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TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

2026-2027
MSSW Field Practice Manual

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1.0 UTCSW Mission and Curriculum

1.1 UTCSW Mission

Pursuing the college’s vision in alignment with the university’s land grant mission through...

- conducting groundbreaking, interdisciplinary research that informs policy and practice.
- building partnerships that leverage our resources to improve lives in Tennessee and beyond.
- equipping professional social workers with the knowledge and skills to facilitate well-being.

1.2 College of Social Work Standards of Professional Conduct

Separate and distinct from the University of Tennessee’s Standards of Conduct, and the CSW’s standards for academic performance, there are requirements that students must meet to assure that students can complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of social work education and the professional practice of social work. Students in the CSW are expected to possess the following abilities and attributes at a level appropriate to their year in the program. Attention to these standards will be part of evaluations made by faculty responsible for evaluating students’ field placement performance. These standards can be found in the MSSW handbook: <https://csw.utk.edu/academics/graduate-programs/masters-of-science-in-social-work/handbook-and-forms/>

1.3 Programs of Study

Students are admitted to the full-time, extended study, or advanced standing program of study.

Advanced Standing Program

Advanced standing students complete the MSSW program (37 semester hours) on a full-time or part-time basis beginning in the summer term. Full- time advanced standing students complete the program in 3 semesters. Part-time advanced standing students generally complete the program in 5 to 6 semesters. Advanced standing students only complete the concentration year field practicum.

Full-time Program

The full-time program of study begins in the fall semester. Students complete the full-time program (60 semester hours) in two years, or four (4) semesters of full-time study. They complete two field placements. They complete their first placement as part of the generalist curriculum during the first year and their second placement as part of the concentration curriculum in the second year.

Extended Study Program

The extended study program (60 semester hours) allows students to complete the MSSW degree in three or four years depending on individual needs. The program begins in the fall semester. Students generally take two years to complete the generalist coursework

and field and one or two years to complete the concentration coursework and field. The generalist coursework and field must be completed before beginning the concentration coursework and field. These students will complete both a generalist and concentration field placement as outlined in their program of study.

Locations

All three programs of study are offered on the Knoxville and Nashville campuses and through the Online MSSW Program. The online program and the Nashville hybrid program are designed to accommodate students who work and/or have obligations that prohibit attendance of courses through a traditional, face- to-face program. Field sites are secured within the student’s geographic location if at all possible.

1.4 Curriculum Overview

- All students are expected to develop their program of study with their Advisor. This will ensure that the appropriate sequence of courses is followed.
- The MSSW curriculum is grounded in the following CSWE EPAS 2022 core competencies:
- Competency 1 – Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
 - Competency 2 – Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
 - Competency 3 – Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity Equity and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
 - 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

Generalist Curriculum

The generalist curriculum for full-time and extended study students consists of 24 credit hours of course work and 6 credit hours of field instruction. It is completed by full-time students during the first year of study and by extended study students during the first two years of study.

The MSSW generalist curriculum is comprised of the following courses:

- SW 503 - Intro to Interpersonal SW Practice (3)
- SW 504 - Interpersonal SW Skills Lab (3)
- SW 511 - Intro to Macro SW Practice (3)
- SW 515 – Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)
- SW 510 - Social Welfare Policy and Programs (3)
- SW 519 - Foundations of Social Work Research (3)
- SW 538 -Social Justice and Anti-oppressive Practices (3)

SW 565 Psychosocial Assessment and Diagnostic Formulation in Behavioral Health Systems (3)

SW 542, 544 Generalist Field Practice I & II (6 total credit hours)

Total 30 credit hrs.

Concentration Curriculum

Students must select a concentration in Clinical Practice or Organizational Leadership. The concentration curriculum consists of 12 credit hours of field instruction and a minimum of 18 credit hours of course work.

The Clinical Practice concentration prepares students for advanced direct social work practice with individuals, groups, and families representing diverse populations. Students develop competencies in advanced assessment, relationship building and enhancement, application of evidence-based interventions, evaluation of practice, and life-long professional development. Potential areas of practice include mental health, child welfare, substance abuse, schools, health care, and other settings providing direct services.

The course requirements are as follows:

SW 560 – Interpersonal Practice with Groups (3 credit hours)

SW 562 – Interpersonal Practice with Adult Individuals (3)

SW 563 – Assessment & Evaluation of Interpersonal Practice (3)

SW 570 – Family Therapy (3)

SW 584 or 586 Concentration Field (total of 12 credit hours)

Two SW Electives (6)

Total 30 credit hrs.

The Organizational Leadership concentration prepares students to provide leadership in human service organizations. Students develop competencies in leading and managing programs and organizations, financial management, use of information technology, grant writing, program development and evaluation, advanced policy analysis and advocacy strategies. Graduates will be prepared to work in a variety of settings including varieties of human service agencies, schools, health care facilities, governmental entities, quasi-governmental entities, foundations and nonprofits, and policy analysis and advocacy positions.

The course requirements are as follows:

SW 545 Resource Development and Management (3)

SW 547 Advanced Organizational Theory and Practice (3)

SW 548 Advanced Change Management & Policy Practice (3)

SW 549 Program Development & Continuous Improvement (3)

SW 584 or 586 Concentration Field (total of 12 credit hours)

Two SW Electives (6)

Total 30 credit hrs.

1.5 Certificate Programs

Students may elect to complete a certificate program as a part of their course of study.

Certificate programs are optional and represent the opportunity for a student to focus on services to a specific population or within a specific field of practice. The certificates that are currently offered include: Gerontology, Trauma Treatment, Forensic Social Work, and Veterinary Social Work. Each certificate program has an application process and includes specific coursework and field components. Student learning plans should include assignments that reflect the certificate program topic area. More information can be found on the college’s website:<https://csw.utk.edu/academics/graduate-certificates/>. Please check with the Chair of the Certificate program you are interested in for more information.

Please note that field learning plan assignments are only one component of the certificate programs. Students should comply with all certificate program requirements.

1. Students should familiarize themselves with the field-related components of the certificate program they plan to complete

Trauma Treatment Certificate (must be concentration placement)

12 credit hours (concentration field placement) in a MSSW field placement where student learning plans will include assignments related to trauma

Veterinary Social Work Certificate (must be concentration placement)

12 credit hours (concentration field placement) in a MSSW field placement where student learning plans will include assignments related to veterinary social work.

Gerontology Certificate (may be generalist or concentration placement)

At least 6 credit hours (generalist or concentration placement) in a MSSW field placement where student learning plans will include assignments related to the field of gerontology.

Forensic Social Work Certificate (may be generalist or concentration placement)

At least 6 credit hours (generalist or concentration placement) in a MSSW field placement where student learning plans will include assignments related to forensic social work.

Note: there are non-field generalist course requirements associated with the Forensic Certificate. Full time/extended study students who did not take those generalist course requirements will not be eligible for the Forensic Social Work Certificate.

Sports Social Work Certificate (may be generalist or concentration placement). At least 6 credit hours (generalist or concentration placement related to sports social work).

2. Students should note their intent to complete a specific certificate program on the Field Planning application.
3. During field placement interviews, students must inform each prospective field instructor of their participation in the certificate program and discuss if/how the student will be able to complete some assignments related to the certificate on their learning plans.
Remember: the agency’s mission and programming may not be specifically focused on the certificate program but may still qualify if they are willing to allow the student to work on certificate-related assignments
4. After securing a placement, students must submit the completed Confirmation of Field Placement form to the UT field coordinator for approval. On that form, students in a

certificate program must check which certificate program they have been accepted to.

5. When students develop the field Learning Plan in IPT with their Agency field instructor at the beginning of the semester, they must have assignments that are specific to the certificate program entered into their field Learning Plan. (Note: Students in the VSW Certificate Program must refer to the VSW Certificate Competency Rubric to identify learning activities for their field Learning Plans.)
6. Students are to document completion of certificate learning activities in their Learning Plan in IPT in the column titled Evidence of Plan Completion.
7. Students must receive a competency rating of at least 3 on each of the Practice Behaviors related to the certificate program in order to satisfactorily complete field requirements for their certificate program.

1.6 School Social Work Licensure Requirements

While not a certificate program, students residing in Tennessee can pursue a State of Tennessee licensure in school social work while in the program. Students who wish to pursue this license will need to take the school social work elective and complete a school-based field placement.

Pursuant to the National Child Protection Act of 1993, UTK requires all students completing a placement in PreK-12 school settings to complete a fingerprint background check. Students in the MSSW program who are placed in Tennessee are presumed to enter the school social work licensure program if they select a field placement in a school setting. All students placed in school settings must adhere to this requirement. The law also states that the applicant is required to pay the cost of the background check. Students arrange for this through the School-based Experiences Office in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences. Local school systems may require additional background checks. UT field coordinators provide information to students regarding what is required and how to arrange for background checks.

In addition to UTK's background check requirement for students placed in schools, students must meet the requirements of the state in which they reside and are placed. Other states may have additional requirements for school social work placements. Students must also adhere to any requirements for the state in which they are placed, as other states may have additional requirements.

2.0 Field Education

2.1 Educational Philosophy

The Council on Social Work Education has identified field as the signature pedagogy of social work education: "It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum - classroom and field - are of equal importance, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice" (Council on Social Work Education, 2022 EPAS, 3.3).

The educational philosophy underlying field practice is the integration of classroom theory with experiential, supervised learning experiences. Within a framework of social

work values and knowledge, the student in the placement will test out theory, develop skills and demonstrate competencies, learn to evaluate their own performance, and prepare for autonomous practice. The student will also learn how to contribute to the provision of humane and equitable social services, to the development of professional knowledge, and to the creation of a more just society.

The college considers the field placement agency both as the arena in which practice is carried out and as a valuable source of learning for the student. Through interaction with agency staff, service to clients, and exposure to the structure and policies of the social welfare system, the student learns from the agency and, in turn, contributes to its programs. The agency field instructor is a professional colleague entrusted by the college with the task of enabling the student to apply and integrate knowledge.

