policies and procedures which will guide the process of field education and will help clarify any issues which may arise for the student and the field instructor.

Please see the BSW Field Education webpage for a complete listing and resource for forms, syllabi and other materials.

That link is: http://ssw.uga.edu/academics/field/bsw_field.html
Chapter 1  Framework and Overview

Field Practicum and Organizational Structure

The Field Education Office is responsible for the overall administration of the field program. The Field Education Office works under the direction of the Associate Dean and in collaboration with the MSW and BSW program directors for both the Athens and Gwinnett campuses. The Field Education Office coordinates agencies, faculty members, students, and field instructors to provide the best internship experiences possible.

Field Education Office Role

The Field Education Office is responsible for the total field education program of the School of Social Work. The Field Education Office is led by the director of field education, who oversees field education for both the MSW and the BSW programs.

Field Education Office Responsibilities

1. Evaluation and maintenance of a bank of agency resources to adequately meet students’ learning needs.
2. Identification of openings for students at practicum sites.
3. Coordination of student placements with agency openings.
4. Coordinating student interviews at agency and conduct follow-up confirmations of placements.
5. In collaboration with the Associate Dean, the MSW program director, the BSW program director and faculty, assign faculty liaisons to agencies.
6. Provision of agency and student information to faculty liaison.
7. Training and orientation of field instructors.
8. Orientation of students to practicum process.
10. Provision of information to academic advisors and students about the variety, quantity, quality, and nature of practicum offerings.
11. Provision and distribution of necessary field placement educational materials (for example, application forms, informational resources, syllabi, evaluation forms, teaching/learning materials, practicum calendars, etc.) to appropriate persons.
12. Provision of consultation to faculty liaisons, academic advisors, students, field instructors, and administrators concerning a variety of issues impacting the School-Agency relationship and the quality of the individual student’s learning experiences.
13. Recruit new agencies, conduct agency evaluations for potential practicum sites.
14. Maintenance of file of professional student liability insurance policies to ensure insurance is current.
15. Sponsor field education conferences.
Since the beginning of the social work profession in the late 1800s, social work training has included academic classwork as well as actual practice experience in social service agencies. The apprenticeship model of training in the profession of social work was the “field education” experience in the earliest days of social work education. Today, field education is viewed as the signature pedagogy of social work education wherein the student becomes socialized into the profession of social work. Field education, according to the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), is on equal ground with classroom learning and importance. The aim of field education is to facilitate student integration and application of knowledge, values, and skills. Through the field practicum and internship, BSW students are provided significant opportunities to practice skills, apply knowledge, and utilize social work values. Field education is based upon a model of learning known as “experiential learning” wherein the student actually practices generalist social work.

Experiential learning requires the student to engage in the processes of observation of other social workers in their field site, participate in and receive supervision and formal evaluations from the field instructor, practice critical self-reflection and self-correction, to achieve the learning assignments in the field integrative seminars, achieve competency in the field learning plan practice behaviors and, most importantly, practice with real clients.

The University Of Georgia School Of Social Work works collaboratively with the professional social work community in developing effective field education experiences as an integral part of the BSW curriculum. Sites are available across the northeast Georgia region and are selected through a prescribed process of site evaluation and contractual agreements between the agency and the University of Georgia. Student experiences in the agency are designed to meet objectives specified in the practicum syllabi for fall and spring semesters. Hence, the BSW practicum is educationally directed and implemented through a vital partnership with the School of Social Work and with selected and approved human service organizations and field instructors.

Purpose of Field Education

Field education is the signature pedagogy in social work education. The primary purposes of field instruction are to provide students with educational and practice opportunities that lead to competent generalist social work practice through the integration of classroom learning. The field experience is intended to complement BSW curriculum objectives that include the provision of generalist practice opportunities for all students. The mission and goals of the BSW Program are as follows.

Mission

As adopted by the BSW faculty in September 2009, the mission of the baccalaureate social work program is to prepare students for beginning generalist social work practice in a variety of settings, including nonprofit, private, and public settings. Consistent with this statement, the purpose of the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program is to prepare competent social workers who are dedicated to advancing social work knowledge and practice, and to providing services to
at-risk populations. This includes, but is not limited to, alleviating social injustice, poverty, oppression, and discrimination.

**BSW Program Goals**

With the liberal arts as its foundation, BSW graduates are prepared to engage in entry-level social work practice or continue their formal education in social work or another graduate discipline. It is our goal to prepare students to:

1. Provide culturally competent, generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
2. Practice according to the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession.
3. Acknowledge and positively impact the bio-psycho-social, spiritual, and cultural functioning of people.
4. Influence social policies with the goals of alleviating poverty, oppression, and social injustice, as well as advocating for human rights.
5. Utilize a planned change model that is based upon an understanding of the ecosystems perspective, is driven by a commitment to social justice, and is grounded in culturally sensitive empirical research and theory.
6. Address the human service needs in the state of Georgia and the region.

**BSW Curriculum and BSW Field Education Curriculum**

The BSW Curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts tradition. Students enter the BSW major as an intended major and once they have successfully completed all of the pre-professional courses and UGA Core Curriculum requirements, students then apply for formal admission into the BSW Professional Program. Once accepted into the Professional Program, students make application into the BSW Field Education Program. Students intern (on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday) at the same field agency for both fall and spring semesters, and are required to accomplish a documented 280 clock hours of interning per semester (see time sheet on BSW Field website).

The BSW Practicum is intended to provide students with experience in the field as generalist social work practitioners, as well as to provide them with the opportunity to integrate various theories, models, and methods of intervention in a direct service environment. Students have the opportunity to experience these three levels of generalist social work practice: micro, mezzo, and macro levels of intervention, with primary emphases on helping skills, self-awareness in practice, and applying ecological systems theory. The BSW Field Education curriculum has two major components: the practicum and the integrative seminar.

**The Practicum**

SOWK 5835, Practicum I (fall) and SOWK 5845, Practicum II (spring) are 5 hour credit courses. The Field Learning Plans guides the student and field instructor in establishing tasks to accomplish practice behaviors among the nine competencies. Please see the BSW Field Education webpage for forms.
The student is expected to achieve practice behaviors in the nine competencies as set forth by the School of Social Work and which are stipulated by the Council on Social Work Education standards for field education. Thus nine areas of competencies are:

2.1.1 **Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

2.1.2 **Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

2.1.3 **Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

2.1.4 **Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed practice**

2.1.5 **Engage in Policy Practice**

2.1.6 **Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

2.1.7 **Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

2.1.8 **Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

2.1.9 **Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

SOWK 5835 and SOWK 5845 are guided by the Field Learning Plan. The Field Learning Plans guide the student in establishing how the student will achieve practice behaviors in nine competencies as set forth by the School of Social Work and which is in compliance with the Council on Social Work Education standards for field education. The field instructor evaluates the student at midterm and at the end of each semester. The forms for the midterm and final evaluations for SOWK 5835 and for SOWK 5845 are on the BSW Field Education webpage.

