



Master of Social Work
Field Education Manual
MSW Field Courses
Term: Fall 2022

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FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK
MSW FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL

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Preface

The aim of the Faculty of Social Work's **MSW Field Education Manual** is to provide information to students, instructors, advisors, and practice settings regarding the:

- (i) General philosophy and objectives of the Master of Social Work Program;
- (ii) Specific goals, objectives, roles, structures, policies, practices and procedures of the field courses of the MSW program.

The content of the Manual is based on formal policies of the Faculty of Social Work, the Canadian Association for Social Work Education Accreditation Standards, and Wilfrid Laurier University.

For more detailed information regarding a particular policy, contact your [MSW Field Advisor & Placement Coordinator](#).

The policies and procedures in this manual are subject to change and only apply to the specified MSW program and term. Whenever possible, students and field instructors will be notified of any relevant changes to field policies. Please contact your Field Advisor & Placement Coordinator to inquire about any recent updates to procedures or policies.

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Field staff

The MSW field education mandate is facilitated by the MSW field staff listed below. Field staff support students, field instructors, and agencies in all aspects related to field placements. The manager oversees the mandate of the MSW program.

Field contact/staff	Support provided
<p>MSW Field Education Office</p> <p>Email: mswfield@wlu.ca Faculty of Social Work Field Education</p>	<p>First point of contact for any field related questions.</p> <p>As the field staff continue to work remotely, we are only accessible via email. Our phone extensions are not accessible for communication during this time.</p>
<p>Field Advisors & Coordinators mswfield@wlu.ca</p> <p>Alexa Grodecki, MSW (on leave until January 2023)</p> <p>Anum Urooj-Sage, MSW</p> <p>Cecilia Wu, MSW</p> <p>Jocelyn Newman, MSW</p> <p>Tracey Watson, MSW</p>	<p>Field Advisors & Placement Coordinators provide support to students and Field Instructors. Students and instructors contact the advisor assigned to the placement for any field concerns. Instructors & agencies contact coordinators for escalated field concerns.</p> <p>Students and instructors will meet with the advisor during the beginning of placement at a virtual site visit.</p> <p>The advisor’s name is listed in the student Placement Record. The advisor’s office hours are listed on Navigator for availability in the MSW Field Appointment Calendar.</p>
<p>Field Planning Coordinator Breanna Kersey mswfield@wlu.ca</p>	<p>Coordinates the full-time MSW placements, placement recruitment and administrative processes for the field office.</p>
<p>Field Education Manager Yumna Al-Adeimi, MSW yaladeimi@wlu.ca</p>	<p>Oversees the MSW field education office. Provides support and strategic direction to field office and staff in the MSW program. Agencies and instructors contact manager to explore collaborative initiatives.</p>

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Faculty of Social Work

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW) at Wilfrid Laurier University is committed to providing education at the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW), [Master of Social Work](#) (MSW) and [Doctor of Social Work](#) levels. The Master of Social Work program aims to educate students for advanced social work practice in Canada and abroad. The PhD program in Social Work prepares students for leadership roles in education, research and specialized areas of practice in Canada and abroad. The Faculty of Social Work also offers opportunities, through its continuing education program, for specialized learning. The faculty maintains standards through accreditation of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies, and other evaluative activities. The faculty is committed to providing an international focus for the appropriate programmes so that graduates can respond to social problems and needs arising from a rapidly changing socio-economic world order.

It is recognized that social work knowledge and skills are constantly evolving. Therefore, social work education is conceptualized as a life-long learning process in which the faculty is a central resource. A dynamic relationship among faculty, practitioners, and students at differing stages of professional development ensures change and growth in the social work profession.

Statement of Values, Vision, Mission, and Principles for the Faculty of Social Work

The Faculty of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University recognizes that intellectual inquiry, critical reflection, and scholarly integrity are the cornerstones of all academic units of all universities. Our unique values are drawn from the key elements on which Wilfrid Laurier University was founded, as well as those values that are integral to the profession of social work.

We Value

- Social responsibility: advancing the well being of people and communities in every aspect of our work.
- Student-centred learning: meeting students “where they are at” with learning experiences that are realistic in their representation of social work practice and supporting students to reach their potential.
- Integrative learning: equipping students with learning that connects the knowledge of heart, hands, and head and theory to practice.
- Relational practices: giving priority to knowing students as people, facilitating mutually supportive relationships amongst ourselves, and with practice communities and alumni.
- Personal development: encouraging students in their processes of self-discovery, offering constructive feedback a nurturing attributes that equip students to meet the social work challenges of the future.
- Mentorship: recruiting experienced field instructors who will mentor students and supporting these relationships by encouraging ongoing professional development, sharing resources, and communicating openly.
- Diversity: honouring our diverse student body by creating a diverse range of field learning experiences with varying roles, locations and responsibilities.
- Well-being and health: emphasizing reflexive learning and prioritizing self-care.

Our Vision

Our commitment is to social and economic justice. Recognizing that a full understanding of injustice is elusive, we are committed to intentionally pursuing critical reflective and self-reflective space. Through the fostering of such individual and institutional spaces we aim to be better able to support a more just, inclusive and egalitarian society. Our teaching, research, scholarship and actions support challenging structural sources of inequality, including conditions that infringe upon human and civil rights, and facilitating well-being in individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, locally and globally. We strive to have our Faculty of Social Work be known for its cutting edge, community-based scholarship and academic rigour, and providing a challenging and nurturing learning environment to our students.

