

## Introduction



Field Instruction in the Undergraduate Social Work Program at Alabama A&M University is guided by a well thought-out set of policies and responsibilities. These standards allow the program to provide continuity of service to all students in a professional manner.

**Policy Statement.** Alabama A. & M. University's Undergraduate Social Work Program maintains an excellent caliber of teaching faculty to support the implementation of the Council on Social Work Education's mandate to ensure the generalist approach in field instruction. Students who have met all of the prerequisites for field instruction are approved for senior-level field, which utilizes an ecological perspective for entry-level practice.

## Responsibilities Of The Undergraduate Social Work Program



The program's responsibilities are as follows:

1. To select agencies and settings that will offer adequate resources including space, time for student training and comprehensive learning experience to fulfill the educational objectives of field experience.
2. To participate, in cooperation with agency administrators and training coordinators, in selection of appropriate field instructors.
3. To refer students likely to be acceptable to specific agencies.
4. To provide background information on student(s) referred to agencies.
5. To select for each student the agency most likely to meet his/her particular interests, talents goals and learning needs.
6. To screen and prepare students to ensure their readiness for beginning practice.
7. To furnish agency personnel with a manual, course outlines and any other data on policies and procedures pertinent to structuring field experiences within the goals and objectives of the program.
8. To assist the agency and field instructor in planning an educational program for the student.

9. To assist students in resolving any problems or questions arising in relation to their field work.
10. To provide periodic field instructors' meetings or workshops focusing on class/field integration, and professional development issues.
11. To ensure via the Coordinator of Field Instruction the above responsibilities.

## **Responsibilities Of Coordinator Of Field Instruction**



The Coordinator of Field Instruction who works in collaboration with the Undergraduate Program Coordinator has responsibility for the coordination of the undergraduate field instruction component of the curriculum. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Development and Coordination of Evaluation Processes of the Field
  1. Responsibility to keep Field Manuals accurate and current.
  2. Establishment and revision of student evaluation instruments.
  3. Establishment and revision of all evaluation instruments to be completed by students on agency placement, field instructors and field seminar leaders, where applicable.
2. Coordination and Placement of All Students
  1. Orient students to the placements and the placement process.
  2. Evaluate students' needs, interests and readiness for fieldwork by interviewing students. Consult with other faculty, advisors and instructors as needed.
  3. Assist students in selecting agencies for fieldwork.
  4. Make arrangements for agency interviews.
  5. Establish and maintain contact with agencies throughout the placement process to ensure that as far as possible their special needs are met.
  6. Advise students with special problems related to placements and where feasible develop plans to resolve them.

7. Maintain contact with academic advisors in relation to their student's placement needs/academic progress.
8. Assign faculty liaison to field students and agencies.
3. Maintenance of the Present Field Placements
  1. Maintain a current directory of field placements.
  2. Act as liaison with the administrators of agencies.
  3. Negotiate university/agency agreements as needed.
  4. Keep up-to-date by making periodic visits for reassessment of the agency evaluations.
  5. Prepare and render student placement evaluation instruments.
4. Selection of New Placements
  1. Follow up on requests by agencies for student placements by making visits and completing a study of the agency.
  2. Have a Field Agency Information Form completed on all proposed new settings.
5. Coordination and Liaison Between Supervisors, Students and Faculty
  1. Maintain open communication among all parties involved, concerning learning or related problems, including student, field instructor, faculty liaison and educational advisor.
6. Establishment of Policy and Procedures for the Selection and Evaluation of Agency Supervisors
  1. Interview all candidates for agency supervisor assessing their overall capabilities for teaching.
  2. Recruit field supervisors
  3. Complete a vita on all prospective field supervisors.
  4. Maintain a review of the supervisor teaching through student evaluations, discussions with the appropriate faculty consultants and periodic conferences with the individual supervisor
7. Conduct two (2) training seminars for agency field instructors per semester.