The Integrative Seminar

The Integrative Seminar in Generalist Social Work Practice I, (SOWK 5836, fall) and SOWK 5846, Integrative Seminar in Generalist Social Work Practice II (spring) are 2 hour credit courses and those syllabi are on the BSW Field Education webpage.

SOWK 5835 and SOWK 5836 are corequisites and similarly SOWK 5845 and SOWK 5846 are corequisites. SOWK 5835 is a pre-requisite for SOWK 5845 and SOWK 5836 is a pre-requisite for SOWK 5846. No field education course can be substituted through taking a directed reading, SOWK 5908. No course credit will be given for life, volunteer, and or work experiences. (Additional information is discussed in the Policies and Procedures section of this manual.)
Agency Sites

BSW practicum sites in a variety of social work venues are available in Athens, the surrounding counties of Northeast Georgia, and in the metro-Atlanta/Gwinnett County areas. Approved agencies are typically within a 65 mile radius of the UGA campus in Athens, and it is expected that students will make arrangements to commute to available sites. Therefore, the use of a car is highly recommended, as without transportation, agency availability is severely limited.

Students are offered the opportunity to assume a wide range of social work roles and functions, and the opportunity to work with diverse client populations. Field placement sites include, but are not limited to, children and family services, juvenile justice, adults and aging, mental health, substance abuse, crisis shelters, as well as school systems, health care settings, and child welfare. Please see the School’s field education web site for a descriptive list of commonly used field agencies. Additional information regarding the agencies is available in the Field Education Office.
Chapter 2  BSW Field Practicum Organizational Structure and Roles

The BSW field practicum involves a number of different individuals, including faculty from the School of Social Work, the student, and agency-based social workers and other staff. The following chapter describes the role and responsibilities of all of the people who have connection with BSW Field Education. Information contained in this section helps to clarify who will be involved in the practicum and how these various individuals work together to create a successful practicum experience.

Coordinator of BSW Field Education

The coordinator of BSW field education is responsible for the overall administration of the BSW field program. The coordinator is a member of the school’s field education faculty, which is then directed by the school’s director of field education. The coordinator has overall responsibility for the following:

- Co-developing with the BSW curriculum committee and the director of field education the curriculum content of the BSW field education program.
- Coordinating student placements with agency openings.
- Coordinating student interviews at agencies and conducting follow-up confirmations of placements.
- Providing agency and student information to faculty field liaisons.
- Training and orientation of field instructors.
- Orientation of students to practicum process and field responsibilities.
- Provision of information to BSW faculty and students about the variety, quantity, quality, and nature of practicum offerings.
- Provision and distribution of necessary field placement educational materials (for example: application forms, informational resources, syllabi, evaluation forms, teaching/learning materials, practicum calendars, etc.) to appropriate persons.
- Provision of consultation to BSW faculty, faculty field liaisons, students, agency-based field instructors, and School of Social Work administrators concerning a variety of issues impacting the school-agency relationship and the quality of the individual student’s learning experience.
- Recruitment of new agencies as potential practicum sites.
- Re-evaluate current practicum sites and field instructors to ensure that both continue to meet appropriate criteria for placement.
Faculty Field Liaison

Faculty field liaisons for the BSW field education program are BSW faculty or doctoral teaching assistants assigned to the SOWK 5835, SOWK 5836 and SOWK 5845 and SOWK 5846 courses (i.e. Practicum in Social Work I and Practicum in Social Work II and the Integrative Seminars). There will usually be four to six different sections of these courses each semester. Individuals assigned to teach these courses will facilitate the weekly integrative seminar which functions as the grounding component to the student’s experiences in the field, as well as provide liaison support to each of the sites. The liaison meets twice each semester with the student and the field instructor to complete the midterm and end of semester evaluations.

Faculty field liaisons are actively involved participants of the BSW field program, holding both administrative and teaching functions in their role. Throughout the semester, the faculty liaison acts as the link between the School of Social Work and the agency, as well as for the student and field instructor. The faculty liaison provides support and guidance to both, in helping the student to meet learning objectives. These tasks are outlined below:

Administrative Role

- Review, each semester, the student’s Field Learning Plan, and complete the midterm and end of semester field evaluations.
- Troubleshoot any administrative or policy issues that may arise between the agency and the School of Social Work.
- Troubleshoot any issues that may arise between the student and the field instructor.
- Provide feedback to the BSW field education coordinator concerning any changes in field instructors or agency policies that affect student learning.
- Active involvement with student and field instructor should there be a need to terminate the practicum.
- Evaluation of agencies as to their continued effectiveness as a practicum site.

Teaching Role

- Function as the primary instructor for the Integrative Seminar offered weekly to BSW students.

Student Roles and Responsibilities

Learning in field education is experiential and reflective learning. This type of learning contrasts to the more passive style of learning in the classroom. Additionally the practice acquisition and application of social work knowledge, skills, and values occurs vis-a-vis with real clients in a real agency. Thus the knowledge is situated knowledge wherein the student lives and learns their professional skills. Students in practicum are interns and intend their work as a learning experience. Subsequently, students need to be prepared to learn, able to benefit from supervisors, able to self-evaluate and, most importantly, students must engage in their work through intentional purposive actions. Learning in field education is reflexive learning whereby the student can self-correct based upon supervision, assignments, and critical self-reflection.
Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct at The University of Georgia. That document can be located at this link: https://conduct.uga.edu/content_page/code-of-conduct

In addition to the above professional and UGA student expectations, students are expected at a minimum to:

- Conduct themselves in behavior, speech, and dress in a manner consistent with the professional standards of social workers.
- Meet the expectations of their supervisors, including documentation, arriving on time, and completing tasks.
- Be prepared for supervisory and evaluation meetings.
- Demonstrate initiative and engagement in their field education experiences.
- Discuss with their field instructors and/or faculty liaison any minor or major concerns they may have about their experiences.
- Practice self-reflection through applying social work knowledge, values, and skills.

**Listed below are some common questions students have about BSW Field Education.**

1. **What is the process to obtain a field placement? What does the field office do with my placement request materials?**

   BSW students remain in the same field site agency throughout their entire senior academic year. Details about these processes can be found in Chapter 4 of the field manual. The coordinator of BSW field education will meet with students at appropriate times to further discuss and share information about the placement process, review the application, and provide deadlines. Internships are assigned through an application process by the coordinator. Students do not set up their own field placement.

2. **Can I ensure that I get my first choice for my internship?**

   Slot availability changes rapidly. The field office makes every effort to place students in their preferred agencies, but cannot make guarantees because of the rapidly changing human service environment. In addition, preference choices are determined in four major categories including agency setting, client population interest, social work problem area, and geographic considerations. Each of these is given equal weight in making field placement assignments.

3. **What if I don’t have a car?**

   Healthcare, mental health, and family service organizations are frequently community-based. Therefore, many placements require students to have a car to perform field assignments that involve outreach, home visits, and community work. Also, many placements are located outside the Athens area, so it is to the student’s advantage to have a vehicle or to be prepared to car pool with other students for travel to and from the agency. Unfortunately, not having a car severely limits field placement options. Students without cars may have to compromise their interests to be accommodated locally or near their homes. Many local agencies, however, also require the use of a vehicle.
4. Can I have a placement in the town where I live in Georgia?