Our Mission

The Faculty of Social Work is devoted to excellence in research, creative and critical thinking, and reflective practice. Our students learn through traditional and innovative teaching techniques and our Indigenous Field of Study challenges traditional pedagogy through Indigenous-based learning (i.e., Indigegogy). We challenge students to become active citizens of an increasingly complex and interconnected world. We fulfill our mission by advancing multi-disciplinary and marginalized forms of knowledge, including an Indigenous world-view, which is foundational to developing excellence in social work practice with individuals, families, groups and communities. Skilled in the continuum of practice, our graduates are committed to challenging the oppressive conditions and structures that affect their clients. Our individual and collaborative scholarship is relevant to community and social needs, framed by our engagement in our own communities, and by our dedication to innovative and integrated practice education.

Our guiding principles are consistent with our vision and mission and will inform our decision-making as we embrace our future.

Guiding Principles

- Responsible and transparent leadership and governance
- Local and international community engagement and collaboration
- Collegiality and respectful relationships
- Openness to change and renewal
- Recognizing the interconnections among research, theory, and practice
- Realizing an appropriate balance among research, teaching, and service
- Learning and teaching that involves multiple forms of knowledge relevant to reflective and engaged social work practice that promotes social justice

Approved by Divisional Council on September 21, 2012

Objectives

- (i) To educate students for responsible, advanced social work practice. This objective will be achieved through provision of a graduate program leading to the MSW degree. The program prepares graduates for positions of leadership in macro and micro social work practice, including direct practice with individuals, families, groups and communities, and for roles in research, social policy development, social planning and administration. It is understood that all graduates will also acquire basic competence in research sufficient to enable them to function in their practice as knowledgeable consumers of research findings and as producers of social work research.

- (ii) To participate, when feasible, with other faculties of the university in appropriate academic activities. Such participation may include teaching of courses, work on thesis committees, and research collaboration. The faculty is also responsible for offering undergraduate social welfare courses and other courses at WLU. It may also include cross-registration of students between the Faculty of Social Work and other faculties of the University. This concept of participation is based on the premise that the Faculty of Social Work is an integral part of Wilfrid Laurier University.
- (iii) To contribute to the development of the social work profession through active participation in research, scholarship, publication, specialized practice and related activities of intellectual leadership. These activities may include consulting; contract research; production of instructional programs, instructional materials and of textbooks; organization of symposia and conferences on topics of concern to the profession. It is the aim of the FSW to coordinate and integrate this objective with its educational objectives so that they may complement and reinforce each other. Collaboration in scholarly activities with members of other universities is also encouraged.
- (iv) In cooperation with appropriate professional organizations, to provide continuing education credit programs for members of the social work profession designed to update and expand their professional competence.
- (v) To provide services to its various social service communities, local, provincial, national and international provided that the needed resources are available. Needs of areas nearest to the geographic location of the School will receive priority consideration but, when feasible and appropriate, the School may lend its assistance to other regions. The School's services may take such forms as organization of special educational programs (eg. workshops and conferences) for personnel employed in the field of social welfare: participation in in-service training programs and related activities; provision of advice and information to social welfare organizations, governments and community groups on matters within the competence of the members of the Faculty of Social Work.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

The University's guidelines in Policies 10.1 [Information Availability and Privacy Protection](#) and 10.2 [Student Records](#) provide rights to access and limitations. Notice carefully that these rights of access may be exercised without recourse to the formal process, and associated expense to you, set out in FIPPA. You will find, among other things, that subject to a few exemptions, the University's guidelines give every member of the faculty, staff, and student body of the university access to records containing their personal information. Individuals may request access through the office that holds their personal information. An individual may also request correction of their personal information where the individual believes there is an error or omission and reasonable proof can be provided to substantiate the error or omission. Again, to request a correction, contact directly the office that holds the relevant personal information. The University's guidelines also restrict the collection and use of personal information. The University undertakes to collect and record only such personal information about an individual as is either reasonably necessary to the proper administration of the university and its academic and other program, or is required by virtue of data collection or reporting requirements lawfully imposed upon the university.

If you have questions about your rights under the University's guidelines, contact the Office of the privacy coordinator at privacy@wlu.ca.

MSW Program Overview

Integrative reflexive social work practices

As a revitalizing practice, the Faculty of Social Work (FSW) engages in systematic curriculum review processes to ensure methodically that we are on the cutting edge of social work education and practice. Our latest curriculum revision spanned more than two years. It was thorough and rigorous. It involved the use of surveys, interviews and focus groups with all stakeholders of the program including faculty, contract academic staff, students, administrative staff, alumni, field instructors, supervisors and social service agencies.

Our new curriculum, integrative reflexive social work practices, embodies what we consider quintessential aspects of social work practice. With an overarching framework including social justice, equity, inclusivity and reflexivity, the curriculum is now designed to provide a wholly integrated foundational year that grounds all two year full-time and three year part-time students in four essential and interconnected social work practice areas: individual, family and group; community; policy and organizations; and research.

The curriculum continues and strengthens our strong practice tradition. While we no longer use the nomenclature of fields of study in any of our program options, students can continue to focus their placements and courses ([Online MSW courses](#); [Full-time MSW courses](#)) on micro and/or macro practices having increased flexibility to choose their particular practice leanings. While advanced standing full-time and part-time students will not be participating in the revised foundational year, their year of program study, will offer more course options than in the past.

We believe that our curriculum will equip students with a robust and integrated grounding in theory and practice so students are prepared for the challenges of contemporary social work practice. Our intent is to help nurture social workers who are actively concerned about the well-being of the people with whom they work, who are reflexive and ethical in their practices, who are competent and caring practitioners and who will stand up for what they believe is just.

MSW programs offered

The Faculty of Social Work offers:

- a regular track full-time MSW program,
- an advanced standing (post BSW) full-time MSW program,
- an online part-time regular track MSW program,
- an online part-time advanced standing (post BSW) program,
- International Social Work Diploma – for students in the MSW regular track full-time program.