The college is able to provide a wide variety of field experiences for students, and opportunities to work with variety of populations are abundant. The College works closely with field placement agencies and agency field instructors to give each student a quality field experience. For the commuting and online student, every effort is made to locate or develop field sites in the community/state where the student resides and plans to practice upon graduation.

In summary, the field placement provides an arena for students to apply and integrate the knowledge, values, and skills learned in the classroom to a real agency setting. It enables students to develop a greater respect for diversity, apply theoretical knowledge to their practice with populations at risk, use critical thinking skills as they struggle with complex practice and ethical problems, and demonstrate the use of self in the professional role. This structured and supervised practice setting allows students to develop the competencies needed for generalist and specialized advanced practice.

The college considers the student to be an adult learner, responsible for actively participating in the design of learning experiences that will meet the college's educational competencies and the student's own career goals. Thus, the field placement is the result of a dynamic four-way interaction of college, agency, agency field instructor, and student.

2.2 Generalist Placement and Seminar

The generalist placement consists of a Field Seminar for processing field experiences and deepening an understanding of competencies and practice behaviors, and the Field Placement. Generalist seminar begins at the start of the fall semester, and the generalist field placement begins in mid-September. Please see the field calendar in your field Canvas site for more details.

The focus of generalist seminar is the development and demonstration of professionalism and the integration of learning from courses with professional practice in the field placement setting. The field seminar meets for the duration of both semesters. It orients students to field education and policies and focuses on skills, competencies, and knowledge for functioning within an agency. The seminar includes an integration of field competencies with field practice and includes topics such as professionalism and professional relationships, safety in field, making the most of supervision, legal and ethical issues, and social work practice. Seminar will also provide an opportunity

for students to receive support related to their placement. It provides an arena where students can share their concerns, achievements, impressions, and experiences with each other as they move into the role of MSSW student. Generalist seminar is taught by adjunct Field Faculty Liaisons, with supervision and support from the UTK field coordinator.

If a student is unable to complete the fall generalist field course, the student should communicate with their advisor and Field Coordinator, as the pre-placement seminar is only offered in the fall semester and the spring learning plan builds upon the fall learning plan. Students cannot begin generalist seminar in the spring.

The generalist placement is generally scheduled for two days each week during the fall and spring semesters. Generalist students are required to complete a minimum total of 400 placement hours for the generalist year. During the fall semester, students in generalist field must complete a minimum of 160 placement hours along with all requirements for the field seminar. Students may complete up to 200 placement hours prior to the start of the spring semester, including a maximum of 40 hours completed during the winter break. Students return to their generalist field placement at the start of the spring semester. Students should expect to complete 240 hours in the spring, for a grand total of 400 hours. In addition to the hours requirement, students must complete assignments to address all competencies and practice behaviors and complete field seminar requirements.

Generalist field placements are designed to provide students with supervised generalist practice experience, which is consistent with the generalist knowledge and skill development education experience they receive in the classroom.

2.3 Concentration Placement and Seminar

Concentration field consists of a 500-hour field placement focused in the student’s area of concentration (Organizational Leadership or Clinical Practice) and the concentration field seminar. The focus of concentration seminar is the continued development and demonstration of professionalism and the integration of learning from courses with professional practice in the field placement setting. The field seminar meets for the duration of the field placement and focuses on the integration of field competencies with field practice. Concentration seminar is taught by the UTK Field Coordinator. Please see the concentration field Canvas site for the field calendar and seminar dates/times. The seminar provides an arena where students can share their concerns, achievements, impressions, and other important topics with each other as they transition into the role of professional social worker. Seminar will also provide an opportunity for students to receive support related to their placement.

Full-time Students

Full-time students in the two-year program of study begin the concentration placement in the fall after completion of all generalist course work, including generalist field. Full-time advanced standing students begin the concentration placement in the fall after completion of required summer coursework. It is strongly recommended that applicants who will be employed more than 20 hours per week select one of the part time program options.

Full-time students are in concentration field practice for two semesters, fall and spring. Students must complete a total of 12 credit hours and 500 clock hours in concentration field or 250 clock hours per semester. On occasion, full-time students may request the option to extend field over three semesters. Exceptions to this Program of Study must be approved by the student’s Advisor and UT Field Coordinator. Additionally, there must be resources available to provide liaison support over the additional semester.

Extended Study and Part-time Advanced Standing

Extended Study and part-time Advanced Standing students must also complete a total of 12 credit hours and 500 clock hours in concentration field and must develop a plan for completion of the concentration field placement with their UT field coordinator. The Program of Study for Extended study/PTAS students reflects that they complete concentration field over three semesters, generally beginning in the summer after completion of all generalist coursework. Exceptions to this Program of Study must be approved by the student’s Advisor and UT Field Coordinator.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities in Field Education

To promote a quality field placement, it is essential that key persons involved in the placement understand the complexity of their roles and work in cooperation with one another. The following section delineates the roles and responsibilities of those key persons.

3.1 Director of Field Education

The Director of Field Education is responsible for oversight of field education in all College of Social Work programs. The responsibilities for this position are to:

1. Assure congruence between the College of Social Work MSSW curriculum and the field education program.
2. Assure congruence of field education with Council on Social Work Education accreditation standards.
3. Conduct periodic evaluations of placement methodology and outcomes and initiate appropriate changes.
4. Hire, train, supervise and evaluate Field team members.
5. Provide oversight of the development of all written and electronic placement materials, including the field manuals, student and field agency forms, and website.
6. Oversee utilization of the online software system for student forms and the agency and agency field instructor databases.
7. Develop and provide oversight of strategies for recruitment, development, and training, support and evaluation of agency field instructors.

- 8. Evaluation and enhancement of field education program.
- 9. Manage the field budget.

3.2 Assistant and Associate Directors of Field Education

Associate Director of BSSW Field Education

The responsibilities for this position are to:

- 1. Provide leadership for the BSSW program and to BSSW field faculty and adjuncts.
- 2. Provide support to field faculty and staff on their campus.
- 3. Lead field curriculum and policy development for BSSW students.
- 4. Collaborate with the Associate Dean of Equity and Inclusion to establish and coordinate international field placements for BSSW students
- 5. Serve as the lead point of contact on UT Knoxville campus-based placements.
- 6. Represent field education director at college meetings as needed.
- 7. Implement special projects to enhance the field curriculum.

Assistant Director of MSSW Field Education

The responsibilities for this position are to:

- 1. Provide leadership for the MSSW program and to MSSW faculty and adjuncts.
- 2. Provide support to field faculty and staff on their campus.
- 3. Evaluate and oversee training of MSSW field adjuncts.
- 4. Support MSSW field curriculum and policy development.
- 5. Collaborate with the Associate Dean of Equity and Inclusion to establish and coordinate international field placements for MSSW students.
Represent field education director at college meetings as needed
- 6. Implement special projects to enhance the field curriculum.

3.3 UT Field Coordinator

The UT Field Coordinator is administratively responsible for the oversight of field education for the students enrolled in the campus or program to which they are assigned. This includes the effective and efficient coordination of all field placement activities involving faculty, field liaisons, students, and agencies. Specifically, the UT field coordinator’s responsibilities are to:

- 1. Identify, develop, and maintain effective partnerships with field agencies and agency field instructors.
- 2. Facilitate student placement planning and agency interviews and confirm placement assignments.
- 3. Select, train, and supervise field liaisons and/or field faculty liaisons.
- 4. Maintain efficient reporting systems and records of field practice activities.
- 5. Confer with the liaison when a student’s performance is below

expectations and/or when a grade of “No Credit” is anticipated.

- 6. Mediates situations in field, particularly if the student’s field placement is at risk of disruption.
- 7. Participate in the preparation and maintenance of a current field practice manual, forms handouts and other materials which have an educational value for agency field instructors and students.
- 8. Develop and deliver certification training program for agency field instructors and other training as needed.
- 9. Provide an orientation to field education for all incoming students.
- 10. Plan, deliver or coordinate personal safety training for students.
- 11. Coordinate and/or deliver field seminar.
- 12. Assign student grades upon review of student competency evaluations and with recommendation from the field liaison.
- 13. Serve as field liaison, offsite field instructor or supplemental supervisor for various field sites due to special circumstances if needed.

3.4 UTCSW Field Faculty Liaison (FFL) for generalist students

The Field Faculty Liaison fulfills the dual roles of 1) field liaison and 2) seminar instructor for generalist students. The Field Faculty Liaison role includes supporting the student and agency field instructor to enhance the student’s field learning experience and monitoring of the student’s placement to ensure compliance with UTCSW field policies. The seminar instructor role includes developing and implementing a process-oriented field seminar to enable students to make deeper connections between field competencies and learning experiences and to process their field experiences. This position reports to the UT field coordinator for the assigned program and campus.

FFL Liaison Responsibilities:

- 1. Initiate and maintain ongoing contact with assigned students and agency field instructors through email, phone, and videoconferencing according to the Field Liaison Protocol timelines.
- 2. Check UTK email every other day and follow up with students/agencies within 2 business days.
- 3. Serve as an expert consultant for students and agency field instructors on development of learning activities, including learning plan assignments to address required competencies and learning experiences to address students’ learning goals and needs.
- 4. Complete a detailed review of student learning plan assignments by the due date specified in the Field Liaison Protocol. Provide written and/or oral feedback to students and agency field instructors on relevance and substance of assignments.
- 5. Provide consultation, support, and mediation for students and field instructors to address concerns or problems in the field placement experience. Meet separately with students and field instructors, as needed, and facilitate additional joint meetings as outlined in the problem-solving steps in the UTCSW Field Manual.
- 6. Conduct regular review of evidence students have entered on Learning Plans. If needed, initiate contacts with students

to give feedback on quality of evidence entered.