It may be possible for students to be placed near their homes in Georgia, depending upon the availability of placement opportunities that have been, or could be approved by the field office. Please keep in mind that students still need to attend classes in Athens.

5. Can I do field work at my current place of employment?

Students interested in a worksite practicum should discuss this possibility with the coordinator of BSW field education as far in advance as possible.

6. I need to work while enrolled in school. How much time should I reserve for field work each term? Can my placement be arranged for evening and/or weekend hours?

The BSW practicum requires that students are in the field for a minimum of 20 hours per week during both the fall and spring semesters, for a minimum total of 280 documented field hours each semester. Students must be prepared to meet these requirements. Most students work in the field during traditional workday hours during the week on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. There is some opportunity, in non-traditional settings, for students to work late afternoon, evening and weekend hours. The field office will attempt to work with students to complement their work requirements but in no way will the educational objectives of the practicum experience be compromised. In addition, the agency-based field instructor, or other designated supervisor must be on duty and available to the student during these non-traditional time frames. These conditions do not usually allow students to do the entire placement during evenings or weekends.

7. What is the difference between an academic advisor, a faculty liaison, and a field instructor?

An academic advisor is a member of the School of Social Work BSW faculty who advises students on academic matters, which typically include course planning and registration. The faculty field liaison is assigned to each agency where a student is placed and is the seminar course instructor. The faculty liaison is typically a member of the faculty, an adjunct faculty member, or a teaching assistant, who monitors and grades the student’s fieldwork performance. The liaison also serves as an advocate for the student at the agency and helps to mediate placement-related problems, including those that may occur between the student and the field instructor. The field instructor is an agency staff member, typically a BSW or an MSW, who supervises and evaluates students in their day-to-day functioning at the agency.

8. What if my agency is not what I expected or is not meeting my learning goals?

Once you have started fieldwork, you should discuss any placement-related issues with your field supervisor and faculty field liaison. Any decisions about whether or not a student should terminate field work at an agency and be re-assigned to another agency must be made by the faculty field liaison, the field instructor, and the student in consultation with the coordinator of BSW field education.
9. Do agencies hire students when they graduate? Which ones?

Occasionally students will obtain employment with field agencies following graduation. There is no evident pattern of which agencies hire students after they graduate. Employment services are provided by the Career Planning and Placement Office.

Field Education is a new, challenging, and formative experience for students. Listed below are some common issues students have during their experiences. These questions are derived from BSW students and the responses are derived from BSW field instructors

Field Issues, Concerns and Resources: Student FAQs and Field Instructor’s Replies

I. Supervision Issues Expressed

Main Student Supervision Issues Reported

1. Lack of supervision
   - Discuss your concerns directly with your field instructor.
   - Clarify with your field instructor how he/she could better meet your needs (e.g., is it time, feedback, or what’s missing).

2. Supervisor often absent
   - Request a meeting to discuss a schedule. If physically unavailable to do so, discuss issue with faculty liaison.
   - Be willing to utilize mediation session with student, liaison and field instructor.

3. Difficulty communicating effectively with field instructor
   - Refer to the code of ethics, agency policies and school’s field manual.
   - Be assertive not aggressive in your communication.

4. Unusual boundaries by field instructor
   - Review such concerns openly with field instructor or faculty liaison, as well as noting appropriate boundary issues.
   - What information do you need to clarify boundary issues?

II. Placement Concerns/Issues Expressed

Main Student Placement Issues Reported

1. Never received formal training/orientation
   - Talk to your field instructor ASAP.
● What are you looking for in terms of training/or orientation from either the School or agency?

2. Not having individual caseload or enough direct client contact

● Advocate for yourself and question your own competencies/abilities.
● The field instructor may need to point out where contact is happening.

3. Not having enough work for BSW students to do

● Take initiative — create a project or evaluation of an intervention at the agency.
● Use the fact that you are a “new face” in this agency -- to see where the needs may be, and put them into a proactive plan or project.

4. Limited internship experience—learned a lot in one area but little experience with anything else

● Explain this to field instructor; have a plan of what you would like to do.
● Look for more learning opportunities within the community.

5. Not being challenged; doing same things all year

● Discuss in supervision how your placement can be more meaningful.
● Create a project, take more initiative.

III. Other Setting Specific Concerns Noted

Other Student Setting Concerns

1. Office politics

● First, be aware of them and then understand their implications.
● Figure out how to navigate within these politics with your field instructor.

2. Gossip with/about other agency staff

● Walk away and avoid getting involved.
● Seek assistance from your field instructor if problematic for you.

3. Emotional stress

● Provide an opportunity to discuss concerns with your field instructor and brainstorm solutions.
● Ask field instructor to assist you with developing better coping and time management skills, understand his/her boundaries, and utilize peers for support.
4. Interns treated unfairly; feel they are looked down upon
   ● Discuss placement expectations so that everyone is clear about duties and responsibilities.
   ● Seek assistance from your field instructor.

5. Feeling as if clients are stuck in one place -- work is not progressing quickly enough
   ● Meet regularly with staff to discuss progress, ways to speed up progress, and define realistic expectations.
   ● Celebrate small successes of clients more proactively.

IV. Scheduling Concerns

Student Scheduling Concerns Reported

1. Going to school and internship interchangeably (i.e. class 2 days, field 3 days)
   ● Organization and time management skills are critical — develop them.
   ● Consider ways to define allocated timeslots each day to facilitate transitions, i.e., keep journals, meditate, exercise, yoga, etc.

2. Time management deficient with intensity of senior level courses
   ● Prioritize needs and wants, set up calendar with specific due dates, exams, etc., and break tasks into increments.
   ● Start school assignments earlier.

3. Placement requires evening work
   ● This should have been discussed in pre-placement interview -- talk with your supervisor about it.
   ● Often social workers have to do extra work to accommodate clients after hours. Plan accordingly, as this is our “practice world.”

4. Physically tired when adjusting from class to work schedule
   ● Look at your time management schedule and be sure to schedule personal or “down time” to exercise, meditate, chill out.
   ● Be sure you get adequate rest and good nutrition—review next day’s schedule in prior evening.

5. Making up for missed intern hours
   ● Try to earn additional hours each week so you have some flexibility if you are out sick or need extra study time.
● Talk with your supervisor. Are there any non-traditional hours available for projects you could do? – i.e., meet your mom at grocery store over the weekend and assist her with a budgeting lesson.

V. Other Student Concerns Noted

1. Preparing for termination from placement
   ● Seek supervision about completing final projects and identify client concerns for termination.
   ● Voice these concerns with your field instructor.

2. Desire for new learning challenges in different settings
   ● Speak directly with your field instructor; advocate for yourself.
   ● Have you shown yourself to be competent? How so?

3. Nervous about performing in internship
   ● Be honest in supervision.
   ● Be willing to be open to any constructive suggestions.

4. Learning to interact with professionals from other disciplines
   ● Advocate for yourself in supervision for shadowing possibilities.
   ● Ask questions, and initiate developing professional relationships.