The MSW program does not intend to educate narrow specialists and every student is expected to build on a solid core of general social work knowledge and skills.

MSW Field Education

Overview

Learning begins with the acquisition of factual information, moves on to theory formulation, and finally to an assimilation of knowledge which involves self, feelings and attitudes, as well as intellectual understanding. The goal of social work education is to help students achieve that integration of personal, social, emotional and intellectual capacities which transmutes professional practice into a fine art in the application and use of knowledge. In the student's placement, all of these elements come into play for the first time. The areas of learning open to the student in the field are more comprehensive and pragmatic than is possible in the classroom. Accordingly, the [field instructor](#) carries a teaching role of special importance.

[Field education](#) is a vital aspect of the MSW program. The objective of field education is to ensure the field placement experience reflects the framework of the Faculty of Social Work, and the curriculum goals of the MSW program. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for students to:

- apply the values, knowledge and skills learned in the classroom,
- practice and integrate foundational and advanced level social work theories and practice,
- develop a professional "self" and professional identity as a social worker.

The objectives for the field program are set to meet the standards set by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) as outlined in the document [Standards for Accreditation](#). The [MSW Field Education Office](#), under the direction of the MSW field education manager, facilitates the MSW field program.

As part of field education, students will complete placements with approved agencies that provide micro, macro, or integrated learning opportunities. A qualified agency-based field instructor will provide supervision to help students develop social work practice skills that reflect the foundational or advanced field education course. The field instructor becomes a source of learning for the student in two respects:

- the field instructor and other agency personnel serve as models of the professional practitioner at work,
- the field instructor facilitates the student's development in areas including effective assessment and problem-solving, mastery of primary skills, values and ethics dilemmas and the development of a professional self.

The Faculty of Social Work at Laurier seeks to offer the highest quality and most relevant graduate social work education and training to its students. In acknowledging our current global reality, such social work education ideally permits students' exposure to social work as it occurs in other contexts, particularly those of the so-called 'developing world' or global south. The faculty believes that such exposure and opportunity to both contribute expertise and learn from the expertise of these communities will broaden social work horizons, creating new models of social work practice and new possibilities for global collaboration and understanding. To this end, the [International Social Work Diploma \(ISWD\)](#) is offered to a limited number of students in the two-year full-time program who fulfill the program requirements.

Field education objectives

The following specific field objectives are applicable. It is understood that the objectives meet the standards for accreditation of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) as outlined in Domain III of the "[CASWE-ACFTS Standards for Accreditation](#)" for field education.

- a. The field experience reflects the conceptual framework of the Faculty of Social Work.

- b. The field experience reflects the Faculty of Social Work curriculum goals. The major goal is to permit the student to develop professional competence in general social work practice with increasing emphasis on advanced practice in the latter phase of the MSW program.
- c. Considering the learning activities available within the agency setting, the field placement provides an opportunity for the student to apply the values, knowledge and skills learned in the classroom.
- d. The field setting provides the student an opportunity to observe and learn the specified social work intervention methods and styles of practice.
- e. The field setting is designed to encourage the student to assume considerable responsibility for their own learning and for identifying their future career goals. The student's ability to assume this responsibility will vary and their goals can be expected to change during the MSW program.
- f. Depending on the requirements of the MSW program and field course, the field experience is designed to teach the inter-relatedness of micro and macro social work practice. Learning assignments can offer interconnected practice opportunities within individual, family, groups, community concerns, policy and organizations, and research.
- g. The field experience facilitates identification with the profession of social work.
- h. The field experience prepares the student for continuous and rapid change; to recognize that their capacities to be responsive and adaptive to change will be a major factor in future success in social work.
- i. The field supervision experience encourages readiness for field instruction.

Standards for field placement agencies

Field placement agencies, or teaching centres/settings, are approved by the Faculty of Social Work's MSW field education coordinator based on the following standards:

- a. Clarity and appropriateness of agency purpose and function for a MSW field placement.
- b. Sound social work practice as reflected in structure, philosophy, administration and service.
- c. Readiness and interest on the part of both the agency administrator and instructor to oversee the responsibilities usually associated with social work MSW placement.
- d. In secondary settings, clarity of purpose of the social service department, acceptance of social work by other key departments and administration support of the student's education programs.
- e. Acceptance by the teaching centre of student's participation in the organizational structure, such as attendance at staff meetings and participation in committees.
- f. Willingness to provide the student with appropriate learning opportunities.
- g. Demonstrated interest in membership and participation in appropriate standard setting organizations and in community, regional and provincial agencies of community organization, social planning and social policy. Appropriate interest and participation in planning and action organizations at the federal level are also desirable.
- h. Adequate space to accommodate student and appropriate equipment and support services to assure maximum efficiency in the preparation of records and reports by students and instructors.
- i. The participation of a field instructor with at least two to four years post BSW (for foundational placements) depending on experience, and two years post MSW (or its equivalent) for advanced placements.
- j. Providing adequate supervision for the student at a minimum of 1 hours per week for full-time placements, or 1 hour every other week for part-time placements (2 days/week).

Field Courses: Timelines & Hours

Field timelines

Please adhere to the placement hours and timelines provided by your Field Advisor & Coordinator and noted in your placement record on Navigator.

Students who do not attend placement within the schedule for their program, may need to request a change in their course sequence and may need to register for an additional term, which will delay graduation timelines. The tables below outline field timelines for students in the various MSW programs.

