Employment-Based Social Work Placement

New Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation policies allow students completing field placement in their workplace to count work hours towards field requirements if:

- Assignments and activities fulfill learning objectives
- Assignments and activities are linked to the appropriate level of social work practice
- Supervision by a trained social worker*
- Supervision process for field education is distinct from employee evaluation process
- The student and agency field instructor remain employed at the agency during the time of the field placement
- The student has successfully worked at the agency at least four weeks

* External social work supervision may be possible if the agency does not have a social worker on staff who is able to provide supervision.

Benefits of Employer-Based Placements

- Employees can pursue BSSW or MSSW degree while working
- Employees can count work hours towards field expectations
- Employee morale improves with employer investment
- Employee retention should also increase
- Employer benefits from better trained staff
- CEU Opportunities for Field Instructors
UTK College of Social Work
Employment-Based Field
Placement Expectations

1. Signed Agency Affiliation agreement with UTK (Memorandum of Agreement)

2. Identification of a qualified social worker at the agency who will oversee student’s learning, provide weekly supervision, sign off on learning plans, evaluations and timesheets

3. Employment-based field plan:
   • Outline learning activities/tasks to meet required learning competencies for field
   • Develop plan for tracking field hours
   • Clarify supervision plan, delineating student learning assessment versus employer’s professional evaluation
   • Acknowledge risks involved with an employment-based placement
   • The student has successfully worked at the agency at least four weeks

Examples for Generalist or BSSW students (400 hours)
• Intake/assessment
• Client engagement/empathic listening skills
• Resource linkage/case management
• Basics of research, evaluation, policy analysis and advocacy

Examples for Clinical Practice Concentration students (600 hours)
• Advanced client assessment
• Implementation of clinical interventions (individual/group counseling)
• Evaluation of clinical practice
• Research best practices related to client interventions
• Understanding policy analysis/advocacy as a clinical social worker

Examples for Organizational Leadership Concentration students (600 hours)
• Community/agency assessments
• Facilitation of meetings/task groups
• Fund development, including grant writing
• Program development and evaluation
• Advanced policy analysis/advocacy

Want More Information?

Please Contact:
Kim Crane Mallory
Director of Field Education
kcrane@utk.edu