5. Not having direct practice experiences at internship that correlate with course assignments
   ● Process with field instructor about assignments and responsibilities.
   ● Communicate the need for help ASAP. We ask our clients to seek help when necessary — start to model this behavior.

   Resources and Supports Identified by Students and Field Instructor Responses

I. Resources within the Field

Resources within the Field Reported by Students

● Supervisor
● Networking with other agency staff
● Supervisor flexibility with hours
● Observing supervisor interact with clients and other professionals.
● Allowing the first week to be a “learning week” to read manuals, policies, etc.
Field Instructors Added these Ideas

- Refer to manuals and policies first when there is a question; try to find your answers first, before asking.
- Develop well thought out organized questions.

**Resources outside the Field Identified by Students and Field Instructor Responses**

II. Resources outside the Field

- Talking to classmates and family members for support.
- Dr. Artelt (Coordinator of BSW Field Education).
- Faculty liaison.
- Information on communication styles learned in class.
- Talking to former interns.

Field Instructors added these ideas

- Take initiative to research the organization, population served, community, national/international trends, best practices, etc., to gain further perspectives and deeper understandings of the agency in its “community of care.”
- Try problem-solving with field instructor before going to faculty due to: 1) task clarification and 2) mature problem-solving. Solve concerns at level of impact and concern first, before going up the ladder.
- Model professional behavior in taking more initiative for your own learning.

**Field Instructor Roles and Responsibilities**

*Planning role*

The field instructor carries an important planning function for the student’s internship. In some agencies, some or all of these activities may be carried out by the agency’s administrator or a coordinator for social work student placements. These planning functions include:

1. Communicate information to the Field Education Office about potential practicum openings and any information that may impact the nature or quality of the practicum.
2. Following receipt of the student’s practicum application from the Field Education Office, the field instructor confirms that the referral appears to be an appropriate one and responds to the student’s request for scheduling an interview.
3. Should the field instructor learn information in the interview that leads her/him to question the viability of the practicum, s/he is responsible to discuss the concerns with the Field Education Office for immediate appropriate action.
4. After the interview, the field instructor should complete the interview tracking form indicating whether or not the student is accepted for placement. This form is signed by the student and then forwarded by the student or the field instructor to the Field Education Office.
**Teaching Role**

Throughout the field placement, the field instructor’s primary role is as a teacher and facilitator of student learning. To this end the field instructor:

1. Provides for the student’s orientation to the agency’s policies and procedures, ethical standards, and safety precautions.

2. Negotiates and plans student assignments in accordance with the practicum objectives as identified in each practicum syllabus.

3. Provides educational supervision/field instruction for each student at least one hour per week.

4. Serves as an advocate for the student within the agency by facilitating the student’s access to productive learning experiences and other learning activities/resources (for example, student participation in activities outside the agency such as professional conferences, relevant library work or field visits to other programs) during the practicum.

5. Evaluates the student’s performance in the agency with regard to the specified practicum objectives.

**Off-Site BSW or MSW Field Instructor/On-Site Preceptor Model**

In selected situations and with prior approval from the director of field education and/or the coordinator of BSW field education, an off-site BSW or MSW field instructor/on-site preceptor model of field instruction may be utilized by a field agency which does not have a BSW or MSW degreed employee available for field instruction. These situations usually occur in new, “cutting edge” areas of practice where social work is just beginning its impact and which the School of Social Work wants to develop. Off-site BSW or MSW field instructors are selected jointly by the targeted agency and the director of field education in consultation with the field education faculty.

Responsibilities for field education using this model are outlined below.

**Off-Site BSW or MSW Field Instructor**

1. Must meet eligibility criteria for field instructors.

2. Collaborates with the on-site supervisor in assisting the student with the development of the Learning Plan.

3. Meets weekly with the student in a supervisory session to review progress of student toward achievement of learning objectives and to assist student with the integration of practice realities and theoretical concepts from a social work perspective.
4. Meets periodically with the student and the on-site supervisor to evaluate student performance and modify the Learning Plan if necessary.

5. Assumes primary responsibility for submitting to the School the written evaluation and grade recommendation for the student at the end of each semester.

6. Assumes primary responsibility for meeting with the assigned faculty liaison and student during the semester to review student progress, and for alerting the liaison in a timely manner of any problems or potential problems which might interfere with a successful educational outcome.

**On-Site Task Supervisor**

1. Assumes primary responsibility for orienting the student to the agency, to agency staff, and to work projects.

2. Works with the off-site BSW or MSW field instructor and student to create the Learning Plan, which includes learning objectives and practice tasks.

3. Assumes primary responsibility for supervising the daily work of the student as described in the Learning Plan.

4. Meets periodically with the student and the off-Site BSW or MSW field instructor to evaluate student performance and modify the Learning Plan, if necessary. The on-site supervisor may meet with the faculty liaison to review student progress, at the request of the student, the off-site BSW or MSW field instructor or the liaison.
Chapter 3:  Selection of Field Agencies, Criteria, and Field Instructors

Agencies and social workers may make inquiries regarding becoming a field instructor. Information about this process is on the web page of the School in the Field Education section. Once approved and having had interns, agencies and field instructors are evaluated by their intern at the end of the internship. That evaluation form is on the BSW field education webpage.

The School draws on the following criteria for field site selection:

1. Administrative policies regarding service to clients, to other agencies, and to the community should be consistent with the sound standards of practice appropriate to the particular type of agency.

2. The agency should show stability of program and of financial support. Alternatively, it may be at the cutting edge of innovative programming or practice.

3. The agency should show ability to respond to the changing needs of the community.

4. The agency should show capability for accommodating students.

5. Preference is given to agencies that can provide stipends to financially needy students.

6. The agency must be endeavoring to meet progressive standards of practice.

7. Agency should have formal safety policies and procedures.

8. Potential for School/agency cooperative efforts (joint research projects, consultation, and in-service training).

9. Commitment on the part of the agency to enter into a long-term relationship with the School involving the training of numerous students over time.

10. The agency and school will enter into a contractual agreement regarding the mutual expectations for affiliation.

Field Instruction Criteria

1. The agency must offer a favorable setting and atmosphere conducive for learning.

2. The agency must provide training opportunities in general practice methods and/or in concentrations applicable to the School’s curriculum.

3. The agency must have one or more staff members who qualify as field instructors.
4. Adequate facilities must be available. These include provision of office space, work materials, and equipment as needed for the student. The student’s use of agency cars must be included in the agency’s insurance policy if driving is expected of students (pages 15-16).

5. The agency must allow all field instructors time for attending field instructor training offered by the School of Social Work.

6. The agency must allow all field instructors time for preparation for student instruction, for regular conferences with the student, consultation with School faculty, and, if needed, attendance at meetings held at the School.

7. The agency must share the agency policy regarding reimbursement for any costs (such as background checks or travel expenses) incurred in the course of accepting or carrying out a practicum at the agency at the student’s interview for placement.

8. The agency agrees that no student trainees accepted by the agency will be discriminated against on the basis of race/ethnicity, sex, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, disability, Vietnam-era veteran status, or sexual orientation.