Full-time MSW field timelines

Field education courses are structured within specific terms for each MSW program. Students in the full-time regular track program start their foundational placement in January, during the second term of their program. Regular track students start their advanced placement in September, during the second year of their program in term four. Students in the full-time advanced standing program start their placement in September, during their first term. This structure considers the program as a whole, and ensures that students complete required courses within the appropriate course sequence and can graduate in a timely manner. Field placements and courses are offered concurrently.

Full-time: Regular track, Foundational year (year 1)

SK541: Minimum of 450 hours

Days in placement/week	Hours per week	Total terms	Total months to complete hours	Placement start & end
Winter term: 3 days/week	21 hours/week	2 terms	Approx. 5 months	January to May
Spring term: 4 days/week	28 hours/week			

Full-time: Regular track, Advanced year (year 2) & Advanced Standing program

SK649: Minimum of 500 hours

Days in placement/week	Hours per week	Total terms	Total months to complete hours	Placement start & end
3 days/week	21	2 terms	Approx. 8 months	September to April

Online part-time MSW field timelines

Field education courses are structured within specific terms for each MSW program. Students in the part-time regular track program start their placement in term four. Students in the part-time advanced standing program start their placement in term three. Placements start during the first week of January, September or May. This structure considers the program as a whole, and ensures that students complete required

courses within the appropriate [course sequence](#) and can graduate in a timely manner. Field placements and courses are offered concurrently.

Part-time, online: Regular track

SK600: Minimum of 950 hours

Options: Days in placement/week	Hours per week	Total months to complete hours	Placement starts
2 days/week	16 (minimum hours/week)	Approx. 15 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January
3 days/week	21	Approx. 11 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January
4 days/week	28	Approx. 8 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January
5 days/week	35 (maximum hours/week)	Approx. 7 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January

Part-time, online: Advanced standing

SK649: Minimum of 500 hours

Options: Days in placement/week	Hours per week	Total months to complete hours	Placement starts
2 days/week	16 (minimum hours/week)	Approx. 8 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January
3 days/week	21	Approx. 6 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January
4 days/week	28	Approx. 5 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January
5 days/week	35 (maximum hours/week)	Approx. 4 months	Start date determined by student's MSW program: September, May or January

Thesis Exemptions

Thesis students who are approved to complete a Thesis are afforded the following exemptions from placement hours based on their program:

- **Full-time advanced standing program:** Thesis students are exempt from the Advanced placement and do not need to complete SK649: Advanced Field Education
- **Full-time two year regular track program:** Thesis students are exempt from 100 placement hours for the advanced placement only (SK649). Students complete 400 placement hours instead of the required 500 hours.

Students who do not complete the Thesis must complete the required placement hours for their program and as a result, may need to extend their program.

Field courses

Emphasis is placed on the experience of direct and indirect social work practice with disadvantaged and disenfranchised populations. Field education is conceptualized as an educational experience rather than a work term. That is, it is a graded placement course with an agency based qualified instructor assigned to teach each student. The placement workload is controlled to facilitate this emphasis on learning. Field education course requirements for MSW full-time programs are as follows:

- **Full-time advanced standing (post BSW)**
 - SK649: Advanced Field Education
- **Full-time two year regular track program**
 - SK541: Foundational Field Education
 - SK649: Advanced Field Education
- **Part-time online advanced standing (post BSW)**
 - SK649: Advanced Field Education
- **Part-time online regular track**
 - SK600: Field Education

The concurrent [courses](#) offered with each period of the field placement are intended to strengthen the integration between classroom and field teaching. A full list of courses by MSW program is available on the students.wlu.ca website. Descriptions of courses for MSW part-time programs are outlined in the [Appendix](#).

SK541: Foundational Field Course (Full-time MSW Program)

The Foundational Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 450 placement hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their foundational field education placement. This may require up to 2 terms or more of registration.

SK649: Advanced Field Education Course (Full-time & Part-time MSW Programs)

The Advanced Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 500 placement

hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their field education placement. This may require up to 2 terms or more of registration.

SK600: Part-time Field Education Course (Part-time MSW Program)

The Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 950 placement hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their field education placement. This may require up to 4 terms or more of registration.

Field Placements

The curriculum is designed to offer theoretical and practical knowledge in four essential and interconnected social work practice areas:



Micro practice refers to direct practice with individuals, families and groups. It includes placements in a community setting or placements with a counseling agency.

Macro practice refers to direct and/or indirect practice with groups and communities. It includes placements with agencies that work on research, program development, policy, and/or communities.

Integrated practice incorporates both micro and macro learning opportunities. It includes placements that offer both micro and macro practice areas.

It is expected that students entering the MSW program at the advanced level have already been exposed to the continuum of social work practice and have developed foundational skills. Advanced field education placements include placements geared towards micro, macro and/or integrated skill development.

Types of placements

Social Work Practice Area	Description	Types of Placements
Macro Social Work Practice	Focus on macro settings applying a variety of theories, practice methods and models. Learning activities may include collaborative work in community organizational practice, developing proposals, program planning, implementation, evaluation and relevant research, as well as policy analysis and development where feasible.	Social planning councils, government ministries and services (all levels: political, health and legal), organizations, family service and child welfare agencies, research groups, and funding bodies.
Micro Social Work Practice	Focus on practice in ongoing and short term counselling with individuals, families and groups. Applying a variety of theories, practice methods and models. Learning activities may include assessment work, psychotherapy, intake, crisis intervention, and case managements. Placements may include observation or direct practice this is dependent on the placement setting and the discretion of the field instructor.	Counselling agencies, hospitals, mental health clinics, treatment facilities, child welfare, addictions agencies, nursing homes, and long-term care facilities, women’s centres, agencies responding to diversity issues, correctional settings, school boards, and other specialized social service agencies.
Integrated Social Work Practice	Emphasis on micro or macro social work practice with a view of facilitating social change via a planned combination and range of theories and social work interventions, practice methods, and models applicable to small and large systems. These placements may or may not include direct practice with individuals and groups. Practice could include information gathering to assist in the development of programs, case management, or service coordination.	<p>Child welfare agencies, community based programs in counselling centres, schools, hospitals, women’s centres, agencies responding to diversity issues, and community mental health programs.</p> <p>Grassroots community agencies including some counselling centres, child welfare, specialized organizations responding to diversity issues, women’s organizations, community mental health projects, specialized programs through schools and hospitals.</p>

