

To: MSW Student Interns and Agency Interviewers  
From: Field Education Office  
Date: March 2014  
Re: **Interview Paperwork for Field Placements beginning Fall 2014 and Spring 2015**

Once you have reviewed the information below, please review the attached information prior to your field placement interview:

- Interview Topics and Sample Questions
- Interview Outcome Forms – Student (Form A) and Field Educator (Form B)
- Field Education Calendars
- Field Educator Orientation Information

**Student Responsibilities:**

- 1) Make contact with the agency within 2 business days
- 2) Schedule an interview within the 2 weeks
- 2) Review the enclosed Interview Packet
- 3) Return the **Student - Interview Outcome (Form A)** within 24 hours of the interview

**Agency Responsibilities:**

- 1) Review the enclosed Interview Packet
- 2) Return the **Field Educator - Interview Outcome (Form B)** within 24 hours of the interview

**Students will be engaged in the interview process with only one agency/program at a time.**

Foundation students are assigned to field placements that offer generalist experience, as opposed to the Advanced Year which provides students with an opportunity to focus on an Area of Interest. Students are expected to accept the placement where they have been assigned for their Foundation Year Placement. However, if after the interview there is a serious concern about the placement on the part of either the agency or student, it should be discussed with the Field Education Office immediately. If the agency determines that the interview has not resulted in a successful match, the agency contacts the Field Education Office and an alternate placement will be selected.

**It is essential to return the enclosed forms within 24 hours of the interview date. We cannot continue the placement process at another agency until we know the outcome of the current interview.**

The School of Social Work and the Field Education Office develop important relationships with community agencies in order to develop new placement sites and maintain established sites. The advanced year placement process allows the student to choose their preferred agencies, interview with one of those agencies, and make a decision based on personal choices. Although the start of your placement may be months away, we ask you to remember that by accepting this placement, you are making a professional commitment to this agency, and we expect that you will honor the commitment you have made.

If you have any questions, please contact the Field Education Office.

Field Education Office, 636 Baldy Hall, (716) 645-1234, E-mail: [sw-field@buffalo.edu](mailto:sw-field@buffalo.edu)

## INTERVIEW TOPICS

### *MSW Student Interns – Field Placement*

We have found that placements are most successful for both students and field educators when **expectations, needs, and opportunities are clarified in the initial interview**. When issues arise they often stem from a lack of communication about expectations, make sure you are both “on the same page” – please don’t assume! We hope that discussing these topics will be helpful to you in beginning a meaningful and mutually satisfying student/field educator relationship. Please take this document with you to review during the interview.

□ **Discuss student career interests, professional goals, and learning needs.**

□ **Discuss mandatory trainings/orientations:**

-Orientations prior to the beginning of the field placement, typically do not count toward field placement hours. Please contact the Field Director to request any exceptions.

-Be aware of SSW policy related to agency training and potential classroom conflicts: *“In the rare event that a student is mandated to attend a field placement training that conflicts with a scheduled course, the instructor will consider resulting absences as excused and follow university policy (See UB SSW Student Handbook.) In such instances, students will notify the field education office or their field liaisons about the conflict.”*

□ **Screenings/References:**

Students may be required to have a PPD Mantoux (TB test) within the 12 months prior to the start of the field placement. Please discuss all necessary requirements with your agency at the interview. It is important to clarify if the agency has any additional requirements such as specialized screenings (i.e. criminal background checks, drug screenings) or immunizations and any costs that students may incur. Some agencies may also require Letters of Reference.

□ **Conflicts of Interest:**

Does the agency have a policy that may restrict accepting an MSW intern (i.e. if an intern/and or their immediate family member received services from agency, no smoking policy, etc.)?

□ **Student Hours:**

*(See [Field Education Calendar](#) for specific details.)*

-Agree upon a specific student field placement schedule (ie days and hours)

-Generally, full-time students have been expected to be in field placement for an 8-hour day. This is based on 7.5 field hours with a half-hour for lunch that is not counted toward field.

-Students in the part-time program may need to flex their hours and may not be in field for 8 consecutive hours. In these cases, an alternate schedule may be developed between the student and the field educator then reviewed with the school for approval. Our expectation is that students will be at placement during hours that preserve the integrity of their learning, never less than 3 hour shifts.

□ **School Setting Placements:**

Please discuss the spring break of the school system versus that of UB. In order to get the minimum required hours, students often need to exchange the time off from UB with that of the school if they do not coincide.