9. As required by federal and state law and by University of Georgia policy, field placements, as a whole, must be accessible to students with disabilities. The “as a whole” requirement means that students with disabilities should have the same kinds of educational opportunities—including field placements in particular kinds of settings—as students without disabilities. However, given the wide range of disabilities, it is possible that not every placement site will have the capability to accommodate every student. It may not be feasible, for example, for a site to accommodate students who use wheelchairs because of the site’s location and existing architecture, but this same site could easily accommodate students with visual or hearing impairments. Every effort is made by the field instruction program in consultation with the Disability Resource Center to ensure equal access to practicum opportunities.

Agency Safety Guidelines

Most agencies are under enormous pressure. Reduced budgets and clients with increasingly critical needs and histories of negative involvement with social services have resulted in increasing tensions in social work settings. As a result, social workers have experienced a variety of threatening situations, and some have been harmed. Social work students cannot be completely insulated from the realities of professional life, nor should they be. On the other hand, students frequently lack the experience and skills that help more seasoned practitioners assess danger and take appropriate precautions. The School recognizes its responsibility to help prepare students to handle potentially dangerous situations by providing students with safety training and classroom content on safety issues. However, we also need to make a serious effort to try to reduce risk in field settings. Please see Appendix A for more safety information.
Agency Selection Criteria

The following guidelines are designed to supplement the School’s agency selection criteria. Modification of guidelines for particular students and special circumstances may be made in the student’s educational agreement with the explicit approval of the faculty liaison to the agency and the Field Education Office. Moreover, it is recognized that the implementation of these guidelines may take some time. A liaison may determine that, while an agency is not currently meeting all guidelines, it is making a good faith effort to do so and current conditions are sufficiently safe to proceed with a field placement.

1. A field agency should have a policy and/or procedures on safety covering the following matters:
   a. Building and office security.
   b. Emergency procedures, including when and how to summon security or police assistance.
   c. Staff responsibilities and procedures governing the management of violent clients.
   d. Safety on home visits, including when, where, and under what conditions visits should or should not be made, when the student should be accompanied, and how backup is provided (see four and five below).
   e. Alcohol and drug use policy formulated and posted.
   f. Guns and other weapons policy formulated and posted.
   g. Procedures for logging and communicating with staff and students all incidents or threats of violence.
   h. Policy for aftermath of assault and threat of assault. Provision of support services for victim’s family and/or staff and clients who may have witnessed the assault.
   i. Relationship with police should be established.

2. The agency should provide each student with a copy of the above policies as part of the student orientation to the agency, and provide training on safety issues and procedures. Consideration should be given to in-service training on clinical and administrative management of violent clients and violent situations outside the agency. The agency and each of its programs should have a well-rehearsed specific plan of action in which students know exactly what to do in case of danger, from recognition of the signs of agitation to code words for signaling for help, when to call for police, clearing the building, etc. This plan of action should be rehearsed with students placed at the agency and reviewed on a regular basis.

3. Though a student has the right to refuse a dangerous assignment, a common understanding about the kinds of assignments that are appropriately safe should be reached by the student, the field instructor, and the faculty liaison. The following types of activities should be discussed with the faculty liaison to the agency to determine if these activities should be assigned to a student:
   a. Physical restraint of clients.
   b. Agencies may not require students to transport clients.
   c. Transportation of a client with a recent history of violent behavior.
   d. Treatment of a client with a history of violence.
e. Work in the agency at times when and/or in areas where other staff is not present.

4. The student’s field instructor should know, or be able to easily ascertain the student’s location during fieldwork hours and should discuss with the student any activities that require special planning with regard to safety.

5. Thorough preparation should be made for student home visits with consideration given to the following elements:
   
a. Selection of clients and home environments that are assessed to not be dangerous to the student.
   b. Provision of a safe means of transportation, whether by agency vehicle, the student’s car, or public transportation where such can be judged to be normally safe.
   c. Discussion of the neighborhood, including any potentially dangerous areas.
   d. Discussion of appropriate risk-reducing behaviors in the neighborhood and in the client’s home.
   e. Clarification of the purpose and development of a specific plan for the visit.
   f. Discussion of what to do should the client or anyone else present a threat to the student.
   g. Provision of appropriate support and backup. Depending on the situation and the student’s experience with home visits, this may range from an accompaniment by another worker or security person to immediate availability of telephone consultation. The student’s field instructor should know when a visit is to take place and at a minimum, telephone consultation must be available.
   h. In some situations, the student should be given permission to not make the home visit.

6. Consideration should be given to the following features pertaining to the agency facilities:
   
a. Adequate lighting inside and outside the agency.
   b. Adequate phone system for signaling emergencies.
   c. Arrange office furniture for an easy exit of client and worker.
   d. Minimize amount of unescorted traffic within the agency.

If a student is threatened or injured while in placement, or involved in an incident where his/her safety is or could be compromised, the incident should be reported immediately to the faculty liaison to the agency, to the Field Education Office (706) 542-5419, or to the Office of the Dean (706) 542-5424.


Criteria for the Selection of Field Instructors

Field instructors are nominated by the agency and approved by the School to provide practicum instruction to students. Field instructors select specific student assignments and instruct students in the skills necessary to fulfill these assignments in relation to the student’s course work.

Field instructors for BSW students should have an MSW. However, field instructors with a BSW
and several years of human services experience may be approved. Typically, the student is assigned to a field instructor on the basis of the student’s choice for a client population. The instruction of students can be shared between various agency personnel, but the School-appointed field instructor assumes overall responsibility for field instruction. Field instructors must be on site and on duty for at least 10 hours per week. During those periods when field instructor availability is not possible, other qualified staff members must be available for backup or consultation to the students.

Field instructors are strongly encouraged to participate in field instructor training provided by the Clark Atlanta University, Georgia State University and University of Georgia Field Education Collaborative. Detailed information about field instructor training workshops will be provided on a regular basis to all agencies that have a student assigned to them.

Persons nominated to be field instructors should be members of an agency staff who show:

1. evidence of competence in the practice of social work
2. concern for continuing professional development
3. commitment to the teaching function of social work education
4. possess the interest in and have the time available for the regular instruction of students
Chapter 4: Policies and Procedures

Application into BSW Field Education

Students must first be accepted into the BSW professional curriculum prior to making application into BSW field education. Once accepted, students meet for an orientation to field education meeting in mid-February. At that meeting students learn more about field education and begin the process of making application.

A student’s educational progress and levels of performance will be tracked from the time of applying to field education and at least to the first day of practicum. If the BSW field education coordinator has any concerns about the student’s performance (e.g. a GPA lower than the required minimum), then the BSW field education coordinator will meet with the student to assess whether the student may go forward.