Remote and online placements

We anticipate that online and remote service delivery will be a critical skill for social workers in the future, whether in micro or macro settings. Recognizing the learning opportunities this presents for field students, and the supports field instructors and students may need, we have built [remote field resources](#) to support both agencies and students engage in remote and online placements.

Hybrid placements

As changes to health and government recommendations regarding COVID-19 have continued to unfold, many of our community partners have had to adapt their work accordingly. We appreciate that this has been a trying time for many organizations and applaud their efforts to support our students by offering quality field placements that meet both the agency's social work needs and Laurier's field standards.

Following safety protocols, the field office will support students in a variety of placement models. This includes remote placements, in-person placements and some hybrid opportunities, which provide a combination of both remote and in-person learning experiences. The safety of our students and agency partners remain at the forefront.

Placement disruptions

We recognize that a resurgence of COVID-19 may disrupt the continuation of in-person placements at some agencies. The [Placement Disruption Policy](#) outlines the process for supporting students and field instructors should there be any interruptions to their placement.

Policy on field placements at work sites

Passed at CAFSAC December 2018

Passed at Divisional Council with amendments April 2019

This policy reflects broad requirements and conditions for field placements at work sites (i.e. workplace placements). Detailed requirements are provided in the [next](#) section.

Context

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW) supports workplace placements as a means to facilitate student graduate learning experience. The FSW also supports workplace field placements where the student may receive a stipend. We have developed this policy with a view to protect the student and ensure the academic integrity of the field placement.

Field placement is the student's opportunity to explore, gain skill, learn from experienced professionals, operationalize classroom learning in social work practice, build a professional network and create potential career pathways.

The learning experience could be compromised if there is not a clear distinction between field and work tasks.

Students must be aware of and assume all responsibility associated with the risks of participating in workplace placements. Students could jeopardize their paid employment if problems arise within the domain of the field placement. It is also possible for previous work experience to interfere with the successful completion of the field placement.

Conditions for approval

The FSW may approve field placements at a student's place of employment. To obtain this approval the following conditions must be met:

1. The field office determines that the student's proposed opportunity provides for new learning within the current place of employment;
2. The agency has available either different divisions or learning assignments that are new to the student and the student can demonstrate that they will be engaging in activities not experienced before and distinct from tasks performed as part of the student's employment;
3. Learning opportunities are commensurate with the student's level of study (BSW or MSW level)
4. The learning opportunity is under the supervision of a field instructor who has normally not been the student's past or current workplace supervisor.
5. The learning opportunity is aligned with the Canadian Association for Social Work Education – Association Canadienne pour la formation en Travail Social (CASWE-ACTS) accreditation standards.

Field placement credit will *only* be given for work that is outside of the student's usual employment work assignments.

There are situations where a student may receive payment or a stipend during field placement hours. All circumstances pertaining to payment/stipend must be negotiated independently between the student and the workplace.

The student must be allowed time to reflect upon the learning experience, facilitating integration of the newly acquired knowledge and the skills. This may require temporarily altered productivity standards for the student during that portion of paid work time that constitutes the field placement.

A customized [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) that details the mutually accepted expectations of the student, the workplace, and WLU will be crafted for each workplace placement. At a minimum the MOU must outline the student field placement learning opportunities and confirm the five conditions for approval listed above. Additionally, the MOU will detail the risks to the student, the workplace and WLU and mechanisms for resolution should conflicts arise.

Procedures for approving a workplace placement

It is expected that students will take the initiative by making the workplace proposal to the Field Office by completing a workplace proposal form. A completed MOU must be submitted at the time of the proposal.

The Proposal form is reviewed by the Field Office to ensure it meets the required conditions. The student, field instructor, and agency are contacted by the Field Office to ensure this is a feasible and suitable learning opportunity for the student. The proposal is then reviewed and approved by the field office prior to the beginning of the field practicum.

The student is advised that if the workplace placement is found to be unacceptable, the student then must agree to another placement approved by the Field Office.

It will be the responsibility of the field advisor to determine in an ongoing fashion that the field placement is consistent with the educational objectives of the Program and the proposal made by the student. This is determined through a site visit and communication with the student and instructor.

If assignments do not meet the learning contract and if no attempt has been made to alter the assignments by the student and/or instructor, the placement may be terminated by the Field Office.

Impact on Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage

In the event of a workplace injury at an unpaid placement, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) is responsible for providing coverage. The process of reporting to WSIB and managing the return to work after an injury is facilitated by Laurier's Safety, Health, Environment & Risk Management (SHERM).

Students who receive stipends that are paid by Laurier are considered unpaid students and would be eligible for MTCU coverage in the event of an injury at the placement setting.

In the event of a workplace injury in a paid workplace placement, students would be covered by insurance (WSIB or other) that must be provided by the employer, i.e. workplace placement agency.

Requirements for workplace placements

Paid placements

Paid placements are not common in the MSW program and are only possible in the student's approved workplace placement, that is, where the student is currently employed *and* has been employed for some time.