□ **Use of vehicles and any parking expenses:**

-Due to liability issues, students are not allowed to transport clients in their vehicle or agency vehicle(s).

-Will the student need to use their own vehicle to travel between different agency sites or for home visits? Does the agency reimburse interns for mileage? Is there a fee for parking at or near the agency?

□ **Population Served:**

Agency Interviewers may want to share typical examples of populations and situations encountered in the agency's setting. For example, this setting frequently deals with clients confronting death, suicide, sexual trauma, etc. Discussing experiences students have had in preparing to deal with these populations or situations as well as their comfort level may be helpful. However, please be mindful that it is generally inappropriate to discuss a student's personal life experiences in the interview.

□ **Recommended Courses:**

The agency interviewer may want to discuss what courses the student has taken and make suggestions about any particular course that may be useful in getting the most out of the field placement (i.e. Psychopathology, Interventions with Groups). Students may or may not be able to take a particular elective course depending on when the course is offered and their individual schedule.

□ **Agency Mission and Learning Experience:**

We ask that agencies provide as much diversity in the range of experiences as possible for this foundation placement. It is beneficial for the field educator to share with the student typical examples of situations encountered in the field setting. Students will be better prepared for the placement if they are aware and can discuss any concerns about dealing with particular problem areas. Providing agency brochures or other information for the student to take to read is also helpful.

□ **Learning and Supervisory Styles:**

Awareness of differences or similarities from the start can be very helpful in terms of developing a good working relationship. It is not always necessary for the student and field educator to have similar styles in terms of structure, preferred learning, and teaching styles (i.e. experiential, cognitive, etc.) to have a positive experience. Sometimes differences can cause a student to stretch and learn new ways of doing things. This discussion will be important when developing a learning contract but an initial recognition of the preferred style can help. Recognizing and respecting diversity is the key.

□ **Dress code:**

It is useful to clarify terms such as "casual" or "professional" as they may mean different things to different people. Please be specific (i.e. jacket and tie are required or dress is casual but no jeans or sneakers).

□ **Establish a clear outcome:**

Does the agency agree to the student? Does the student agree to the agency? If not, establish a date to know the outcome of the interview. **Students are responsible to follow up. Clear communication between the student and the agency is very important.**

□ **Review “Sample Questions” and incorporate into the interview.**

Please return the Interview Outcome Form to the Field Department ASAP.  
Your field placement will not be confirmed until we receive this.

UB School of Social Work – Field Education Department

**Sample Questions for Students to Ask in Interview**

- 1) What can the agency/field educator provide in terms of learning opportunities?
- 2) What can I expect in terms of supervision? What is the supervisory style of the field educator?
- 3) What services does the agency provide? Find out as much as possible about the agency. Ask for brochures or any written material that might be available. Ask what activities or tasks will I be doing as a student?
- 4) What has their previous experiences been like with students? What seems to have worked well in terms of students/field educators benefiting from the experience?
- 5) What, if any, resources are available at the agency (i.e. computer availability, in-service training opportunities)?
- 6) ***Advanced Year Placement Only***  
Are there any necessary prerequisites to having a placement at the agency? (i.e. Some agencies ask that a student have taken a psychopathology course or be willing to take it during the first semester of placement.) You may also want to ask the field educator for any suggestions he or she may have about courses that would be useful in getting the most out of the field placement.

**Sample Questions for Agency Interviewers to Ask Students**

- 1) What are you looking for in terms of learning? Supervisory style?
- 2) What have you found particularly helpful, or not helpful, in supervisory or learning relationships in the past?
- 3) What might your field educator do that you would find conducive to your learning? What would you probably find negative?
- 4) How do you deal with problems when they arise? For example, how do you think you would handle problems in the student/field educator relationship, or how would you respond if you found that the learning opportunities were not meeting your needs? How could the practicum help you deal with these types of problems?
- 5) What have you found to be your strengths and weaknesses in working with others in teams?
- 6) What has your experience been in working with people in authority? What have your positive experiences been? What difficulties have you experienced?
- 7) Do you have any ideas about how you learn best? For example, are you more comfortable putting a lot of thought in before you face a new situation, or are you more comfortable acting first and reflecting in more detail later?
- 8) ***Advanced Year Placement Only***  
What learning objectives have you developed so far for the upcoming practicum? What do you know, or what have you heard about the agency that would help you to meet some of these objectives?

The sample questions listed above are offered as suggestions and need not all be asked.