The Field Placement Process

The BSW field education coordinator matches students to School approved field agencies and instructors based upon the learning needs of the students, other preferences and attributes for the students. The aim is to create a goodness of fit to meet the social work learning needs of the students. **Students are not to seek out their own placement agencies or to solicit from field instructors a placement.**

Students are usually informed of their internship placement by letter, approximately 5-6 weeks after submitting the field application. At that time, students are expected to research the agency and to prepare for the initial interview that the student must schedule with the field instructor within three days after receiving the placement letter. If both the student and field instructor regard the match as a good fit, the student completes the Field Tracking Form (included in the initial letter about the placement) and returns the Tracking Form to the Field Office. If the student does not consider the match to be a good fit, the student must contact the coordinator of BSW field education to schedule a meeting. Sometimes field instructors may decide that the student is not a good fit. When that is the case, the BSW field education coordinator will meet with the student to assess the situation and make further plans. Thereafter, if a field instructor will not accept a student based upon a second placement, then the BSW field education coordinator and the director of field education will discuss the situation to discuss a plan of action, one of which could be to call for an Academic and Professional Review. At the initial interview, students need to have a clear understanding of their role as an intern, expectations, and definite starting at ending times for the semester practicum.

Agency Assignment Process for Students with Disabilities

The placement procedures generally apply to students with disabilities. However, students with disabilities, particularly those with physical impairments and learning disabilities, are strongly urged to contact the BSW field education coordinator to discuss special considerations and to help arrange for aids or services that students may need to negotiate the practicum. In situations where a student is registered with the Disability Resource Center, the BSW field education
The coordinator will consult with Disability Resource Center personnel as necessary to arrange appropriate accommodations in the internship.

As required by federal and state law and by the University of Georgia policy, field placement as a whole must be accessible to students with disabilities. This “as a whole” requirement means that students with disabilities should have the same kinds of educational opportunities – including field placements in particular kinds of settings – as students without disabilities. However, given the wide range of disabilities, it is possible that not every placement site will have the capability to accommodate every student. It may not be feasible, for example, for a site to accommodate students who use wheelchairs because of the site’s location and existing architecture, but this same site could easily accommodate students with visual or hearing impairments. Every effort is made by the BSW field education coordinator to ensure equal access to practicum opportunities.

**Background Checks**

Students must be willing to submit to a possible background check on issues such as prior arrests and convictions for felonies and misdemeanors, abuse of illegal drugs, and certain motor vehicle offenses. If there are previous records or criminal charges pending against the student, she/he must schedule an appointment with a field faculty member to discuss the situation prior to submitting the field application. Additionally, students are advised to review any criminal background record for accuracy and completeness prior to having a practicum agency conduct its own review. The expense of a criminal background check may be covered by the agency, but the student may be required to sustain the cost at some agencies. Students who cannot pass a criminal history background check should carefully consider their plans for field practicum in concert with the BSW field education coordinator. The School cannot guarantee that the student will be accepted into a field placement. Many agencies currently require a clear background check and drug screen. Most agencies are not willing to accept students with a felony conviction and/or a positive drug screen test. Students who have a criminal history need to be aware that this may also affect their future ability to obtain a social work license.

**Student Self Disclosures**

Students need to be aware that when they participate in any form of internet social networking, they may be disclosing information about themselves which could possibly have a negative and perhaps deleterious impact on their personal character and professional development. Such occurrences often represent a cause for action for the field instructor or the field agency.

**Work Site Practicum and Prior Involvement**

BSW students are discouraged from interning at a place employment. Only through compelling reasons would consideration be given to permitting a field placement at a work site. If a student desires to pursue the idea of a placement at a current place of employment, then the following must be considered first.

1. Is the agency an approved field agency by the School?
2. Is the field instructor approved by the School?

If the above are affirmative, then the student must prepare a document requesting a worksite placement, which must contain responses to the following items.
1. How will the practicum tasks and responsibilities differ significantly from current work responsibilities? How will the new tasks and responsibilities help fulfill the field education learning plan?
2. Describe a typical schedule and duties performed.
3. For the proposed field instructor: Please describe your rationale for supporting the student’s request.

The BSW field education coordinator will evaluate the proposal along with the student and will make a determination.

Stipends

Agencies occasionally offer students stipends during their internship. Such an arrangement will be reviewed by the BSW field education coordinator and faculty field liaison to ensure that any tasks or other duties attached to the conditions of the stipend do not interfere with, impede, degrade, or conflict with the student’s learning needs or any other polices contained in this field education manual, the School of Social Work, or The University of Georgia.

Freedom of Information

Information about a student intern that a field instructor shares with the Field Education Office, BSW field education coordinator, or faculty liaison may be shared with the student. Similarly, students are free, if they wish, to see any forms or notes the Field Education Office or faculty personnel sometimes maintain on students to assist in planning and developing placements for them and assigning them to particular placements. All of these forms and notes are destroyed when students graduate.

Professional Liability Insurance

Students must obtain professional liability insurance coverage prior to beginning their practicum and must maintain coverage during the span of the practicum. The majority of the students choose to subscribe to the plan offered through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). If students choose this professional liability insurance plan, they must first become a member of NASW. This process often takes up to three months to complete and it is advised that students begin this during spring semester of their junior year. Proof of coverage for professional liability insurance must be submitted to the Field Office prior to starting practicum. Failure to do so will result in stopping and/or delaying the start of the practicum and may have other consequences, such as the agency deciding not to continue with the student. There are no exceptions. Significant delays because of failure to submit proof of liability coverage can delay the practicum and possibly prevent the student from completing the semester practicum.
Grading

Grading for all BSW field education courses is based on the A-F, plus or minus configurations. Grades are assigned by the faculty liaison. Students must earn a B- or better in all BSW field education courses as stipulated in the BSW Program Handbook. Students who earn below a B- will be referred for an Academic Review in the BSW program. Academic Review: If the practicum termination raises question(s) as to whether the student should continue in the BSW program or whether the student's Program of Study should be significantly altered, an Academic Review may be convened as requested by the BSW field education coordinator. Request for an Academic Review may be made by the student, faculty liaison, and/or BSW field education coordinator.

Changing Placements and Termination of Field Placement.

A student's practicum may be terminated by the BSW field education coordinator, student, field instructor, an agency administrator, or faculty liaison for any of the following reasons:

Level of Student Preparation for the Practicum.

Although the BSW level student is in training and students are still learning, because of its nature as a professional program, it is assumed that the student has acquired the competencies expected for participation in the work-world (e.g., arriving on time, managing one's schedule, communicating with others as appropriate, presenting and conducting one's self in a professional manner--including dress and other aspects of self-presentation as well as engaging in appropriate interpersonal interactions). Evidence to the contrary of the above expectations, given appropriate efforts by the field instructor and faculty liaison to assist the student in remedying these deficits, will constitute grounds for the agency's withdrawal of the practicum for that student.

- Student failure to meet the expected standards for ethical professional practice as noted above in the section, “Professional Ethics.”
- The agency's failure to provide the expected learning experiences and/or appropriate supervision or to meet any of the other expectations identified in the Memorandum of Understanding between the agency and the University.
- Unexpected events in the life of the student or in the agency that jeopardize the quality of the student's learning experience.
- "Mismatch" between the field instructor and/or agency and the student. Sometimes, differences in learning or interpersonal styles emerge as the student and field instructor begin to work together rendering the practicum less than optimally productive for a student's learning. Such circumstances are rare but they may generate recommendations for a change in the practicum arrangements.