7. Review, approve, and sign all assigned student learning plans, evaluations, and timesheets in IPT. If needed, initiate contacts with students to give feedback on quality of evidence entered. Communicate within 24 hours with the student's UT field coordinator regarding any evaluation ratings below 2 in the fall semester or below 3 in the spring semester.
8. Provide agency field instructors with field policy, academic curriculum information, access to and interpretation of current course content and syllabi, as needed.
9. Meet with each assigned student and agency field instructor at least once per semester to review the learning plan, supervision structure, student learning needs, and to address any concerns of the student or agency field instructor. Complete and submit report forms within two weeks of each meeting.
10. Report to the Field Coordinator as needed related to progress of students in placement and any problems encountered.
11. Assess the quality of placement experiences and make recommendations to the UT Field Coordinator about retention of agency placement sites.

FFL Seminar Instructor Responsibilities:

1. Plan and facilitate a process-orientated online seminar for generalist MSSW students. The seminar focuses on three primary areas: enabling students to connect classroom content (course competencies) to field experiences, promoting development of self-reflection and reflective practice, and processing field experiences.
2. Develop knowledge of and skills for online teaching and training, including effective use of Zoom and other technology platforms, as needed.
3. Using the material provided in the Canvas course, develop and implement didactic and experiential learning activities to deepen student understanding of field competencies and to enable them to process field experiences.
4. Provide feedback to students through in class activities and grading the seminar assignments on Canvas.
5. Provide individual consultation, coaching and problem-solving support for students and Agency Field Instructors as needed.
6. Consult with the Field Coordinator as needed.
7. Provide supplemental supervision to students as needed.

3.5 UTCSW Field Liaison for concentration students

The field liaison serves as an expert consultant and as liaison between the agency and the College for MSSW concentration students. This position requires approximately 4 hours per week from the beginning of the fall semester to the end of the spring semester. Liaison hours are cyclical in nature, as more hours are required for site visits and when paperwork is due and may be lower during other times of the year. Liaisons will provide limited support to students during the winter break, as fewer students will be in field. This position reports to the Field Coordinator for the assigned program and campus. The field liaison's responsibilities are to:

1. Initiate and maintain ongoing contact with assigned students and field instructors through email, phone, and videoconferencing

according to Field Liaison Protocol timelines.

2. Check UTK email every other day and follow up with students/agencies within 2 business days.
3. Serve as an expert consultant for students and field instructors on development of learning activities, including learning plan assignments to address required competencies and learning experiences to address students' learning goals and needs.
4. Complete a detailed review of student learning plan assignments by the due date specified in the Field Liaison Protocol. Provide written and/or oral feedback to students and field instructors on relevance and substance of assignments.
5. Provide consultation, support, and mediation for students and field instructors to address concerns or problems in the field placement experience. Meet separately with students and field instructors, as needed, and facilitate additional joint meetings as outlined in the problem-solving steps in the UTCSW Field Manual.
6. Conduct regular review of evidence students have entered on Learning Plans. If needed, initiate contacts with students to give feedback on quality of evidence entered.
7. Review, approve, and sign all assigned student learning plans, evaluations, and timesheets in IPT. If needed, initiate contact with students to give feedback on quality of evidence entered. Communicate within 24 hours with the student's Field Coordinator regarding any evaluation ratings below 2 in the fall semester or below 3 in the spring semester.
8. Provide agency field instructors with field policy, academic curriculum information, access to and interpretation of current course content and syllabi, as needed.
9. Meet with each assigned student and field instructor at least once per semester to review the learning plan, supervision structure, student learning needs, and to address any concerns of the student or field instructor. Complete and submit report forms within two weeks of each meeting.
10. Report to the Field Coordinator as needed related to progress of students in placement and any problems encountered.
11. Assess the quality of placement experiences and make recommendations to the UT Field Coordinator about retention of agency placement sites.

3.6 Agency field instructor

The agency field instructor has the primary responsibility for the student's education in the field placement. The agency field instructor is an educator and a role model who demonstrates professional skills and behaviors and guides the student in the learning and integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills. The agency field instructor:

1. Identifies appropriate assignments that address the educational competencies for the placement and that take into consideration as much as possible the student's experience, learning styles, career goals, strengths and unique learning needs.
2. Provides an orientation to the agency.
3. Informs relevant agency staff about the MSSW program and the student's role in the agency.
4. Oversees development of the student's learning plan with

- input from the student and, as needed, field liaison.
5. Meets at least one hour each week with the student for an educationally focused supervision.
 6. Reviews and signs student field placement timesheet.
 7. Contacts the field liaison, if consultation or assistance is needed, and participates in regularly held semester meetings with the liaison and student.
 8. Assesses the student's progress on a regular basis and completes all evaluation instruments in a timely manner.
 9. Participates in agency field instructor certification training and in other opportunities for college-agency exchange.
 10. Contributes knowledge and suggestions to the college for updating the field placement and/or master's curriculum.

While most students have an on-site Agency field instructor, occasionally students may be supervised by a MSSW who is not on-site with the agency. In these situations, the offsite field instructor will partner with the on-site agency task instructor in support of the student's learning.

3.7 Task Instructor

The term "task instructor" is used to indicate an agency staff member who assumes certain responsibilities for the student's field education as delegated and monitored by the agency field instructor. The task instructor may provide direct daily supervision of the student's learning activities. The task instructor does not replace the field instructor but is expected to be well informed of the college's educational plan and understand their role in the student's learning plan. The agency field instructor helps the student integrate the task instructor's contribution into the overall educational experience. Not all students will have a task instructor, as the decision is up to the agency. However, task instructors are required in situations where the student's field instructor is not on site.

3.8 Supplemental Supervisor

A Supplemental supervisor is a MSSW with at least two years post-MSSW experience who provides ongoing field supervision and support to students with a specific focus on providing a social work perspective to the student's field placement experience. This may be used in rare occasions when an additional social work perspective is needed to support the student's field placement learning experience. Supplemental supervisors will assess student competence at mid-term and the end of each semester and will share this feedback with the student's on-site supervisor.

3.9 Student

The student is expected to be an active adult learner with a commitment to and investment in preparation for a career in the profession of social work. The expectations for the knowledge, values, and skills that students must acquire in field practice are specified in detail in the College's educational competencies for each placement.

Students are expected to:

1. Prepare for placement interviews and present in a professional manner. Interview preparation includes review of the agency website and developing questions to ask at interview. Professional presentation includes all forms of communication in scheduling and completing the interview.
2. Review the orientation to field placement checklist with the field agency and discuss safety topics specific to the placement.
3. Participate with the agency field instructor in developing appropriate learning assignments for the field placement.
4. Demonstrate the professional use of supervision by preparing for the weekly supervisory meeting, utilizing an agenda and taking initiative to raise questions for discussion and demonstrating application of theory to practice.
5. Demonstrate professional behavior at all agency meetings and functions and in all interactions with agency staff.
6. Engage actively in the evaluation process by seeking ongoing feedback from the agency field instructor and participating in all formal evaluations and integrating that feedback into practice.
7. Use the NASW Code of Ethics and the college's Code of Professional Conduct as a guide in all placement activities.
8. Treat all information about agency clients in a confidential matter.
9. Abide by agency policies, including those related to practice activities, dress codes, working hours, inclement weather, and attendance.
10. Maintain an accurate record of time on the field placement timesheet and meet minimum required hours each semester.
11. Report absences to the agency field instructor in advance when possible and make arrangements with the agency field instructor to make up any lost hours in a timely manner.
12. Follow the field problem-solving process as outlined in section 10.
13. Meet with the field liaison during each semester meeting to review progress and discuss any concerns or problems in the placement experience.
14. Arrange for transportation to and from the field practice agency.
15. Pay annual premium for professional liability insurance. Students are typically billed for their liability insurance by the bursar's office as a part of their semester fees. It must be paid before the field placement starting date.
16. Complete the form, Student Evaluation of Field Practice, at the end of the placement.
17. Submit all required forms according to the designated schedule.
18. Read and comply with requirements outlined in field course syllabi.
19. Read the field manual and abide by all field policies and procedures.
20. Read and abide by the College of Social Work Standards of Professional Conduct.

3.10 Advisor

Each entering student is assigned an advisor who helps the student plan a course of study and is available to the student if problems arise. The Advisor may be notified by the UT field coordinator when the student is doing less than satisfactory work in field. Students who experience problems in field practice may seek consultation from their Advisor in addition to their field liaison. It is usually appropriate for both to be aware of

problems in the field, which may or may not be related to other difficulties the student is having while in the MSSW program.

4.0 Selection of Field Agencies

Each UT field coordinator is administratively responsible for identifying, developing, approving, and maintaining field practice settings for the MSSW program. The UT field coordinator is expected to continuously engage with faculty, field liaisons, students, and community practitioners regarding the identification of potential field sites. The UT field coordinator is also expected to identify the types of settings that are needed to provide an adequate number and variety of placements to serve student needs and interests and curricular priorities.

Field practice sites are continuously re-evaluated as new information or changes in agency circumstances arise. Feedback from students and field liaisons is a necessary and essential ingredient in the selection, re-evaluation, and retention of quality placement sites. A field placement site is no longer used when information indicates that the setting no longer meets selection criteria.

4.1 Procedures for the Selection of Field Agencies

The UT Field Coordinator identifies prospective field settings through contacts with faculty, students, field liaisons, and community practitioners. The UT field coordinator then contacts prospective field agencies to determine whether they are interested in affiliation with the College to provide field placements. If the organization is open to considering this, the UT field coordinator arranges a site visit or teleconference and collects information regarding the agency through the agency information form, the website and community contacts to determine whether the organization meets the specified criteria. Finally, a memorandum of agreement specifying mutual obligations of the field organization and the MSSW Program must be agreed-upon and signed by the agency administrator and the Dean of the College or the Budget Director. These agreements are on file in the college.

Agencies are selected to become generalist and/or concentration field sites depending upon the kinds of educational experiences that are available and the qualifications of available agency field instructors. This determination is made in the selection process after thoughtful consideration of:

1. The congruence of the agency's mission and scope of services with generalist and/or concentration field competencies.
2. The agency field instructor's qualifications, specialized training, and preference for providing supervision for the generalist or one of the concentrations.
3. The availability of learning experiences that fit the learning needs of students and address the competencies of the respective placements.
4. Information from other sources, e.g., students, faculty, and community practitioners, regarding the stability, reputation, and quality of services at this agency.