## Student - Interview Outcome (Form A)

**Due Date: Within 24 hours of interview date**  
**Submit this form even if you have not received a decision from the agency.**  
If you have concerns about this placement, please contact the Field Office.

Agency/Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Placement Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Educator: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Licensed Social Worker)

Task Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable)

Please check one and sign below.

- I accept this placement.
- I do not accept this placement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature                      Date

***Advanced Year Students***

Please note: Students are expected to have fully researched their choices before interview, and therefore only disagree with a placement under exceptional circumstances.

**Students will be engaged in the interview process with only one agency/program at a time.**

## Field Educator – Interview Outcome (Form B)

Field Educator Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Licensed Field Educator
- Outside Field Educator
- Task Supervisor

Licensure Information (please check one):

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> LMSW   | <input type="checkbox"/> I have applied for licensure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LCSW   | <input type="checkbox"/> I have not applied for licensure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LCSW-R | <input type="checkbox"/> NA – not a NYS field placement   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RSW    |   |

Is your agency listed below licensed by any of the following:

- NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH)
- NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS)
- NYS Office of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD)
- NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (OASAS)

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one and sign below.

- I accept the student listed above for placement.
- I do not accept the student listed above for placement and I have notified the student.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Field Educator Signature                      Date

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**Field Education - Internship Calendar for MSW Students**

## Advanced Year Field Placement

Program Type	Fall Hours Per Week (Minimum Hours) [Ex. Course No. on schedule]	Spring Hours Per Week (Minimum Hours) [Ex. Course No. on schedule]	Total Hours in Field (Fall & Spring)
<b>Advanced Year</b> <b>Field Education Placement</b> Full Time Traditional & Advanced Standing	<b>Field Instruction 3</b> 2 days or 15 hours per week <b>(240 hours)</b> <a href="#">[Ex. SW 552LEC]</a>	<b>Field Instruction 4</b> 2 days or 15 hours per week <b>(240 hours)</b> <a href="#">[Ex. SW 553LEC]</a>	<b>480 hours</b>

## Foundation Year Field Placement

Program Type	Fall Hours Per Week (Minimum Hours) [Ex. Course No. on schedule]	Spring Hours Per Week (Minimum Hours) [Ex. Course No. on schedule]	Total Hours in Field (Fall & Spring)
<b>Foundation Year</b> <b>Field Education Placement</b> Full Time & Part Time Traditional  (Field begins in the 5 <sup>th</sup> week of the Fall semester following a 4-week Interventions Lab – see below.)	<b>Field Instruction 1</b> 15 hours per week <b>(180 hours)</b> <a href="#">[Ex. SW 550LEC]</a> (Begins 5 <sup>th</sup> week of semester)	<b>Field Instruction 2</b> 15 hours per week <b>(240 hours)</b> <a href="#">[Ex. SW 551LEC]</a>	<b>420 hours</b>
<b>Interventions Lab*</b> (Foundation Students Only)	Interventions Lab (First 4 weeks of Fall Semester only) <a href="#">[Ex. SW 520LLB LAB]</a>	NA	NA
<b>Interventions Class*</b> (Foundation Students Only)	Once per week <a href="#">[Ex. SW 520LLB LEC]</a>	Once per week <a href="#">[Ex. SW 521LLB LEC]</a>	NA

\*Please direct questions on these courses to the MSW Program Director

## Field Calendar & Guidelines

<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Advanced Year</b> FT Trad. & Adv. Standing	<b>Foundation Year</b>
Fall Adv. Year field placements begin during the week of	Monday, August 25, 2014	
Classroom Interventions/Field lab begins the week of		Monday, August 25, 2014
Labor Day – Observed Holiday (no field)	Monday, September 1	
Foundation field placements begin during the week of		Monday, September 22
<b>Learning Contracts due in Taskstream</b>	<b>Friday, September 26</b>	<b>Friday, October 24</b>
Field Fall Recess Begins (no field for 1 week)	Mon. Nov. 24 to Sun. Nov 30	Mon. Nov. 24 to Sun. Nov 30
Field placements resume during the week of	Monday, December 1	Monday, December 1
<b>Mid-placement Evaluation due in Taskstream</b>	<b>Friday, December 12</b>	<b>Friday, December 12</b>
Fall field ends the week ending (Monday – Sunday)	Sunday, December 21	Sunday, December 21
Field Winter Field Recess (no field for 2 weeks) Includes: New Year’s Day - Observed Holiday (no field)	Mon. Dec. 22 to Sun. Jan 4, 2015	Mon. Dec. 22 to Sun. Jan 4, 2015
<b>Spring 2015</b>	<b>Advanced Year</b> FT Trad. & Adv. Standing	<b>Foundation</b>
Spring field placements resume during the week of	Monday, January 5, 2015	Monday, January 5, 2015
Field Education Fair	Thursday, January 8	Thursday, January 8
Martin Luther King Day – Observed Holiday (no field)	Monday, January 19	Monday, January 19
UB Classes begin for Spring Semester	Monday, January 26	Monday, January 26
Spring Recess Begins (no field for 1 week)	Mon. Mar. 16 to Sun. Mar. 22, 2015	Mon. Mar. 16 to Sun. Mar. 22, 2015
Field placements resume during the week of	Monday, March 23	Monday, March 23
<b>Final Evaluation due in Taskstream</b>	<b>Friday, April 24</b>	<b>Friday, April 24</b>
Spring field ends the week ending (Monday – Sunday)	Sunday, May 3	Sunday, May 3