Any number of the circumstances cited above are not necessarily anyone's fault. In some instances, termination of the practicum reflects the fact that the practicum is highly successful in helping the student discover that social work is not what was expected and is not appropriate for her/him. Sometimes, it is possible for a change to be made in the student's assignment, either to another unit of the agency or to another agency altogether. This action may necessitate extension
of the student's program and may require a detailed plan to make up any lost hours.

*Termination Procedures*

Whatever the reasons prompting consideration of practicum termination, the student, field instructor, faculty field liaison and the BSW field Education coordinator will work as a team to resolve problems and to come up with appropriate solutions.

*Field Instructor Initiated Termination*

As soon as the field instructor identifies issues that may place the practicum in jeopardy, it is incumbent upon the field instructor to discuss, as soon as possible, any such problems with the student and the faculty liaison. The BSW field coordinator should also be contacted if the issue does not appear to be resolved. If issues cannot be resolved, the field instructor can request termination of the placement. This request should be provided in written form with the pertinent issues outlined. This is helpful in reviewing the student’s needs and to assist with future planning. The faculty liaison will provide a written summary of the termination decision (including the event(s) prompting the termination and the reasons for it) to the BSW field education coordinator, and the BSW program director, with a copy to the student.

Activate appropriate "next-steps" with the student, either with the BSW Field Office for the student's placement in another setting, or with the BSW program director for an academic review of the student's standing in the program.

*Student Initiated Termination*

Some students, for various reasons, may seek approval to leave their placement agency during their fieldwork experience. Compelling reasons to leave the first internship may result in some students continuing their fieldwork in another agency, while other students may choose to withdraw from field and/or the BSW program altogether. **Changing field sites can only be based on compelling circumstances, and these are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** In addition, the BSW field education coordinator must approve this change. This procedure often requires the student to undergo another orientation to an agency and start-up delays are inevitable. Before any decision regarding a transfer is made, students should:

- Discuss any concerns they have with their field instructor.
- Arrange to see the faculty liaison to discuss the nature of the educational concerns and the steps already taken to address them with the field instructor.
- Decide with the field instructor and the faculty liaison if the current placement can be workable for the student.
- Work with the field instructor and liaison, if a transfer is recommended, to develop termination procedures and a time frame within which the transfer is appropriate and feasible. Alternative placement within the agency will be considered before those external to the agency.
- Meet with BSW faculty field liaison to discuss educational objectives and seek guidance.
- Student should arrange for a meeting with BSW field education coordinator and faculty
liaison to discuss options around termination. In some cases it may be necessary for the student to provide a written explanation about this request.

**Schedule and Internship Hours**

The weekly schedule for all practica is established on an individual basis with the agency in which the student is placed. Schedules are to take into account the needs of the agency, school, and individual student. Students will, from time to time, extend their clock-hours beyond the hours allocated to the practicum in order to meet professional responsibilities or obtain access to special activities. When students have engaged more than the needed weekly clock hours, they may take "compensatory" time off from their practicum. To assure that the time off will not disrupt the student's practicum responsibilities, this should be arranged with the approval of the field instructor. All students will remain in their field placement sites throughout the entire semester; i.e., "compensatory time" may not be used to shorten the length of the practicum. Some practicum sites have incorporated evening and weekend hours in order to respond to the needs of their clients. However, most agencies still provide the majority of client services during the typical workweek of Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. It is of utmost importance that students are in agencies when there are maximum opportunities for interaction with clients and other professional staff to facilitate student participation in professional decision-making and collaborative work.

Students need to clarify agency expectations for their practicum hours at the time of the initial interview with the agency. Any excess hours accumulated from fall semester cannot be rolled over into the spring semester.

**Vacations, Holidays, Semester Breaks, other Absences from the Practicum**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving week are observed by the University of Georgia and students are expected to be absent from the practicum on those days. In addition, students may take any holidays observed by the agency without penalty as long as the student has verified that the clock-hour requirements of the practicum are not compromised. Students will be excused from practicum if the University is closed because of inclement weather, but the hours do need to be completed by the end of the semester. Additionally, students will be excused from practicum for Fall and Spring breaks. It should be noted that students in a school setting will take their breaks on the school system’s not the university’s schedule. However, the total number of clock hours for practicum must still be met. It is understood that an occasional illness or other emergency may necessitate absence from the practicum. Students are expected to work out these arrangements with the field instructor; this can usually be accomplished by using compensatory time that most students build up by putting in extra hours (e.g., for evening hours or meetings). If the absence is more than a few days, the faculty liaison should be notified. In no instance will arrangements be approved that result in a practicum deficit in the required total clock hours or the specified time-span.

Occasionally, a class instructor will make special plans for an activity that is not on a regularly scheduled class day. In such cases, the student and field instructor must assess whether the
student can be absent from the practicum at that time, and appropriate plans must be made by the student for professional attention to agency responsibilities.

Students often have the opportunity to attend professional conferences that may be scheduled during practicum days. The student must negotiate with the field instructor as to whether or not this time can be applied to their practicum hours. Generally, if the training/conference is compatible with the field agency’s mission and responsibilities, the hours could be counted as practicum hours. The student must negotiate these requests early enough to arrange for coverage as needed.

In all instances where a student is absent from the field, the agency must be notified of the absence at the earliest possible time in order to arrange for coverage. Absences from the field are allowable for good and compelling reasons. **However, absences must be made up before a grade can be earned for that semester.**

It is anticipated that students who need to make up absences from the field will typically be able to do so during the final week of the semester, which is designated as the exam/paper period on the academic calendar. However, there may be circumstances in which a student is absent for good and compelling reasons from the field for such an extended period of time that the absences cannot be made up in the semester in which they occurred. In such a case, if a plan is approved by the field instructor and the faculty liaison to make up the absences in a subsequent semester, then the grade of I (Incomplete) will be entered by the faculty liaison and removed once the absences are made up.

**Student Continuation in the Practicum and/or With Clients**

Occasionally, agencies seek to employ a student with whom they have worked in the practicum. Should that situation arise while the student is still in the practicum, the student and the field instructor must bring that to the attention of the School by discussing those arrangements with the faculty liaison and BSW field education coordinator. In such instances, the faculty liaison will assure that the necessary safeguards are in place to protect the integrity of the learning experience of the student. Should the point of employment be after the termination of the practicum, no special arrangements will need to be made.

Following the end of a student's practicum, it is strongly recommended that the student not continue to provide service in the agency as a volunteer. Only in response to a request by the agency, and only in rare circumstances, even then, should a student ever plan to continue to render professional services to a client to whom he/she was assigned as part of the practicum.

Under no circumstances should a student continue to work with clients initiated during their practicum and not be under the auspice of the agency. Continuation of service to clients after the completion of the practicum, unless specifically requested to do so by the agency, will be considered a breach of professional social work ethics.
Safety

The safety of students in practicum is of prime importance to the School and to field agencies. It is imperative that students feel safe in order to carry out their responsibilities in the field. If safety concerns arise for a student, it is important that the student discuss these safety concerns with their field instructor. If, after gathering information to realistically assess the situation and to learn how to provide appropriate protection, the student still does not feel safe in order to carry out assignments, s/he is encouraged to renegotiate those assignments with the help of the field instructor. When appropriate, s/he should also consult the faculty liaison for assistance.