4.2 Criteria for Approval as a Field Agency

The following criteria are used for field agency selection:

1. The agency's mission is consistent with the values and ethics of the social work profession.
2. Field agencies must sign and maintain a Memorandum of Agreement with the University.
3. Learning experiences available to students are consistent with the required competencies and practice behaviors of the generalist and/or concentration field courses.
4. A variety of learning experiences appropriate for MSSW students is available.
5. The agency is able to provide the student with the necessary physical resources for the learning experiences, e.g., work space and supplies, etc.
6. The agency is able to provide a field instructor who holds an MSSW Degree from a CSWE accredited program with two years of post-master's social work practice experience.

There are rare situations where an otherwise qualified agency cannot provide a qualified MSSW to serve as field instructor. In those situations, agencies may still be approved if one of the following criteria can be met:

- Someone with the field agency who has a related degree and who has been vetted by the Field Coordinator may be assigned as field instructor. In this situation, students will receive supplemental supervision from a qualified social worker through resources such adjunct MSSW supervisors and/or volunteer social work supervisors.
- If resources are available, a MSSW adjunct hired via the College may provide off-site Field Instruction to students. If the college provides off-site Field Instruction, the agency is required to provide an on-site task instructor who will guide the student's learning and communicate with the field instructor regarding student learning and progress.

5.0 Selection and Training of Agency field instructors

The College of Social Work values the work of the agency field instructor. Persons serving as agency field instructors are expected to be committed to the education of students, and to providing an educationally directed field experience for their students. Agency field instructors will need to have some flexibility in their work schedule to devote adequate time to their students' placement experience. The UT field coordinator is responsible for screening and selecting all agency field instructors. Input is solicited from faculty, students, and community practitioners. The college has a large pool of alumni who are well known to faculty, and this facilitates the screening process.

5.1 Criteria for Selection of Agency field instructors

The following criteria serve as guidelines in the selection of agency field instructors:

1. The agency field instructor has an MSSW from a CSWE-accredited program and two years post master's social work practice experience. Supervisory and/or teaching experience is preferred. There are rare situations where an otherwise qualified agency cannot provide a qualified MSSW to serve as field instructor. In those situations, agencies may still be approved if one of the following criteria can be met:

- Someone with the field agency who has a related degree and who has been vetted by the Field Coordinator may be assigned as field instructor. In this situation, students will receive supplemental supervision from a qualified social worker through resources such as adjunct MSSW supervisors and/or volunteer social work supervisors.
 - If resources are available, a MSSW adjunct hired via the College may provide off-site Field Instruction to students. If the college provides off-site Field Instruction, the agency is required to provide an on-site task instructor who will guide the student's learning and communicate with the field instructor regarding student learning and progress.
2. The agency field instructor must be committed to master's level social work education and be willing to supervise students with diverse learning needs.
 3. The agency field instructor must be available to the student while in placement and able to devote adequate time for supervision. Students are to receive one hour of supervision per week.
 4. The agency field instructor must be willing to work cooperatively with agency staff, faculty, field liaisons, and the college to promote a successful placement experience.
 5. The agency field instructor must be willing to complete agency field instructor orientation and training.

5.2 Agency field instructor Orientation

Prospective agency field instructors receive an overview of field education at UTK and information about the agency field instructor orientation and training from the UT field coordinator at the initial contact. Additionally, Field Coordinators host Field Instructor orientation on Zoom. Whenever possible, new agency field instructors complete agency field instructor orientation prior to commencing work with a student. If this is not possible, field instructor orientation is held online monthly for field instructors. The UT field coordinator may also meet with the new agency field instructor individually to provide an orientation to the roles and responsibilities of the agency field instructor, additional information about the curriculum, and instruction on how to use the learning plan and evaluation tools. Key topics reviewed in orientation include roles and responsibilities in field, supports and learning opportunities students need to succeed, field documentation, evaluation and the problem solving process.

5.3 Agency field instructor Training

The agency field instructor is central to a successful placement experience for students and every effort is made to identify, train, and develop qualified agency field instructors. Agency field instructors are equipped and encouraged to think and act as educators as well as practitioners and supervisors. The college provides an agency field instructor training program to enhance the knowledge and skills of agency field instructors in their role as educators. The training includes content in the following areas: MSSW curriculum, roles and responsibilities, student orientation to field, learning and teaching strategies, supervision, evaluating students, culturally sensitive practice in the field, legal and ethical issues, dealing with challenging student situations, safety and risk management and integration of theory and practice.

Field Instructor training is available as an asynchronous online training. Additionally, live, in person, half-day Field Instructor training is held at least once per year on the Knoxville and Nashville campuses and periodically in other parts of the state for the online program. Field Instructors may also engage in online field instructor training modules, which cover the same topics and slides as the in-person training. Agency field instructors receive certificates for the training, which can be used for continuing education requirements in Tennessee. The UT field coordinators may also conduct orientation and training at the field site when necessary or requested by a particular agency.

6.0 Placement Selection Process

6.1 Admission to Field

Students are required to complete the Field Placement Application by the due date to begin the field planning process. This application will give students the opportunity to share practice interests, experiences, and any unique needs with their field. This information is used by the UT field coordinator to identify prospective placements for each student. The UT field coordinator is responsible for initiating all contacts with agencies regarding student placement and facilitates the placement process for all students. Students are not to contact agencies or agency field instructors without prior permission from the UT field coordinator.

If a student submits the completed field application after the due date, the student may not be able to be placed for the planned semester. This could result in a change in the student's program plan and delay of graduation. Even if the UT field coordinator is able to place a student whose application is late, the student's options for field may be severely limited.

6.2 Planning and Interviewing for Placement

The field team is deeply committed to your success, and our college is proud of the high level of individualized support we offer every student in the placement planning process. Field placements are selected through a joint process involving the student, the UT field coordinator, and personnel from potential placement sites. The final approval regarding each student's placement assignment is made by the student's UT field coordinator.

Note: The UT field coordinator is responsible for initiating all contacts with agencies regarding student placement and facilitates the placement process for all students. For students outside major hubs, your insight into local organizations will be especially valuable as we explore new partnerships. We understand that students are eager to explore options and make connections, and we appreciate your collaboration in this process, but students may not contact agencies or field instructors until given the green light by their Field Coordinator. This step protects both students and our community partners. It ensures that: 1) The agency can meet your learning needs, and 2) The site is open to hosting a BSSW or MSSW student. Your Field Coordinator will guide and support you through every step of this process.

Placement Planning Process overview:

The field placement planning process is outlined broadly below and is listed in more

detail on the Field Planning checklist provided by the UTK Field Coordinator:

- Students receive an email with information about the placement planning process. This email contains links to information about traditional and Employment-Based Placements (EBP) and a field application.
- Students complete the Field Placement Application by the deadline, identifying practice interests, skills, experiences, and any unique needs, including identifying if they are employed and wish to pursue an EBP—see policy 6.4 for EBP requirements and steps.
- For a traditional placement, the UT field coordinator meets with each student to discuss placement sites that fit the student's interests and educational needs; for an EBP, a meeting will be scheduled with the student, Field coordinator, and an agency representative.
- The UT field coordinator engages with prospective placement sites to ensure they meet the college's requirements and are open to taking students.
- Student interview(s) are scheduled with agency field instructors to explore the match between student interests and what the agency can provide. Generalist students interview at one site, while concentration students interview at one to three sites depending on location and availability.
- Students and prospective agency field instructors report on the status and outcome of interviews to the field coordinator in a timely manner.
- Once a placement is accepted, students submit the completed Confirmation of Field Placement form by the due date established by the UT field coordinator.
- Students will not be cleared to start until all agency prerequisites and required paperwork and legal agreements are in place.

Student responsibilities during placement planning:

Students are expected to comply with all policies, due dates and timelines for the placement planning process. These expectations are set by the UT field coordinator for the program in which the student is enrolled and are communicated to students.

Students should check their UTK email daily and respond promptly to messages throughout the field planning process. Students are expected to use their UTK email account when communicating with agencies, field coordinators and other university personnel regarding field education. This expectation of professional timeliness includes submission of the application by the due date and timely responses to all communication from the UT field coordinator regarding placement. Because field coordinators work with many students and agencies at the same time, timely communication is essential. Failure to respond to communications, follow interview scheduling instructions, or meet required timelines may result in the student's field planning process being placed on hold. In these situations, the student will be required to meet with the UT field coordinator to discuss next steps before field planning can continue.

Interview expectations:

When instructed by a UT field coordinator to schedule an interview with a placement agency, students must contact the agency within two business days. Delays in scheduling interviews can create a negative impression with agency partners and may result in the loss of an interview opportunity or potential placement.

It is the student's responsibility to adequately prepare for interviews and seek consultation from the UT field coordinator if support related to interviewing is needed. Guidelines regarding professionalism and appropriate interviewing behavior will be discussed with the student during placement planning meetings with the UT field coordinator. Students are responsible for adhering to professional standards, including, but not limited to, timeliness, preparation, and conduct. Additionally, the UT Center for Career Development (<https://career.utk.edu/>) has resources available to support students in enhancing interviewing skills.

Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism throughout the placement process. Resumes, emails, phone conversations, interviews, and all interactions with agency representatives contribute to an agency's assessment of a student's readiness for placement. Professional and timely communication can strengthen a student's candidacy, while unprofessional communication may negatively affect placement opportunities.

Accepting Placement Offers:

Students are expected to accept an offer of placement after completing all scheduled interviews. If a student declines all offered placements, there is likely to be a delay in starting field and graduating from the program. The UT field coordinator will first finish facilitating placement interviews for all other students and then contact the student to discuss alternatives.

Agency Decision-Making and Placement Limitations:

UT field coordinators make every reasonable effort to assist students in securing field placements that support their learning goals and accommodate transportation and scheduling needs. However, field placements are offered voluntarily by community agencies, and the college cannot require an agency to accept a student.