Proposed placements

A previous, current, or new employment opportunity cannot be considered for a paid or unpaid placement. Additionally, students who hold power positions within a setting (e.g. Director) cannot propose a placement within that setting. When exploring the possibility of a workplace placement, the student must submit a formal request, which will be assessed by the field coordinator. Information about the requirements of workplace placements are covered in detail at the start of the MSW program.

At minimum, the following requirements must be met for workplace placements to be considered by the field coordinator:

- There is no conflict of interest at the proposed placement.
- The student is not in a leadership role within the organization whereby they hold a power within the organization (e.g. Board member, Director, Executive Director, etc.).
- The placement is not a previous, current, or new employment opportunity (i.e., the student must not seek a new employment opportunity and request this to be their placement)
- The placement must be in a division that is different than the one the student was employed with, is currently employed in, and/or will be returning to (e.g., after an approved leave of absence)
- If it is a new opportunity/position within the agency setting: the student must show evidence that they will be returning to their previous employment once the placement is completed
- The placement must be supervised by a field instructor employed with the agency, who has not been the student's past or current workplace supervisor and who meets qualifications for field instruction, as determined by the field coordinator

- The student can provide evidence that they will be engaging in learning activities not experienced before in any setting, and distinct from tasks performed as part of the student's employment
- Learning opportunities are commensurate with the student's MSW level of study, FSW field standards, and are aligned with the Canadian Association for Social Work Education accreditation standards.

The field office cannot determine whether a workplace placement is possible or will be approved until the student has submitted a formal placement proposal as per the process outlined by the field coordinator. There will be many opportunities to consult with the field office about the possibility of workplace placements early in the student's MSW program.

Field placement assignments according to field course

In keeping with the major goal of the FSW to permit each student to develop professional competence in general social work practice, field placements are provided in diverse settings in order for students to acquire the necessary tools to practice in a variety of social work environments. As such, placements are not planned based on students' career interests.

Since the first purpose of student practice is educational, student practice loads must be selective and based on opportunities provided by the agency setting. Learning assignments may correspond with the instructor or placement activities and projects.

Foundational assignments

In the foundational field placement, students will have the majority of assignments in the area of the placement setting, with exposure to develop skills in other areas of social work practice. That is, if the student is placed with an agency that primarily provides individual and group counselling learning opportunities, or micro social work practice, the student must also engage in activities that orient their learning towards macro social work practice such as program development, research or policy review. The assignments in the minor areas could include activities such as speaking to a community group, participation in staff meetings and board-staff committees, attendance at board meetings and participation in agency or community projects. Where possible, students should have a range of experiences including working with clients of different life stages, socio-economic circumstances, social problems and diverse factors. Foundational placements are integrated in nature and placement assignments reflect the core areas of the foundational year's curriculum, which exposes students to all areas of social work practice.

Advanced assignments

In the advanced field placement, the assignments for students reflect the advanced learning activities delivered by the agency. Some placements will focus on advanced micro learning opportunities, others on advanced macro learning opportunities, while some will integrate both areas of social work practice. Integrated placements will have a blend of learning activities for students. More experienced students may carry a heavier load depending on learning needs and style. Assignments may include aspects of the other modalities determined by student learning needs, interests and experience.

An important aspect of the field placement is that the students have opportunities to develop their potential. They could explore issues of concern to them, and are expected to take initiative, and develop their problem solving approaches. As adult learners, students should be fully engaged in the practice assignments and assume considerable responsibility for their own learning.

Field Instruction

The role of the field instructor in the education of social workers is crucial. The instructor attempts to teach complex skills within the respective concentrations, model professional behaviours, and facilitate the growth and development of values and ethics in the student.

For both educational and administrative reasons, the Faculty of Social Work relies on agency-employed field instructors for all field placements. At all times the students and instructors are accountable to the agency administration for the service responsibilities and to the University for the educational requirements and procedures. It is expected that the instructors attend meetings or committees required by the agency to provide for realistic involvement in agency administration.

Appointment of field instructors

Field instructors are employed by agencies, or teaching centres, and normally have a Masters of Social Work (MSW) for advanced or foundational placements, or a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) for foundational placements. Instructors are expected to have at least:

- Six months post-MSW full-time work experience, two to four years post-BSW full-time work experience for foundational placements, minimum 2 years of experience post MSW (if off-site supervisor) or have a graduate degree relevant to social work practice and the field setting,
- one year of employment in the agency,
- and complete [CASWE's Field Instructor course](#) or an equivalent approved by Laurier.

Instructors make a commitment to accept a student during the time they are taking this training or the calendar year following it. Participants receive a certificate of completion, which may be used toward professional credits if applicable. The Field Education Office works closely with all field instructors and orients instructors towards their role and responsibilities before the start of any placement. This includes assessing the instructor's interest and suitability considering CASWE's accreditation standards and FSW policies, and requirements, and potentially conducting a field visit.

Agency-based MSWs usually serve as field instructors for one or multiple students each term. They are selected as instructors because of their competence and ability to integrate theory and practice. To be approved as an instructor, the agency administrator must be in support of the student education program and willing to provide the necessary time to permit the instructor to undertake this responsibility.

Faculty support for field instruction

The Faculty of Social Work is committed to supporting field instruction as follows:

- Establish criteria for selection of field settings which ensure a quality field education program.
- Conduct site visits with new agencies to establish placement settings.
- Provide field instructors with a clear understanding of the faculty's curriculum objectives and the theory base which is taught in the classroom.
- Setting minimum field practice goals and criteria for student evaluations.
- Provide training and learning opportunities for field instructors to assist them to improve teaching skills in new or advanced areas of practice.
- Support, initiate, and maintain contact with field instructors and students through field advisors.