### Field Calendar Guidelines

- The actual day of the week that field placement begins/ends is determined by the schedule arranged b/t the student and the agency.
- Students are generally expected to be at their field placement site for a regular/traditional 8-hour day. This is based on 7.5 field hours with a half-hour lunch break that is not counted toward field hours. See example below:
  - 7.5 hours learning at field placement (counted towards field hours)
  - 0.5 hours for lunch break (not counted towards field hours)
  - 8.0 hours day at field site
- The Field Calendar differs from the Academic Calendar. Student schedules for field should correspond with the Field Calendar.
- Students do not need to make up time for missing (not being at) field during the periods on the field calendar which designate recess. However, students in some agencies, i.e. school settings may need to take the designated Spring Break of the school system versus that of the University at Buffalo. In order to get the minimum required hours, students often need to exchange the time off from UB with that of the school if they do not coincide. ***It is important to discuss this with the Field Educator at the time of interview.***
- If a student’s typical placement day falls on an Observed Holiday (the student is typically in field on that day of the week), he or she is not required to be in field on that day; however, the student is required to make up the hours on an alternate day in that semester.
- Students may need to work their field placement hours around their final exams. ***It is important to discuss this with the Field Educator at the time of interview.***
- Please note that the field placement resumes before classroom instruction begins in the Spring semester.
- Be aware of SSW policy related to agency training and potential classroom conflicts: ***“In the rare event that a student is mandated to attend a field placement training that conflicts with a scheduled course, the instructor will consider resulting absences as excused and follow university policy (See UB SSW Student Handbook.) In such instances, students will notify the field education office or their field liaisons about the conflict.***
- All field hours must be completed within the specific semester.



**UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO – SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**  
**Field Education - Internship Calendar for MSW Students**

## ***Advanced Year Field Placement***

Program Type	Spring Hours Per Week (Minimum Hours) [Ex. Course No. on schedule]	Summer Hours Per Week (Minimum Hours) [Ex. Course No. on schedule]	Total Hours in Field (Spring & Summer)
<b>Advanced Year</b> <b>Field Education Placement</b> <i>Part Time Traditional &amp; Advanced Standing</i>	<b>Field Instruction 3</b> <i>15 hours per week</i> <b>(255 hours)</b> <i>[Ex. SW 552LEC]</i>	<b>Field Instruction 4</b> <i>15 hours per week</i> <b>(225 hours)</b> <i>[Ex. SW 553LEC]</i>	<b>480 hours</b>

## **Field Calendar**

<b>Spring 2015</b>	<b>Advanced Year</b>
Spring Field placements begin during the week of	Monday, December 29, 2014
New Year's Day - Observed Holiday (no field)	Thursday, January 1, 2015
Field Education Fair	Thursday, January 8
Martin Luther King Day – Observed Holiday (no field)	Monday, January 19
UB Classes begin for Spring Semester	Monday, January 26
<b>Learning Contracts due in Taskstream</b>	<b>Friday, January 30</b>
Field Spring Recess Begins (no field for 1 week)	Mon. Mar. 16 to Sun. Mar. 22
Field placements resume during the week of	Monday, March 23
<b>Mid-Placement Evaluation due in Taskstream</b>	<b>Friday, April 24</b>
Spring Field ends the week ending (Monday – Sunday)	Sunday, May 3
<b>Summer 2015</b>	<b>Advanced Year</b>
Summer field placements resume during the week of	Monday, May 4
Memorial Day - Observed Holiday (no field)	Monday, May 25
Independence Day – Observed Holiday (no field)	Friday, July 3
<b>Final Evaluation due in Taskstream</b>	<b>Friday, August 7</b>
<b>Please note, the Final Evaluation is due <u>before</u> the end of field. However, students are required to attend field after this to meet their hourly requirement. Failure to comply can result in a change of grade for Field Placement.</b>	
Summer Field ends the week ending (Monday – Sunday)	<i>Sunday, August 16</i>