## Responsibilities Of Faculty Liaison



The Coordinator of Field Instruction is delegated the primary responsibility for Field Instruction, but faculty liaisons are a significant component of the instructional program. Faculty are assigned a certain number of students to monitor in the field for the academic year. The faculty liaison represents the Program and serves as the primary link between the agency, supervisor, and the student. The Faculty Liaison will:

1. Serve as principal liaison between the Undergraduate Program and the Agency including appropriate communication with its executive and/or training Coordinator about the total curriculum and the particular goals of field instruction.
2. Obtain information about agency programs and personnel, which is given to the Field Coordinator to assist in overall Field Program planning for generalist placement assignments.
3. Keep the agency informed and up-to-date on educational changes within the Program, and provide information about student's past work experience, educational backgrounds and current academic progress.
4. Clarify Program's expectations as to what the student should know and be able to do when he/she leaves field.
5. Clarify level of performance expected and assist supervisor in making this determination.
6. Suggest learning experiences and assignments, which would facilitate students' meeting expectations.
7. Advise supervisor of the importance of: (a) making expectations clear to the student; (b) providing regularly scheduled conferences; (c) encouraging student responsibility for own learning; and (d) maintaining on-going evaluative feedback to the student as to his/her progress.
8. Make periodic visits (at least two per block semester) to orient supervisor and review progress and consult with the supervisor about learning progress, patterns, problems.
9. Be available to the supervisor for immediate consultation when requested.

10. Be available to the student to discuss any aspect or difficulty concerning the field placement.
11. Determine and recommend field grade based on knowledge of the student's work and the supervisor's recommendation.
12. Coordinate the return of evaluations by the scheduled deadline.
13. Confirm that the supervisor has the necessary curriculum and evaluation materials.
14. Consult with the Coordinator of Field Instruction and the student's educational advisor, when appropriate, as to the student's progress and/or problems.
15. Evaluate the field placement and supervisor and make recommendations to the Coordinator of Field Instruction.

## Responsibilities Of Agency



The agency responsibilities are as follows:

1. To determine, in cooperation with the educational institution, a specific placement for the student. The assignment should provide a broad range of generalist learning experience.
2. To provide in agreement with the Alabama A&M Undergraduate Social Work Program a qualified MSW supervisor. This implies that the agency agrees to allow the agency field instructor adequate time to devote to supervising the student, conferring with the Coordinator of Field Instruction and Faculty Liaison, and attending instructional workshops conducted for agency field supervisors.
3. To accept and enforce a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation and disability in accepting students for placement.
4. To allow the student to utilize the generalist approach in the delivery of services to his/her assigned caseload.
5. To permit the student to be assigned a specific caseload for which he or she will bear primary

responsibility under the supervision of an MSW agency field instructor.

6. To permit the student to utilize information from his/her caseload (excluding identifying information) for case presentation and analysis in the social work practice courses, SWK 309/310.
7. To orient the student to the agency's policies, procedures, and services as well as the general nature and needs of the agency's clientele.
8. To orient the student to the human service professional network in the wider community.
9. To assign a task supervisor, if necessary, to monitor the day-to-day performance of the student. If a task supervisor is required, the Coordinator of Field Instruction provides additional supervision to assure the social work focus is carried out.
10. To identify a satellite assignment to augment gaps in generalist practice opportunities.
11. To provide any reimbursement for extensive travel required by the placement agency. The University does not provide for this expense.

## **Responsibilities Of Agency Field Instructors**



The agency field instructor's responsibilities are as follows:

1. To become adequately knowledgeable of the philosophy, objectives, and goals of the Alabama A&M Undergraduate Social Work Program and the generalist approach to practice in order to provide appropriate supervision to the student. Agency field instructors are expected to attend the Undergraduate Social Work Program's conferences and workshops on field instruction process.
2. To provide continuing supervision to the student and to consult with the faculty liaison in regard to the student's field work.
3. To formulate the field instruction plan and to be responsible for fulfilling the agency's obligations as specified in the plan.

4. To review periodically the student's learning objectives and needs and to assist in making necessary revisions.
5. To work with the agency task supervisor to develop learning opportunities specifically related to the student's learning needs and objectives.
6. To assign, in conjunction with the agency task supervisor, a specific caseload and agency assignments for which the student primarily will be responsible. The assigned cases and responsibilities should permit the student to utilize various models, methods, and levels of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
7. To conduct structured supervisory sessions with the student each week (minimum of one hour).
8. To assist the faculty liaison in the evaluation of the student's performance in the practicum.
9. To enlist the aid of other qualified professionals in contributing to the education of the student, particularly an agency task supervisor if necessary.
10. To identify and assist in resolving problems arising in the practicum.
11. To identify and approve an Agency Task Supervisor, if necessary, with credentials in the human services to assist in the provision of daily task assignments and supervision.
12. To train and supervise agency task supervisor for student placement, if necessary.
13. To plan for the student's arrival at the agency with appropriate agency personnel, including development of draft field instruction plan.