Goals for field instructors

The goal of the field instructor is to assist the student to identify concepts and integrate theory into practice, as well as to assume responsibility for providing the necessary range of learning opportunities and methods within the placement setting. This may include learning opportunities for practice with diverse, disadvantaged groups with respect to cultural diversity, class, age, gender and ability. The learning methods made available to students could include the use of tape recorders, audio/visual aids, group teaching, process recordings, other resource persons, etc.

With respect to the evaluation of the student, the goal of the instructor is to encourage the development of self-awareness in the student through an open student-instructor relationship, permitting the formulation of learning goals, and evaluation of student performance.

Accountability

- The field instructor is fully accountable to the administrator of the agency or unit, or to supervisory personnel assigned by the administrator.
- The field instructor will follow the general practice of the agency and the conditions of employment, respectful of any right of the University to terminate his/her teaching responsibility.

Responsibilities of instructors

Field instructors are expected to devote at most, one to two hours a week to each student in placement. This includes about one hour of regularly scheduled supervision each week. Individual, dyadic and group supervision are all appropriate means of mentoring and instructing the student at a placement setting. Instructors require time to read student records, listen to tapes, observe interviews and prepare evaluation reports for the faculty. Field instructors have specific responsibilities towards their employer, the agency or teaching centre, the faculty, as well as towards the placement student as noted below.

Responsibility towards the agency

- To cooperate fully with the administrator of the social agency, hospital or board of education service selected by the faculty for field instruction purposes.
- To attend staff meetings; to prepare such reports as is normally required of supervisors in social work in the setting involved.
- To plan for and prepare for the selection of assignments made to students.
- To supervise students in the field setting with regard to professional practice and to prepare such statistical and other reports as may be required of other supervisory personnel in the social agency, hospital or board of education service involved. In the supervision of student practice, the field instructor carries the same status and responsibility as any other supervisor in the service setting involved. This includes professional responsibility for the care and treatment of each client or patient in each student practice load.
- To provide for the orientation of students upon arrival for field instruction.
- To maintain professional relationships with other supervisory and administrative personnel as may be necessary or helpful in upholding a good quality of student service

Responsibility towards faculty and educational components

- To provide a commitment to the basic curriculum objectives of the Faculty of Social Work.
- To cooperate with the faculty with regard to educational content and educational methods in functioning as a teaching supervisor.

- To cooperate with the faculty and its field representatives in determining the kinds of assignments to be selected for student practice, the size of the student's practice load and the diversity of student practice loads.
- To focus the practice experience on the learning level and interests of the student where appropriate. The level of student's ability should set the pace of the placement rather than agency or client need.
- To assist the student to identify concepts and integrate theory into practice. Field instruction is a progressive knowledge and skill building process moving from relatively straightforward assignments to more complex ones.
- To assume responsibility for providing the necessary range of learning opportunities to meet the Faculty of Social Work's generic goals either through assignments within the field setting or satellite projects in the community. This includes opportunities for practice with diverse, disadvantaged groups with respect to cultural diversity, class, age, gender and ability.
- To encourage developing self-awareness in the student through a student-field instructor relationship which is an open and direct transaction permitting the formulating of field goals, optimum student-instructor sharing and evaluation of student performance.
- To make available the widest possible range of learning opportunities and methods, i.e., use of tape recorders, audio/visual aids, group teaching, other resource persons, etc.
- To conduct a regularly scheduled conference weekly with each student and to be available for unscheduled conferences as needed within available time.
- To submit midterm and final evaluation reports as requested by the faculty.

Responsibility towards students

- Reception and orientation of students upon arrival.
- Become familiar with the educational philosophy and curriculum of the faculty.
- Link theory and practice within the student's learning experience.
- Develop the learning plan with the student.
- Provide practice assignments based on the learning plan.
- Observe students in the placement setting with regard to professional practice.
- Schedule individual, group or dyadic supervision weekly (1 hour/week for full-time placements) or bi-weekly (1 hour every other week for 2 day/week placements) in order to teach practice values, knowledge and skills.
- Allow the student the necessary time for participation in concurrent courses offered during the field placement (courses are not offered on placement days).
- Make use of field advisors as appropriate.
- Complete and submit midterm and final evaluations as requested by the faculty. Evaluation guidelines are available to help facilitate planning for an evaluation meeting.

Off-site Field Instruction

Students in the **part-time MSW programs**, who are responsible for proposing placements, are also responsible for seeking out MSW Field Instructors. In the event the proposed agency-based Field Instructor does not have the required MSW qualifications, the student is responsible for seeking an Off-site Field Instructor with MSW qualifications.

Off-site Field Instructors have the same supervision requirements and responsibilities as [agency-based Field Instructors](#); however, they are not employed by the same agency or within the proposed placement department.

Off-site Field Instructors are expected to:

- Adhere to the same responsibilities as agency-based Field Instructors.
- Meet with their student at the agreed-upon frequency throughout the duration of the placement (weekly for 3, 4 or 5 day/week placements or biweekly for 2 day/week placements).
- Engage in meaningful supervision and explore topics such as the integration of theory and practice, social work principles and ethics, and the development of student's learning goals.
- Connect with the Field Advisor if there are any concerns or questions.
- Attend the virtual site visit meeting with the student, on-site Field Instructor and Field Advisor.
- Attend two placement check-ins with the student, on-site Field Instructor and Field Advisor (for students in the part-time regular track program only).
- Provide feedback and input on the student's Learning Plan regarding the integration of social work theory as needed.
- Communicate with the on-site Field Instructor regularly to assess the student's progress in placement and navigate any challenges.
- In collaboration with the on-site Field Supervisor, provide feedback and assign a grade for the student's midterm and final evaluation.