### Field Calendar Guidelines

- The actual day of the week that field placement begins/ends is determined by the schedule arranged b/t the student and the agency.
- Students are generally expected to be at their field placement site for a regular/traditional 8-hour day. This is based on 7.5 field hours with a half-hour lunch break that is not counted toward field hours. See example below:
  - 7.5 hours learning at field placement (counted towards field hours)
  - 0.5 hours for lunch break (not counted towards field hours)
  - 8.0 hours day at field site
- The Field Calendar differs from the Academic Calendar. Student schedules for field should correspond with the Field Calendar.
- Students do not need to make up time for missing (not being at) field during the periods on the field calendar which designate recess. However, students in some agencies, i.e. school settings may need to take the designated Spring Break of the school system versus that of the University at Buffalo. In order to get the minimum required hours, students often need to exchange the time off from UB with that of the school if they do not coincide. ***It is important to discuss this with the Field Educator at the time of interview.***
- If a student's typical placement day falls on an Observed Holiday (the student is typically in field on that day of the week), he or she is not required to be in field on that day; however, the student is required to make up the hours on an alternate day in that semester.
- Students may need to work their field placement hours around their final exams. ***It is important to discuss this with the Field Educator at the time of interview.***
- Please note that the field placement resumes before classroom instruction begins in the Spring semester.
- Be aware of SSW policy related to agency training and potential classroom conflicts: ***"In the rare event that a student is mandated to attend a field placement training that conflicts with a scheduled course, the instructor will consider resulting absences as excused and follow university policy (See UB SSW Student Handbook.) In such instances, students will notify the field education office or their field liaisons about the conflict.***
- All field hours must be completed within the specified semester.

  
**School of Social Work**  
University at Buffalo The State University of New York

To: Field Educators and Agency Contact Person  
From: Field Education Office  
Date: March 2014  
RE: Field Educator Orientation

In an effort to minimize travel and time away from your office, we have made some revisions to the way we provide orientation to our new field educators and support (task) supervisors\*. Our liaison staff will provide an orientation at your site at a time that is convenient for you. **The Field Education Office also has some online orientation segments . They are great introductions to supervision and learning contract development.**

1. Your assigned Liaison will schedule time to meet with you at your site, to offer you supplemental information not covered in the online segment below. It is our intention that this one-on-one personal attention from your liaison provides an opportunity to discuss issues individualized to your orientation needs with your program.
2. Supervision in Social Work Field Education  
<http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/msw/field/supervision-in-sw-education.asp>
3. Developing a Learning Contract webinar  
<http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/msw/field/developing-learning-contract.asp>
4. Developmental Supervision & Learning Contract Development – A more in-depth segment

<http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/msw/field/supervision-in-sw-education.asp>

You will need to log in with the following:

click:	Orientation Segment:
user name:	<b>fieldeducator</b>
password:	<b>Supervision101</b>

The orientation will provide an opportunity to discuss issues of learning contracts, educational supervision, and evaluation. **For field educators who have not had a student in three years or more, this will also be a chance to become up-to-date on important changes in field education and the academic curriculum.** While new field educators with spring / summer interns are required to participate, we encourage any new support (task) supervisors and potential new field educators anticipating working with a student to also participate. *\*Please note: If you will not be in your agency/school setting during the summer, please include an alternate telephone number where you can be reached in case of necessity.*

If you have any questions regarding the field educator role or orientation, please contact the Field Education Office at (716) 645-1234. We look forward to working with you.

**\*What's a Task (Support) Supervisor?** All field placements require a person with a Masters of Social Work degree with two years post-master's social work experience to give their student intern the minimum of one-hour per week of one-on-one supervision. However, in some agencies a support (task) supervisor, usually a non-Masters of Social Work agency person, is also designated to supervise the student intern while the Field Educator (MSW) is not available.

**Questions 716-645-1234 or [sw-field@buffalo.edu](mailto:sw-field@buffalo.edu)**

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