Sexual Harassment

The University of Georgia is committed to providing a professional working environment that is free of sexual harassment. The sexual harassment policy extends to fieldwork and can be found in the BSW Program Handbook. The School of Social Work will not condone harassment in any form and may take action against any agency or field instructor who violates this policy.

Student Use of Automobiles to Transport Clients and Use of Personal Cell Phones

Students are not allowed to transport clients in their own automobiles or use agency vehicles to transport clients unless the agency’s automobile insurance policy has specified the coverage is applicable to students (agency insurance coverage for “volunteers” is not sufficient). Students are not allowed to give agency clients their personal cell phone numbers. Students should contact the field office if the field instructor or agency staff requests that the student do this.

Policy Conflicts

Should conflicts arise between agency and School practicum policies, the field instructor and/or the student should immediately notify the faculty liaison and/or the BSW field education coordinator, who will endeavor to work out a solution that is satisfactory to both the agency and the School. No alternative policy may be established which conflicts with the Memorandum of Understanding established between the University and the agency.

Grade of Incomplete

Students will not be allowed to carry a grade of Incomplete or "I" for social work courses into their practicum. Thus, all Incompletes must be completed by the beginning of the semester in which the student is scheduled to enter practicum. Failure to complete full responsibilities for course work will delay a student's progression in field education.

Course Sequencing Modifications

BSW field education cannot be taken on a part time basis. Other modifications, which do not conflict with BSW program, UGA and School of Social Work policies can be made only under strongly compelling reasons and situations. Modifications must be approved by the BSW field education coordinator, the BSW program director, and the director of field education.
Appendix A

PERSONAL SAFETY/RISK REDUCTION*

Guidelines on Personal Safety

Due to increasing incidents of violence against social workers, the School is attempting to make students aware of safety issues and be better prepared to handle potentially dangerous situations. Training in personal safety is provided to students early in the first term of enrollment; content includes awareness, prevention, and management of dangerous situations at home, on the street and while traveling, in public places, and in the field. Handouts on this content are provided at the training session. Also, agency safety guidelines and information on student health care safety preparation appear in this Manual. Because safety issues relate to fieldwork, campus life, and many other settings, general information about risk assessment and reduction is also included in this section. This information can be used to assess environmental risk levels, to determine if a client or another individual could be dangerous, to make decisions about managing risky situations, or to protect oneself or clients.

It is very difficult to predict when dangerous behavior will occur. The factors most often considered to be predictors are: history of violent behavior, male clients, abuse of drugs and/or alcohol. Aggressive behavior may be direct or indirect; determinants include fear, anger, overstress, chemical alteration, need for attention or power, and paranoia. The important variable is the intent or perceived intent of the individual who appears to be dangerous. It is important to determine whether the behavior is a characteristic adaptive style or if it is reactive to a particular or current situation. However, the best protection in a threatened or actual assault is to follow your intuition. Problem-solving skills are also transferable to risky situations: gather data, evaluate the information, decide on a course of action based on the evaluation, implement it, evaluate the outcome and adjust accordingly. This process may occur in an instant or over a longer period.

The goals of risk prevention and management strategies should be:

- protect the client, staff, and others in the environment
- help the individual gain control with the least amount of pain and guilt
- help the individual focus on the source of anger, fear, frustration, etc.
- assist the individual to express these feelings verbally rather than in actions

General Risk Reduction Guidelines

- Walk with a sense of purpose. Be aware of body language.
- Be alert to people around you. Beware of strangers who approach and speak to you. Keep at a safe distance and keep moving.
- Do not walk on the side of the street where people are loitering. Walk on the outside of the sidewalk, away from possible hiding places.
- Be aware of safe places such as stores, library, school, and community centers to use as refuge.
• Do not carry a purse or bag. If you must carry one, conceal it or use a shoulder bag or backpack.
• Wear sensible appropriate clothing, low-heeled shoes, and no jewelry that could be snatched off or wrapped around your neck.
• Do not give money to people who ask for it.
• Assess multi-story buildings for safety. If you take the elevator, observe elevator interior before entering. If the elevator appears unsafe, wait for the next elevator or consider taking the stairs; be aware of who is in the stairwell and how far apart the exits are. If a suspicious person enters the elevator after you have entered it, exit before the door closes. Stand next to the control panel. If accosted, press all buttons.

*Risk Reduction Guidelines in Fieldwork*

Students should receive a specific orientation to agency policies and procedures regarding risk management. If the field instructor does not provide this orientation, students must ask for it. Students should also learn about the agency’s informal methods for assessing and handling risky situations.

• Each situation is different, but the guidelines that follow may generally apply in the management of potentially dangerous situations.

• Appreciate realistic limitations. Be reasonable about what is and is not possible. Know when to stay and leave. (A sound preventive approach is to avoid seeing clients with reputations for unprovoked assaults or those in acute paranoid psychotic distress in an empty office without backup staff or security available.)

• Keep your work area as safe as possible, keeping it clear of items which could be harmful to anyone involved in a physical intervention. For example, keep objects which can be used as weapons (ashtrays, sharp objects, a hot cup of coffee) away from clients.

• Where possible, alert staff members that assistance may be needed before entering the crisis situation.

• Act calmly. Keep the scream out of your voice. An emotional or aggressive response to a distraught individual is likely to reinforce that person’s aggression. Remember, clients and others who are violent are often reacting to feelings of helplessness and loss of control. Therefore, you need to be in control of the situation.

• Take a non-threatening posture to avoid appearing confrontational, but take a protected posture as well. This usually means standing slightly sideways to the individual, at a safe distance away from sudden lunges, punches, and kicks, with arms and hands held near the upper body for possible quick self-protection. Avoid a “stare down” by periodically breaking eye contact.

• Don’t walk away from the individual who is escalating. Acknowledge the individual’s feelings and attempt to talk him/her down. Encouraging the individual to sit down may
sufficiently delay or divert the possibility of attack. Usually a one-to-one situation with available staff at a distance works well. The most appropriate staff member to be with the individual is the one who has the best rapport with him/her, not necessarily the staff with the most authority or rank.

- Observe the progress of the aggression and the stages of escalation. Identify those actions on your part that serve to calm and those that serve to inflame the individual, and act accordingly.

- Avoid sudden movements or the issuance of strident commands, as these may only inflame the individual. Whenever possible, allow the individual to make behavioral choices. Directives or alternatives should be stated concretely and in terms of actions which can be performed immediately. Depending on the cognitive abilities of the individual, limit-setting may take two forms:
  - Direct: State clearly and specifically the required or prohibited behavior.
  - Indirect: Allow the individual to choose between two acceptable behavioral alternatives.

- Do not touch the individual unless you are willing to restrain him/her, and only when there is sufficient staff power to do so in a manner consistent with the agency’s “take down” or containment policies.