Agencies make final decisions regarding student placements and may decline to offer a placement for a variety of reasons, including availability of positions, scheduling constraints, assessment of student readiness, fit with the agency setting, interview performance, or the results of agency screening procedures. Agencies may also withdraw consideration of a student who does not respond promptly and professionally to agency communications or requests for information.

While the College of Social Work provides support throughout the field planning process, students are responsible for participating fully and professionally in securing a placement. The college cannot guarantee placement for students who are unable to successfully complete agency interviews, meet agency requirements, or satisfy legal, background check, or other screening criteria required by placement sites.

If a Placement Is Not Secured:

While every effort will be made to facilitate placement interviews, the number and availability of interview opportunities cannot be guaranteed and may vary based on geographic location, agency capacity, and other placement-related factors. If the student is unable to secure a field placement after completing available interviews, the UT field coordinator will seek feedback from the agency representatives regarding the results of the student's interviews. The UT field coordinator will meet with the student to discuss the outcome of the interviews and to provide the student with feedback.

Based on the feedback from the agencies, the student may be referred to the University of Tennessee Center for Career Development for additional training and consultation. If concerns were identified from interviews, the UT field coordinator may consult with the appropriate Program Director regarding engaging the college's Academic and the college's Academic and Professional Standards process to determine the student's readiness for field and make recommendations. If the student was interviewing for very competitive placements and no concerns were identified at interview, the UT field coordinator will work with the student to identify other placement options.

Program progression and graduation requirements

As the field placement is a required course, a student's inability or failure to secure a field placement would prevent the student from progressing through the MSSW program. Successful completion of all required field placements is a graduation requirement for the MSSW program. Students who are unable to secure and complete the required field placements will not be able to complete the degree program.

6.3 Evening and Weekend Placements

As is outlined in the MSSW application process, very few opportunities exist for fully evening and/or weekend placements. The overwhelming majority of placements are available only during regular weekday business hours. CSWE accreditation standards require that students be supervised by someone with a social work degree who meets the requirements to be a Field Instructor. Although there are some organizations that serve clients 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the social work staff usually works during normal daytime business hours. If students can only complete their field placement during evening and weekend hours, they will likely be unable to complete the MSSW program. The field placement is a supervised practicum, so the student must be able to be at the agency during hours that the agency field instructor is present.

Students who are requesting evening and/or weekend placements are advised to meet with the UT field coordinator early in order to determine whether any placements are available that meet the student's scheduling request. If no such placement is available, the student may need to delay field until a later semester or consider adjusting their work schedule in order to complete field. Even when evening and/or weekend placements are available, students may be required to be available for orientation, training, supervision, and staff meetings during weekday hours. A student who, for any reason, cannot be

present at a field placement during days/hours that appropriate learning activities and supervision are available, may not be eligible for placement.

6.4 Placement in Employment Setting

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation policies allow MSSW students who are employed by a social service agency to count qualifying employment hours toward field requirements. To do so, both the agency and the proposed agency field instructor must meet all criteria and requirements outlined in this manual.

At each stage in this process, the Field Coordinator will review materials, make decisions, and communicate next steps. There are three primary steps in this process:

1. Completion of Field Application for EBP,
2. Meeting of student, agency and UTK Field Coordinator to discuss requirements
3. Completion of required forms, agreements and prerequisites.

Step 1: Complete the Field Application for Employment-Based Placement

If students are employed at a social service agency and are interested in an EBP, they should:

1. Review the material on the EBP website link included in the field planning email (including the faculty video) to see if they are eligible, and;
2. Complete the field planning application, selecting "Employment-Based Placement," and include their employer's information.

Important: Completing these steps allows the student to move forward in the process; however, an EBP cannot be approved until the student has completed at least four weeks of employment at the agency.

Students should carefully consider the potential impact on their employment, education, and future employability before pursuing an EBP.

Step 2: Meet to review requirements and sign EBP Confirmation of Field form.

Once the Field Coordinator has reviewed the student's application and given initial approval, the student and agency representative must meet with the UT Field Coordinator to discuss the Employment-Based Confirmation of Field form.

The agency must commit to the following for the placement to be approved.

- The employing agency must sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Tennessee.
- Student assignments must align with the MSSW learning competencies and match the appropriate practice level.
- A qualified field instructor who meets the criteria outlined in the field manual must be identified and be willing to complete the field instructor application and training. The individual may be the employment supervisor or another MSW at the agency.

-In some cases, an individual with a related degree may be approved as the primary field instructor; in these situations, the student must receive supplemental supervision from an MSW, which should be provided by the agency. In limited situations and based upon available resources, UTC SW

may be able to provide supplemental supervision.

- If a qualified field instructor is not available on-site, the Field Coordinator must consult with the Director of Field Education to explore alternatives.
- The field instructor must be committed to overseeing the student's educational experience, including training, documentation, evaluation, and weekly supervision.
- Field supervision must remain distinct from any employee performance evaluation.
- Both the student and the field instructor must remain employed for the duration of the placement. If the field instructor leaves, the agency must assign a qualified replacement.
- The student and field instructor must complete and submit the Confirmation of Field Form.

Note: An EBP is not permitted when the student is the highest-ranking staff member in the organization, as this does not provide an appropriate educational structure.

Step 3: Complete all required agency and college forms, agreements and prerequisites.

The student's proposed employment-based placement will be approved, and the student will be cleared to start the EBP only when all of the following are met:

1. All required field placement forms are completed and submitted on time.
2. The agency has a signed Memorandum of Agreement with UT Knoxville; and
3. The agency-based field instructor completes the required field instructor application and commits to orientation/training.

Termination or Resignation from an EBP

Students should be aware that any disruption to an EBP—including resignation or termination—is highly likely to delay graduation. In exceptional situations, the program may determine that an adjustment to the four-week probationary requirement is appropriate.

- Termination: Students who are terminated from their employment must notify their UT Field Coordinator within 24 hours to discuss next steps.
- Resignation: Students who intend to resign must contact the UT Field Coordinator before submitting their resignation to review risks and next steps.

Job Offers at the Field Placement Agency

Students may occasionally receive an employment offer from their placement agency. Students who have been at the agency for at least four weeks may be eligible to convert to an EBP during the current placement.

Students must contact their Field Coordinator immediately to discuss the risks of accepting a paid position and must follow all steps outlined above.

Stipends for Field Placements

A field placement that includes a student stipend is not considered an Employment-Based Placement and does not fall under EBP policy. These placements follow the

standard vetting process for non-EBP placements.

Students interested in stipend-funded placements should speak with their Field Coordinator to learn which agencies may offer stipends during that academic year. Stipend opportunities are limited and competitive.

While the College encourages agencies to offer stipends, this cannot be guaranteed. Agencies already contribute significantly to student learning by providing supervision, space, equipment, and access to clients. Although students pay for field courses, none of these funds go to field agencies.

Stipends may be paid as lump sums, hourly wages, or mileage reimbursement. Students completing placements within their employment agency may receive regular salary compensation for field activities with agency approval. Students should consult UTK One Stop to determine whether a stipend may affect their financial aid.

6.5 Students with Disabilities

Any student in need of disability-related accommodations in field should contact UT Student Disability Services (SDS) on the Knoxville Campus (<http://sds.utk.edu/> or (865) 974-6087) or sds@utk.edu.

In order to receive accommodations in field practice, students must be registered with SDS and request that accommodation information be sent to the UT Field Coordinator, who is the instructor for the field courses. SDS will notify the UT field coordinator of approved accommodations. The UT field coordinator will make every effort to identify a placement that meets the College of Social Work requirements and addresses the student's learning needs. UT field coordinators may consult with SDS staff to explore how a student may be accommodated without altering the fundamental requirements of the placement position. It is the student's responsibility to inform the UT Field Coordinator and agency field instructor if approved accommodations are needed at a particular field placement agency.

The College of Social Work cannot guarantee that a placement can be identified that will meet all student criteria during any given semester or in a specific location, as organizations provide student placement on a voluntary basis. It is always the social work student's responsibility to secure a placement by preparing for and presenting professionally in the field interview. Agency field instructors are expected to make placement acceptance decisions based on the fit between the learning experience offered by the organization and the student's learning needs and goals.

6.6 International Placements

MSSW students interested in pursuing an international placement should advise their UT field coordinator, who will refer the student to the Assistant Director of Field Education to explore next steps.

Most international field placements are scheduled during the summer term. The college has an affiliation with a few international organizations to provide field placements.

Other options may be available through the UT Center for Global Engagement. Field Coordinators and the Assistant Director typically need 6 months to 1 year to secure new placements abroad , so working with these pre-approved agencies is strongly encouraged, as Field Coordinators may be unable to vet agencies outside of the existing opportunities.

Students completing a field placement in another country will need to complete an International Travel Request through UTK’s Programs Abroad Office, the UTCSW practicum study abroad checklist and meet any other requirements.

Students should be aware of the possibility that participation in international field experiences may extend the length of their program. This is typically known prior to departure. However, international contexts are fluid and sometimes present unexpected challenges related to political instability and security concerns. There may also be unanticipated changes in international university settings and course offerings. The Assistant Director of Field Education will make every effort to inform students of changes in the host country and/or university in a timely manner, but delays may be unavoidable.

6.7 Block Placements

A student who has serious extenuating circumstances may request to complete a placement on a block basis. This may mean that the student is completing an entire placement in one semester or that the student needs to complete more than the usual number of placement and credit hours in one semester. This plan is an exception to the curriculum structure and requires prior approval by the UT field coordinator and Advisor. Because field requires the integration of theory with field practice, students must have taken or be taking certain classes for this option to be a possibility. Additionally, block placements can never be guaranteed as an agency would have to agree to this schedule and assure that students could achieve all required competencies during this short time frame. Students are advised to contact their UT field coordinators as soon as they become aware of any serious extenuating circumstance that would lead to this type of request.

