Information to Assist You While Beginning to Find Your MSW Field Placement

Why Field Education?
“As professionals in the making, social work students attend class to learn practice principles, values and ethical behaviors, a body of specialized knowledge, and the scientific basis for practice. In field placement, students apply, under supervision, what they have been learning in the classroom to real situations. Thus, the preparation to become a social work professional is composed of formal learning as well as practical experiences”.

What is the process to locate and confirm my Field Placement?
All students will be required to find and confirm their own internships. Field Education faculty will work with students who request help in identifying possible placements. MSW Field Placement Directories for Northern Arizona and the Phoenix Metro area are available.

- Foundation year students are required to submit a detailed field placement application, personal statement, and resume. Upon review of the material, an interview with a member of the Field Education Faculty may be requested.
- Advanced year (including Advanced Standing students) are required to submit an abbreviated field placement application and resume. Upon review of the material, an interview with a member of the Field Education Faculty may be requested.

Once students received confirmation of an internship offer, they will submit the Field Placement Confirmation Form. Field Education Director will finalize placement with an NAU Affiliation Agreement.

How do I begin?
Many social service agencies will have formal internship opportunities posted on their web site along with someone designated as an internship coordinator. It’s best to start by looking online at web sites or calling the agency directly and asking to speak with the internship coordinator or someone in HR. Please also share the document “FAQ for New Field Education Placement Sites” with any prospective site. Most placement sites will ask students to interview and clear a background check. If in Arizona, you will need to show proof of your Level One Fingerprint Clearance Card. It’s important to demonstrate strong professional skills and respond to emails and phone calls promptly.

What is a Field Instructor and what are the required qualifications?
The Field Instructor will serve as a mentor and instructor during the student’s internship and is someone employed at the field placement site. They will provide one hour of supervision per week and is responsible for assisting students in developing their learning contract, monitoring their progress, and completing both a mid-term and final evaluation. The Field Instructor must be a MSW with at least two years post-graduate experience. NAU and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), our national accrediting body, does not require Field Instructors to be in a leadership role within the agency to qualify as a Field Instructor.

How many hours are required for the field placement?
The Two-Year Program requires 900 clock hours at two different placement sites. The Advanced Standing requires 450 clock hours in one placement. Advanced Standing field placements must be in a different organization than the BSW placement.

- Foundation Year: 450 hours; 225 a semester (about 15 a week)
- Advanced Year: 450 hours; 225 a semester (about 15 a week)
Are Field Placements at place of employment allowed?
Employment Based Field Placement is not a guarantee and will be considered on an individual basis. There are special requirements for an internship at place of employment. There is an additional Employment Based Field Placement application for students who wish to request this type of placement. If approved, Employment Based Field Placement is only allowed for one of the two internships.

Field Placement Site Requirements and Common Types of Placements.
Field Placement sites need to offer students exposure to, and work within, the micro, mezzo, and macro practice fields. Some common types of field placement sites are:

- Community based mental health / behavior health – multiple programs
- Substance abuse treatment – both outpatient and inpatient
- Crisis Response with local police or fire departments
- Juvenile Probation / Adult Probation County or city run Victim Witness Services
- Hospital / Medical settings
  - Care Coordination
  - Palliative Care
  - Hospice Care
  - Behavioral Health
  - Cancer Treatment Centers
  - Child related rehab services
- School based settings with social worker or Special Education
- Community based services for children and families, both for-profit and non-profit
- Adult or Geriatric services
- Adult Protective Services
- Independent Hospice Agencies
- Child Welfare Agencies – both private and state (including adoption services and/or licensing)
- Veteran’s Administration or other Veteran outreach services
- Community based homeless or housing services
- Youth Shelters
- Domestic Violence shelters and outreach services
- Private Practice – as long as mezzo and macro practice is available
- Legal assistance offices
- Developmental Disability Services for all populations
- Services and outreach to refugee populations
- Faith-based social services that serve marginalized populations
- Parenting Services
- Court Appointed Special Advocates
- Library
- Advocacy Center (i.e., Safe Child)
- Family Resource Centers

What are the course numbers for the field placement?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSW Degree Program</th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSW-Foundation Year</td>
<td>SWG 595 (3 credits)</td>
<td>SWG 596 (3 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSW-Advanced Year</td>
<td>SWG 695 (3 credits)</td>
<td>SWG 696 (3 credits)</td>
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</tbody>
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Is there a guide to help me organize my field placement?
Students will work with their assigned Field Instructor in preparing a learning contract that specifies learning objectives, learning activities, and evaluation criteria. Students are provided with a training on how to prepare a learning contract during the mandatory Field Placement Orientation. The Field Instructor is a key person in guiding the student on their learning contract. The university assigned Field Liaison is available to provide technical assistance to the field instructor.

The following are the Social Work Competencies that students will be expected to demonstrate while in field placement. They are also represented in the objectives of the Learning Contract.
- Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
- Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
• Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
• Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
• Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
• Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
• Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

What are the field placement assignments?
Students will complete the aforementioned learning contract within the first few weeks of placement. Students will also have weekly journals and supervision logs. Both of these weekly assignments will be submitted to both the Field Instructor and Field Liaison. A monthly time sheet is also submitted. Additionally, there are assignments in the Social Work classes that relate to the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that the students will demonstrate in practice.

Are there field visits conducted by the Field Liaison?
There will be at least three field liaison visits conducted throughout the placement. An initial check in, a midpoint and final visit. Theses visits will be conducted via phone or video conferencing. No face to face visit is required.

How is Field Placement Graded?
Field Education consists of course work that is graded on a “Pass/Fail” basis. The grade is assigned by the Field Education Director or Online Field Coordinator based on the recommendation of the Field Instructor and/or Field Liaison. The grade is based on the “student performance evaluation” conducted by the Field Instructor and student at the end of each the semester. The student performance evaluation is reviewed by the Field Liaison to ensure that the evaluation was conducted in a fair and balanced manner, and that it was comprehensive and relevant to the student’s learning contract. If the student is unable to complete their field placement within the time frame established, the student may request an “in progress,” which needs to be approved by the Field Instructor and Field Liaison and submitted to the Field Director for review and posting.

Are students covered by liability insurance?
Northern Arizona University, by action of the Board of Regents, covers all students who are properly placed and supervised under its self-insurance program for purposes of liability. The coverage protects against claims arising from a student’s acts, errors or omissions in rendering services of a professional nature.

What are the procedures to make up missed field workdays? What is the holiday policy?
All absences from field work must be made up. Students are advised to speak with their Field Instructor on how to plan the makeup time. Students receive credit for holidays that are observed by NAU. They are, however, required to make up the time from any other holidays that are observed by the field placement site that fall on field days. Students are not expected to be at their placement during winter break and spring break.

Field Placement Terminology
Field Placement: Internship
Field Placement Site: The community entity (agency, school, hospital, etc.) that offers and accepts a student for internship. All the Field Placement Sites must have an agreement with NAU to provide this learning experience.
Field Liaison: NAU Social Work Faculty or Faculty Community Representative that will follow you through your placement.
Field Instructor or Field Supervisor: Staff member from your field placement site that you will report to, will supervise your internship, and evaluate your skills, knowledge and social work competency.
Task Instructor: The person designated by your Field Instructor to assist with your internship. This person is also employed by the field placement site.
Social Work Education Assessment Project (SWEAP): The online tool used to evaluate the student at mid-point and final.