## **Responsibilities Of The Agency Task Supervisor**



The agency task supervisor's responsibilities are as follows:

1. To have adequate skills and experience in the skill areas in which he or she is instructing the student in order to provide appropriate supervision.
2. To provide daily supervision to the student in skill areas, and to consult with the agency field

instructor, the faculty liaison and the Coordinator of Field Instruction in regard to the student's field work.

3. To assist in the implementation of the field instruction plan for the student.
4. To work with the agency field instructor to develop learning opportunities specifically related to the student's learning needs and objectives as well as the requirements of the field instruction plan.
5. To conduct structured and impromptu supervisory sessions with the student.
6. To identify and assist in resolving problems arising in the practicum
7. To assign daily tasks under the supervision of the Agency Field Instructor.

## **Responsibilities Of The Field Review Certification Committee**



The Field Review and Certification Committee (CR&CC) is composed of two MSW agency field instructors, two agency task supervisors, one Program alumnus and two senior field instruction students. The appointment of the committee members is made by the Coordinator of Field Instruction after approval of the Program Coordinator. Committee members are appointed to a one-year term.

The committee meets once a semester, and is chaired by the Coordinator of Field Instruction. The purpose of the committee is the review all aspects of the undergraduate field instruction program and advise the Coordinator of Field Instruction on how to improve the quality of field instruction. This committee represents an added level of input for the field instruction process to adequately meet students' learning needs.

## **Responsibilities Of The Field Student**



Students in Undergraduate Social Work Field Instruction also have criteria and responsibilities. It is in the best interest of students that they assume a light academic load during this instructional period (12 hours). Students must have completed all academic requirements with at least a "C" average (2.0 G.P.A.), have been accepted into the Undergraduate Social Work Program and have approval of their advisor to begin field instruction.

The University and the field instruction setting make a joint effort to provide students with an appropriate educational experience. In obtaining this goal, the Coordinator of Field Instruction and agency field instructors arrive at some basic expectations of

students in the performance of their duties, not unlike those of others working in the agency.

### **A. Student Guidelines:**

When students are placed in agencies, they become a part of the working structure with task assignments originating from the agency field instructor during the instructional period. The following guidelines are offered to field instruction students:

1. Adherence to NASW and NABSW Codes of Ethics.
2. Maintain confidentiality in all agency affairs, record and case materials.
3. Adhere to the attendance and punctuality procedures as established by the field agency and Undergraduate Social Work Program.
4. Continually evaluate professional growth and development through assessment of practice behaviors and skills.
5. Support and uphold the standards and principles of the profession in interdisciplinary associations.
6. Use professional standards and ethics as a guide when functioning with diverse client systems.
7. Promote the effective and humane operation of systems which provide people with services, resources, and opportunities.
8. Observe agency policy regarding service delivery and professional behavior.
9. Appropriately provide information and support.
10. Use interpersonal skills to develop meaningful relationships.
11. Attend regularly the required seminars on campus.
12. Be prompt at all regularly scheduled meetings with faculty liaison and bring an agenda of concerns, thereby taking an active part in the learning process.
13. Keep a record of practice hours on prescribed forms. Honor time commitments in the agency. The student should notify the agency Field Instructor as to when he or she will arrive if there is an emergency that prevents arriving at the agency on time. If tardiness continues

following repeated warnings student is subject to immediate removal from placement.

14. Observe the same holidays as the agency, additionally, students shall observe AAMU holidays. Make-up days should be discussed with field instructor in advance.
15. Exemplify a sense of responsibility toward work and clients. Yet, if a situation arises that qualifies as an emergency, please notify your agency field instructor for directions. The student is not responsible to handle situations for which they are not trained.
16. Understand inter-agency relationships and the importance of networking as a client advocate.
17. Be able to assess problems and set goals with clients.
18. Organize and complete assignments.
19. Work cooperatively with others.
20. Exemplify skill in oral and written communications.
21. Obtain NASW professional liability insurance, car insurance, transportation arrangements before commencing with the field placement. Proof should be provided to the Coordinator of Field. (Neither the University nor the Undergraduate Social Work Program will provide any personal insurance coverage or transportation).
22. Seek reimbursement for extensive travel from the placement agency. The University does not provide for this expense.