6.8 Request to Transfer or Move While in MSSW Program

Occasionally, students may face extenuating circumstances that cause them to need to relocate while in the MSSW program, or to transfer to a different UTCSW campus. These moves and transfers can cause serious disruptions in the field planning process. Moving or transferring can cause a potential delay in finding a placement, disrupt their program of study, and lead to a delay in graduation.

Students who wish to request to transfer to a different MSSW campus should start by talking with their Advisor, and then proceed by following the steps outlined in the College’s Student Handbook.

Students who are in the online MSSW program may experience serious extenuating circumstances that triggers a need to move, while still hoping to remain in the Online MSSW program. A student in the online MSSW program who needs to move but plans to remain in the online MSSW program should immediately request this move using this online form: <https://forms.office.com/r/OPqWkyJ4VX>. If needed, the Field Director will meet with the student to hear the student’s request and review the risks associated with a move while in the MSSW program. If the student’s request is approved, the student may be transferred to a different UT field coordinator that serves that geographic area.

When students are moving to a new location, field planning will not begin until the student’s request to move/transfer has been approved. Moving while in the MSSW program can lead to delays related to field placement.

7.0 Pre-placement Requirements

7.1 Screening procedure requirements

Most organizations require students to undergo additional screening procedures or provide specific health records or legal documents as a condition of placement. Criminal background checks may include fingerprints, online records checks, or local law enforcement checks. Medical records may include immunization records, proof of health insurance, physical exams, and results of TB skin tests and drug screens.

Students are usually required to incur the costs of such procedures. The College of Social Work has a vendor (DISA) for online registration and payment for background checks and drug screens. Results of criminal background checks and drug screens may exclude students from specific field placements. Students are encouraged to share with the UT field coordinator any concerns that they may have regarding these requirements during the placement planning process. If, for any reason, a student does not elect to undergo a background check or provide medical records required by a specific placement, the UT field coordinator will work with the student to identify other placement sites that do not have these requirements. However, the College cannot guarantee placement if the results of background checks and other screening procedures exclude students from placement.

Pursuant to the National Child Protection Act of 1993, UTK requires all students completing a placement in K-12 school settings to complete a fingerprint background check, as outlined in Section 1.07 of this manual. Students who are out of state will have additional steps to take in the school-based background check process and should be advised that this process can take at least four weeks to complete.

7.2 Professional Liability Coverage

Students in field placement can be sued for malpractice. Therefore, participation in a group plan for professional liability coverage is required by the University of all students enrolled in field placement courses. Student Professional Liability Insurance covers liability of students and/or faculty members for the actions of the students while

they are engaged in a University of Tennessee directed educational activity relating to their professional field. The professional liability insurance fee is paid each year before beginning the placement experience. The cost of this insurance varies according to the current agreement with the University's insurance carrier. An effort is made to obtain the most economical coverage possible. Students are generally billed annually for this coverage by the University Bursar.

Students are not allowed to begin field placement without paying this fee. This policy provides \$1,000,000 per claim and \$6,000,000 per annual aggregate per student. Students must be registered as a student (enrolled) in order to be eligible to purchase UT professional liability insurance. If a student has a grade of Incomplete for field, they do not have to pay for the field course again in the following semester, but the student must maintain current professional liability insurance coverage. In order to be eligible for the required liability insurance coverage, the student may a) register for an additional social work course or b) register and pay for 1 credit hour of SW 502- Use of Facilities and pay the insurance fee.

7.3 Personal Safety Training

All students must participate in the personal safety training provided during seminar. The training includes content on topic such as infectious disease control, sexual harassment, and practical advice to minimize risks to safety at the agency, in the community, and when making home visits. Students should complete the Field Placement Incident Report if any of the following occur during the field placement: personal injuries, including but not limited to, those caused by a client or other person or an animal, harassment or discrimination, or damage to or loss of personal property.

7.4 Required Pre-Placement Documents

Each student is required to review and sign the Field Placement Risks and Responsibilities form as part of the Field Placement Application prior to beginning the agency placement.

8.0 Procedures During Field Placement

8.1 Professional Conduct in Field

The student in the field placement is expected to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner and to abide by the policies of the college, the university, and the field agency. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Meeting the requirements of the College of Social Work Standards of Professional Conduct (Section 1 of this document).
2. Abiding by the NASW Code of Ethics (<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>) and as applicable by the International Federation of Social Workers/ International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles (<https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/>).

3. Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all clients both in the field agency and the classroom setting. Various laws and regulations such as HIPAA apply within agency settings. Some agencies may require special training in specific policy areas. See HIPAA at: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>.

8.2 Orientation to Field Education

The UT field coordinator provides an orientation to field education for all incoming first year field students. This orientation provides a comprehensive overview of relevant field policies and procedures and addresses the initial anxieties that many beginning students may feel.

8.3 Managing and Recording Time in Field

Students are expected to confirm their placement schedules with their agency field instructors. This schedule must conform to MSSW Program requirements and must be documented on the Confirmation of Field Placement form and approved by the UT field coordinator. Students are expected to follow the agreed-upon schedule except in unusual circumstances, such as illness or inclement weather.

Students are prohibited from starting field before the first day of the semester without permission from the UT field coordinator. Students are to record their own placement hours as completed on the timesheet in IPT, entering hours daily or at least weekly. This time sheet should not be used as a planner--hours are to be documented only after completion.

Classroom work should not be completed during field placement, and students should not be asked to fulfill field obligations during class time. Field placement does not take precedence over scheduled class times.

Field seminar is a required component of field education, and students may have to step away from their practicum to complete in the field seminar. Time spent specifically in field seminar can be counted as field hours with permission of the agency field instructor.

Students are entitled to holidays listed on the college calendar which fall on field placement days; however, these holidays do not count as field time.. Also, it is critical for students to inform their agency field instructors well in advance of the university holiday schedule to make sure that this can be accommodated by the agency without disruption of the student's educational experience or client services. A student and agency field instructor may agree that the student will attend field on a university holiday and take that holiday time off on a day when the agency is closed for a different holiday.

Each student is responsible for completing the required number of hours for placement. The hours requirement for each field course is listed on the course syllabus. Students who take university or agency holidays or sick leave or miss field days due to inclement weather are required to make up the hours. Students should not record field hours on their time sheets for any days that they were off for holidays, illness, or inclement

weather. It is prudent for students and agency field instructors to discuss and plan for these types of agency closures and, if possible, to develop some competency-related activities on the learning plan that can be completed by the student at another location if the agency is closed for a holiday or inclement weather. These hours may be recorded on the student's time sheet upon approval by the agency field instructor when the student has provided sufficient evidence and information regarding activities completed away from the agency.

8.4 Applying Additional Field Hours to the Next Semester

Students may complete a limited number of additional field hours to apply to the requirements of the subsequent field course, but only with prior approval from both the agency field instructor and the UT field coordinator.

The Request to apply field hours to the next semester form contains important details about limitations on hours between semesters depending on the student's program of study.

Eligibility and Approval Requirements

To request approval to apply field hours to a subsequent semester, students must:

1. Obtain approval from the agency field instructor;
2. Submit the Application to Apply Field Hours to the Next Semester form by the deadline assigned by the Field Coordinator. This form will need to include:
 - The proposed schedule for completing the hours; and
 - The competencies and learning activities that will be addressed during the proposed hours.
3. Once submitted by the student, the form must be reviewed and signed electronically by both the agency field instructor and UT Field Coordinator. Students are expected to follow up with their field instructor to make sure the form is signed promptly.
4. The Field Coordinator will contact the student to alert them if the plan cannot be approved or needs revision.

Additional hours completed during and between semesters without prior approval will not be counted toward field requirements.

Carry Over Hour Limits:

- The maximum number of field hours over the minimum required hours that may be completed during and between semesters and applied to the subsequent semester is as follows:
 - Generalist Field: Up to 40 hours
 - Concentration Field: Up to 50 hours

Program-specific limits include:

- **Generalist year (542/544):** Students may apply up to 40 hours completed during the fall and between the fall and spring semesters, for a maximum of 200 total hours completed before the start of the spring semester.
- **SW 586:** Students may apply up to 50 hours completed during fall and between the fall and spring semesters, for a maximum of 300 total completed hours before the

start of the spring semester.

- **SW 584:** Students may apply up to 50 total hours completed during summer and between the summer and fall semesters and/or during fall and between the fall and spring semesters, for a maximum of 150 total completed hours before the start of the fall semester and 350 total completed hours before the start of the spring semester.

Continuation of Placement During Semester Breaks

- Students are generally encouraged to take breaks between semesters. However, when agency responsibilities require continued participation during semester breaks, approved hours may be applied to the subsequent semester, subject to the limits stated above.
- Students are expected to communicate with their agencies about UTK holidays and semester breaks when determining their schedule/availability. It is encouraged to have this conversation early, ideally before the placement begins or during the interview stage.

Completion of Field Placements

- Completion of the minimum required field hours prior to the end of the semester does not authorize a student to terminate the placement early.
- Students may conclude their placement by the “early end” date specified in the course syllabus with the prior approval of both the agency field instructor and the UT field coordinator.

8.5 The Learning Plan

The college requires a written learning plan for each semester. Students are responsible for complying with due dates for learning plans and evaluations and giving timely reminders to their agency field instructor. The plan is completed and signed online in Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) and may be revised as needed by mutual agreement of the student and agency field instructor. The completed learning plan is reviewed by the field liaison.

8.6 Health Insurance

Students are responsible for their own health insurance and for paying their own medical expenses, including expenses for treatment of illnesses or injuries related to field. The professional liability insurance does not cover student illnesses or injuries. Students are not eligible for Workers' Compensation coverage for accidental injury at their agency placements. Some field agencies may require proof of health insurance coverage.

8.7 Transportation and Vehicle Insurance

All students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the agency. Students should inquire if they will be asked to transport clients as part of their field practicum and discuss their level of comfort with this responsibility. A student should never transport a client unless they have agreed to this role and have a valid, current

driver’s license and are confident that their personal vehicle insurance will cover the costs of any accident that may occur.

8.8 Use of Technology and social media in Field

Students must be aware of the professional and ethical risks of using technology in the field setting. Although the use of technology has the capacity to greatly enhance professional relationships, organizational function, and learning, students must be aware of the professional and ethical risks of using technology in the field setting. Students must consider the impact of technology on three critical areas: protection of client and agency privacy and confidentiality, development and maintenance of appropriate boundaries, and development and presentation of the professional self.

Key guidelines for use of technology in field:

- Determine whether agency staff and/or students are allowed to use social media for personal use during agency hours and follow the agency policy. This includes use of Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- Set social media privacy settings at the highest level to prevent agency clients and staff from accessing the student’s personal information.
- Never “friend” an agency client on social media and, whenever possible, refrain from “friending” agency staff during the term of placement.
- Do not post any information about clients or the agency on personal media sites, with one exception: students may share links to info about agency outreach or development events.
- Refrain from use of personal phones during any client contact.
- Whenever possible, use only agency computers to manage documentation regarding client contacts and services.
- Students completing field hours remotely should discuss technology and privacy needs and expectations with the field agency.
- When in doubt about the use of any technology or social media at field, first consult with the agency field instructor.

Given all of these challenges, students are encouraged to talk to their agency field instructors very early in placement to clarify agency policy and receive guidance on ethical and appropriate use of technology in the field setting.

9.0 Evaluations and Grading Procedures

9.1 Evaluation of Student Competency

An evaluation of each student’s progress in field placement is completed by the agency field instructor at midterm and at the end of each academic semester. Due dates of evaluations can be found in the annual calendar distributed by each campus and on IPT at the beginning of the academic year. Each student should read and sign the evaluation. Signing the evaluation indicates the student has read it, not that they agree entirely with its contents. The student has the right to submit a written statement to the college setting forth aspects of the evaluation with which there is disagreement.

Agency field instructors rate student performance on each practice behavior using the scale below. The rating is based on the evidence the student has entered on the

learning plan and also on the field and task instructors’ observations of the student’s performance.

4 = Advanced Competence -- Student consistently demonstrates effective integration of knowledge, values, and skills at a more advanced level than would be expected for a student at this point in the MSSW program. Student consistently exceeds performance expectations. Student goes “above and beyond” on assignments and consistently seeks and integrates feedback to enhance competency.

3 = Competence – Student demonstrates consistent integration of knowledge, values, and skills at the expected level of performance for a student at this point in the MSSW program. Student is meeting expectations on all assignments and integrates feedback to enhance competency.

2 = Emerging Competence – Student demonstrates beginning capacity to integrate knowledge, values, and skills. Student is using feedback to build competency, but performance is not yet at the expected level for where the student is in the MSSW program. In the first semester of placement, a student often receives a rating of 2 on one or more practice behaviors due to insufficient opportunity to practice the skill.

Please note: Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate competence and receive a rating of at least 3 on all practice behaviors by the end of the placement. A rating of 2 should not be assigned to a student on the end of semester evaluation for the final semester of placement unless there are concerns about the student’s readiness for graduation and performance as a new professional social worker.

If a student earns multiple ratings of 2 on an evaluation, the student and Agency field instructor should discuss and document what is needed for the student to achieve competence and forward the documentation to the UT field coordinator.

1 = Insufficient Competence – Student does not demonstrate essential knowledge, values, and/or skills. Student is not completing assignments adequately and is not responding appropriately to feedback. This student may receive a grade of No Credit for field.

Each student should read and sign the evaluation. Signing the evaluation indicates the student has read it, not that they agree entirely with its contents. The student has the right to submit a written statement to the college setting forth aspects of the evaluation with which there is disagreement.

9.2 Field Education Grading Policy

The UT field coordinator is the course instructor for field courses and is responsible for assigning the final grade. The UT field coordinator assigns the final grade after review of the learning plan evidence and final evaluations, field liaison report forms, and, if applicable, seminar grades. Field placement is graded “Satisfactory” or “No Credit.” If a student receives a grade of “No Credit” for field, the student is not allowed to repeat

the course and will not be able to complete the master’s program. If a student wishes to appeal this grade, they should refer to the Student Appeal Process listed in the MSSW Student Handbook.

9.3 Incompletes in Field

A grade of incomplete (I) is a temporary grade showing that the student has performed satisfactorily in the course but, due to unforeseen circumstances, has been unable to finish all requirements. The UT field coordinator will determine whether a student is eligible for the grade of Incomplete. The UT field coordinator, in consultation with the student, decides the terms for the removal of the incomplete, including the time limit for removal. If the incomplete is not removed within one calendar year, the grade will be changed to No Credit (NC).

9.4 Student Evaluation of Field Placement

Students are required to evaluate their placement experience, including their field instructor, field liaison and UTK Field Coordinator during the spring semester using the Student Evaluation of Field Placement survey. These evaluations will come ot students via email, are completed online, and are used to promote program improvement. If the student gives permission, the evaluation can be shared with the student’s agency field instructor.

10.0 Problems in Field

10.1 Managing Problems in Field

Managing problems in field placement is an important component of students’ professional development. Problems are often related to unsatisfactory progress in student learning, incidents related to ethics or professional standards, or issues with the agency. There are five phases in the field problem solving process. If a student wishes to appeal a decision after going through those five phases, they will follow the college’s Academic and Professional Standards process. As you review these five phases of field problem-solving, please note:

- Throughout this process, Field Coordinators, Directors, and Liaisons may provide individual processing and consultation as needed.
- As Field Liaisons are adjunct faculty with time restraints, there may be times the Field Coordinator, Director or Asst. Director of Field takes their place in Phases 1-5.
- Agencies and the Field Coordinator have the authority to end a placement at any point in this process.
- Students should remain enrolled in classes while they are engaging in the problem-solving process but should communicate with their advisor about their options.
- If a student is in a situation where they are experiencing serious concerns such as discrimination, bullying, harassment, hostile work environment, etc., the student should notify the Field Liaison and Field Coordinator as soon as possible so that appropriate steps can be taken.
- Problems in field related to Title IX must follow the policies of the UTK Office of Title IX: <https://titleix.utk.edu/> and Section 10.03 of this field manual. (Title IX of

- the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex and gender discrimination in all programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.)
- If a student is uncertain about how to best begin addressing a problem/concern, the student may first request a consultation with their field liaison or field coordinator.
 - If the student or field educator will not address placement concerns using the outlined process, the UT Field Coordinator will start with Phase 4 in this process.
 - If there are concerns related to student mental health or wellness, the UTK Center for Care and Resilience may be engaged online at <https://studentlife.utk.edu/care/> or by calling 865-974-HELP.

Phase 1 of the Field Problem-Solving Process:

1. An individual (student or Field Educator) identifies a challenge.
2. Student and Field Educator meet to discuss the challenge.
3. Issue is resolved or plan is developed to address the challenge.
4. Resolution, lack of resolution, or plan to address the challenge is documented by person who identified the challenge. If the concern is serious enough, the field educator should document this on the Performance Improvement Plan in IPT.
5. If the student & field educator cannot come to resolution, OR if the student and/or field educator first want consultation regarding the problem, the process will move to Phase 2.

Phase 2 of the Field Problem-Solving Process:

1. The individual who identified the challenge reaches out to set a consultation appointment with the field liaison.
2. The student and/or field educator receive coaching from Field Liaison regarding possible solutions.
3. The field educator and student discuss the issue with proposed solutions.
4. A plan is developed to address the challenge.
5. Resolution, lack of resolution, or plan to address the challenge is documented by person who identified the challenge. If the concern is serious enough, this should be documented on the Performance Improvement Plan in IPT.
6. If the student & field educator cannot come to resolution, the process will move to Phase 3.

Phase 3 of the Field Problem-Solving Process:

1. The person who identified the challenge notifies Field Liaison that issue was not resolved.
2. The field Liaison notifies Field Coordinator and consults as needed.
3. The field Liaison schedules and facilitates a problem-solving meeting between field educator and student. The field Coordinator may also participate.
4. Resolution, lack of resolution or plan to address the challenge is documented in the

- IPT Performance Improvement Plan as instructed on this form. Student must sign off on IPT Performance Improvement Plan and is encouraged to enter a response.
5. The student documents actions taken to resolve the issue on the Performance Improvement Plan.
 6. If participants cannot come to resolution, or if the student is removed/dismissed from the field placement, the process will move to Phase 4.

Phase 4 of the Field Problem-Solving Process:

1. The student and Field Coordinator meet to see if they can come to resolution on next steps. Next steps may include removal/dismissal from the field placement, a change in placement, a remediation plan, and/or a decision not to re-place the student in field.
2. The Field Coordinator will notify the student of this decision via email within 10 working days of the meeting.
3. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Field Coordinator, the process will move to Phase 5.

Phase 5 of the Field Problem-Solving Process:

1. The student submits a written request to appeal the Field Coordinator's decision to the Program Director for the student's campus within 10 working days of the notification.
2. The Program Director for that student's campus meets with the Field Coordinator and student in an attempt to resolve the matter.
3. The Program Director will notify the student and Field Coordinator of their decision via email in 10 working days of the meeting.
4. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Program Director, college policy related to the Academic/Professional Standards Committee will be followed as outlined in the MSSW student handbook.

10.2 Requests to Terminate a Placement

A student may request to terminate a placement if problems/concerns interfere with learning. However, the decision to terminate a placement is only made by the Field Coordinator after all reasonable efforts to resolve the concerns have been exhausted. If a student is in a situation where they are experiencing serious concerns such as discrimination, bullying, harassment, hostile work environment, etc., the student should notify the Field Liaison and Field Coordinator as soon as possible so that appropriate steps can be taken.

Students are not permitted to resign from a field placement without prior approval from the UT field coordinator. Students who resign without prior approval are at risk of receiving a grade of No Credit.

Any student who wants to request termination must first engage in the problem-solving process described in Section 10.1, then submit an email to the UT field coordinator and

copy the field liaison, including in detail the student's concerns about the placement experience and all efforts made to resolve the issues. The request should include in detail the student's concerns about the placement experience and all efforts that have been made to resolve the issues. The UT field coordinator will review the student's request and may consult with the agency field instructor and/or the field liaison. The decision to terminate a placement is made by the UT field coordinator.

Termination of a placement may result in a change in the student's program of study and/or graduation date. The UT field coordinator will review the hours and activities completed by the student in the initial placement to determine whether any of these hours may be carried over to a new placement. However, a new placement agency may require the student to complete the full-term hours as a condition of placement. The student may need to complete additional hours at a new field placement so that adequate orientation and learning opportunities can be ensured. Students will begin not begin interviewing for a new placement until after a decision has been made to terminate the existing placement.

10.3 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of students is a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits sex discrimination in education. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when grades or educational progress are made contingent upon submission to such conduct, or when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Students should follow the procedure below if they experience sexual harassment in their field agency:

1. Contact the UT field coordinator as soon as possible to report this situation and to receive advice on how to proceed. The UT field coordinator will determine whether the student should return to the field setting while the issue is under review.
2. Complete the Field Incident Report form and submit the completed form to the UT field coordinator ASAP.

The UT field coordinator will:

1. Contact the Office of Title IX to complete the mandatory reporter obligations and discuss next steps listed below.
2. Determine, with the student, whether they feel safe returning to the agency setting. If appropriate, a plan may be developed to assure the student's safety and comfort in the field setting.
3. After review with the Office of Title IX, notify the field liaison who will work with the agency field instructor and/or agency administrator to further assess the situation and to decide on an intervention strategy.
4. As appropriate, confer with the Associate Dean of Access, Belonging, Global Engagement and the Program Director regarding the situation and the planned strategy for intervention.
5. Determine the status of the student's placement in the agency after a thorough assessment.

6. Make referrals, if needed, to appropriate resources for assisting the student to cope with the situation.

10.4 Unsatisfactory Progress in Field

If a student does not demonstrate satisfactory progress toward competency in field, an agency field instructor has the right to terminate the student’s placement at any time. If students have demonstrated commitment to their learning and growth, agency field instructors may be willing to give students the opportunity to achieve satisfactory performance. If student performance or progress in field is unsatisfactory, and the agency field instructor is willing to continue to work with the student, the field problem-solving process outlined in 10.01 should be initiated.

- If there are concerns that the student may not succeed in placement, there will be meetings as outlined in the field problem-solving process to discuss the concerns and to develop a plan to address the issues regarding student performance. If the agency is willing to proceed with the student, a deadline will be set for demonstrating performance improvement. The student will be informed that failure to meet performance standards may result in dismissal from the agency and/or a failing grade in the field course.
- The overview of concerns and plan for demonstrating improvement will be documented on the Performance Improvement Plan in IPT.
- The student may enter comments on the Performance Improvement Plan and is expected to sign off on the report. The student’s signature does not indicate agreement with the concerns, but does indicate an agreement to move forward with the plan for improvement. If the student does not agree to the plan, the student’s placement at the agency will be terminated.
- If the student has not demonstrated adequate progress by the designated date, the agency field instructor may decide to terminate the student’s placement.
- If the placement is terminated, the agency field instructor should contact the UT field coordinator to request that a Dismissal from Placement form be loaded on the student’s page in IPT. The Dismissal from Placement form will be completed and will document reasons for the dismissal. Phase 4 of the field problem-solving process begins at this point.

10.5 Dismissal from Placement and Appeal Procedure

Any field agency that determines that a student’s continuation in placement jeopardizes the quality of client services or agency reputation, or disrupts normal agency operations, may elect to immediately terminate the student’s placement. Whenever possible, agency field instructors are asked to contact the field liaison and/or the UT field coordinator before making a decision to dismiss the student to proactively address any concerns about student performance that might lead to termination of placement (See Sections 10.01 and 10.04).

Upon notification of a student’s dismissal, a Dismissal Form will be uploaded on the student’s page in IPT. The Dismissal Form will be completed and will document reasons

for the dismissal. The UT field coordinator may contact the agency for additional information and will review all documentation of cause for dismissal.

At this point, Phase 4 of the Field problem-solving process will be initiated, and the UT field coordinator will meet with the student to discuss the dismissal. The UT field coordinator will determine whether the student is A) Eligible for placement in another setting, or B) Not Eligible for placement in another setting.

A: Students eligible for Re-placement: If the UT field coordinator determines that the student is eligible for another placement, the following steps will be followed. Please note that it is highly unlikely that the student will be able to begin placement at another agency before the start of the following semester. Consequently, the student will likely receive the grade of Incomplete, and the following procedure will be implemented:

1. The student is to schedule a meeting with the UT field coordinator to initiate placement planning. The UT field coordinator will work with the student to evaluate appropriate options for placement.
2. The UT field coordinator may request that the student sign a Release of Information form so that information about the student’s prior field experience and learning needs can be shared with prospective agency field instructors.
3. The UT field coordinator will facilitate an opportunity for the student to interview for another placement. The College cannot guarantee that the student will be accepted by an organization for another placement. It is the student’s responsibility to secure the placement through a successful interview. Additionally, identifying another agency can take some time and students should be prepared that they may not secure another placement quickly.

B: Students Not Eligible for Re-placement: If a student’s placement is terminated by the agency due to poor student performance, ethics violations, violation of agency policy, or professional misconduct, the UT field coordinator may determine that the student is not eligible for re-placement. The UT field coordinator will notify the student of this decision via email within 10 working days of the meeting). If the UT field coordinator determines that the student is not eligible to interview for another placement or to receive a grade of Incomplete, the student will receive a No Credit for the course at the end of the semester.

Two pathways exist for appeal: (A) the student may appeal the decision not to re-place, continuing to follow the steps in Section 10.1 and the MSSW student handbook; or (B) the student may appeal the grade of NC once that grade is entered at the end of the semester by following the grade appeals procedure in the MSSW Student Handbook.

Students who are following this appeal process should continue attending their MSSW classes, including field seminar, but should consult with their advisor regarding their options. Students who are participating in the field appeal process will not engage in

field planning (no interviews, etc) for the next year until after a final decision has been made. This can cause delays in starting field, which could ultimately lead to delays in graduation

10.6 Student Removal from a Field Placement

The UT field coordinator has the authority to withdraw a student from a placement based on concerns about the student’s performance, the agency environment, quality and consistency of supervision, or the student’s refusal to address concerns about the placement. If a student is removed from a placement by the UT field coordinator due to the student’s performance, the problem-solving process will be initiated.

Circumstances in which a student will or may be removed from a placement include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1. Attempts to harm themselves or any client or agency staff person.
- 2. Is repeatedly absent from field, repeatedly absent without notification, or absent for a period of two weeks for any reason not approved by the UT field coordinator.
- 3. Has personal or legal hardships that negatively impact their performance in the field placement.
- 4. Has a physical or mental health challenge, active substance abuse issues, or undocumented disabilities that severely limit the student’s effectiveness in the field placement.
- 5. Consistently performs in a manner that does not meet agency and/or CSW Expectations.
- 6. Violates the NASW Code of Ethics (depending on nature and severity of the infraction).
- 7. Fails to maintain confidentiality as mandated by the field agency policy, the NASW Code of Ethics, and state/federal law.
- 8. Fails to comply with agency policies, procedures, or standards of conduct.

10.7 Professional Misconduct

Students must conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner toward clients, students, faculty, and agency colleagues. Because membership in a profession implies commitment to an encompassing set of values, professional conduct is expected at all times in any field-related activity. The college subscribes to the NASW Code of Ethics which is discussed in the classroom and in field placements. The college’s policy on professional conduct is in Section 1 of this manual, and in the MSSW Student Handbook. Each student is required to sign the Field Placement Risks and Responsibilities before starting field. This stipulates the student’s understanding of the expectation of professional conduct. Any incident of professional misconduct which is committed during field placement should be documented and submitted to the UT field liaison and/or coordinator in the Performance Improvement Plan, and the field problem solving

process should be initiated. If there are concerns related to student mental health or wellness, the UTK Center for Care and Resilience may be engaged online via their website <https://studentlife.utk.edu/care/> or by calling 865-974-HELP.

10.8 Return to Field after Withdrawal from a Field Course

If a student withdraws from the field course after receiving a substandard evaluation or critical feedback regarding field performance and wishes to return to field in a future semester, the student should participate in an Academic/Professional Standards (APS) committee meeting prior to their next semester of academic enrollment.

The purpose of the APS meeting will be to provide formal approval or denial of the student’s request to return to field courses. The assigned field coordinator will communicate with the Director of Field Education regarding the need for an APS.

The student will start by emailing CSWplacement@utk.edu to request the “Request to return to field” form. Once the form is submitted, the Director of Field Education will request a meeting of the APS committee to consider the student’s eligibility to return to field.

The Committee will review the circumstances leading to withdrawal and determine whether the student is eligible to register for a field course. The APS Committee will have access to documentation relevant to student performance in field and may stipulate specific conditions that must be met for the student to be eligible for field, including timeframes for when it may be possible to return to field. The student may appeal the Committee decision according to the appeals process detailed in the MSSW Student Handbook and Hilltopics.

Students should be aware that choosing to continue enrolling in and completing other coursework prior to receiving APS approval does not guarantee eligibility to resume field education. Progressing through the remainder of the curriculum without this approval may place students at risk of exhausting their academic and financial resources without ultimately meeting graduation requirements. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to complete the APS process and secure approval to return to field before enrolling in additional coursework.

10.9 Eligibility for Field Placement While Appealing Program Dismissal

A student who receives a final grade of D, F or No Credit in any required social work course will be dismissed from the MSSW program. If the student elects to appeal the grade and subsequent dismissal, the student will be permitted to commence or return to field while pursuing the appeal, as long as the field agency approves and they are registered for field. Students who are participating in the field appeal process will not engage in field planning (no interviews, etc) for the next year until after a final decision has been made. This can cause delays in starting field, which could ultimately lead to delays in graduation. If the student’s grade appeal is denied, the student may not return to field and would be required to withdraw from current social work classes.