Students proposing a placement at an agency with a Field Instructor who does not meet accreditation standards must consider supervision during the placement planning process and secure an appropriate Off-site Field Instructor. If an Off-site Field Instructor is no longer available to support the student, the student must inform the MSW Field Office as soon as possible. The student may be asked to seek out another Off-site Field Instructor. Where this is not possible, placement proposals may be declined, or it may lead to the pause or discontinuation of placements that have already begun. The approval of placements is contingent on qualified Field Instructors supporting the placement (whether agency-based or off-site).

Group Supervision

Field Instructors in a Master of Social Work (MSW) program normally hold, at a minimum, a MSW degree from an accredited social work program. In some unique situations, the MSW Field Office may approve placements with a Field Instructor who is employed by the agency, has a graduate degree relevant to the placement, and does not hold an MSW.

While only foundational students may propose a placement under the direct supervision of an experienced Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Field Instructor, all students (foundational and/or advanced) may request a placement that is supervised by an on-site, or agency-based Field Instructor with another graduate degree. This does not change the proposal process or requirements: all placements must consist of MSW-level learning activities and must be vetted and approved by the MSW Field Office. In such situations, at the discretion of the MSW Field Office, a Field Supervisor with MSW qualifications may be asked to support the student.

Students are required to follow group supervision expectations and engage actively with their Group Field Supervisor. Students are expected to meet with their Group Supervisor at regular intervals once the placement begins (weekly for 3, 4 or 5 day/week placements or biweekly for 2 day/week placements). Students are expected to come prepared to supervision with topics for discussion. The purpose of supervision is to provide students with the opportunity to discuss the integration of social work theory and practice. Topics may include clinical/practical supervision (if applicable and appropriate), the discussion of ethics and best practices, etc.

Group Field Supervisors are expected to:

- Meet with their student at the agreed-upon frequency throughout the duration of the placement.
- Engage in meaningful supervision and explore topics such as the integration of theory and practice, social work principles and ethics, and the development of student's learning goals.
- Connect with the Field Advisor if there are any concerns or questions regarding group supervision.
- If requested, provide additional feedback and input on the student's Learning Plan regarding the integration of social work theory. The on-site Field Instructor is responsible for providing feedback about the learning plan activities and guiding the student's day-to-day learning opportunities.
- Provide the Field Advisor with an assessment of the student's participation and learning. This is added to the student's field evaluation report on Navigator.

Students are expected to:

- Review and abide by the Group Field Supervision Agreement.
- Bring questions and topics forward for discussion in group supervision.
- Attend supervision at the agreed-upon frequency. Please inform Group Field Supervisor (with reasonable notice) if there is any need to cancel or reschedule a meeting.
- Establish and respect agency confidentiality policies around sharing client information and/or agency-specific information.
- Notify the MSW Field Office if there are disruptions or concerns with group supervision.
- Update group supervisor on any changes to the placement including changes to on-site supervision, timeline, or significant changes to learning opportunities.
- Integrate learning from group supervision to their practicum placement.

On-site Field Instructors are expected to:

- Accommodate the student in attending Group Supervision during placement hours.
- Communicate with the Group Supervisor for feedback to be incorporated into the midterm and final evaluation.
- Inform student of any agency-specific protocols or expectations regarding confidentiality or sharing of information during group supervision.

Recognition of instructors

Experienced field instructors receive special recognition for their instruction of students via an official title. Field instructors who have completed two successive placements will receive a certificate of recognition with the title **Assistant Field Education Professor (Part-time)**. Instructors who have completed ten or more placements and have made special contributions to the field education program at Wilfrid Laurier University are invited by the MSW field coordinator to apply by letter for the title **Associate Field Education Professor (Part-time)**.

Approved FSW Divisional Council, 1998

Orientation and training for instructors

Training opportunities are provided for new field instructors each year. Periodic workshop activity involving all instructors are usually offered by the faculty once a year. All new instructors are expected to complete [CASWE's Field Instructor course](#) prior to or while providing field instruction to their first student. Instructors who have completed similar training at Laurier or another school or faculty of social work may be exempt. There is no fee for this workshop. Instructors receive a certificate from CASWE upon completion.

Benefits for instructors

The Faculty of Social Work recognizes that due to budget pressures it is increasingly difficult for social agencies to find the resources necessary for providing placements for our students. The success of our MSW field program relies heavily on field agencies that dedicate their time, resources and staff to the education of social work students. In order to reward the longstanding commitment of field instructors and agencies, and facilitate continued involvement with our field education program, the faculty provides several benefits to our field agency partners.

Professional Development dollars

In appreciation of the commitment of field agency partners in providing excellent learning opportunities for our MSW students, the Faculty of Social Work offers Professional Development (PD) dollars. Each agency that supervises a MSW field placement student receives PD dollars, which can be used toward almost any workshop offered by the [Faculty's Professional Development Office](#).

PD dollars are awarded on the following basis for each student's field placement:

- 85 PD dollars for the MSW foundational field placement (462 hours or 450 hours)
- 100 PD dollars for the MSW advanced field placement (546 hours or 500 hours)
- 185 PD dollars for the combined foundational and advanced placements (1008 or 950 hours)

PD dollars are awarded at the end of student placements and can be used immediately or saved for up to five years. The PD dollars will be given to the agency rather than the individual field instructor so that agencies have some flexibility in how to use them (although we trust that field instructors for our students will be the primary beneficiaries). For example, an agency may save PD dollars for a few years and then send a number of staff to the same professional development workshop. PD dollars have no cash value and expire after five years.

Library privileges

All field agency personnel who have some connection with current student field placements (i.e., not just the field instructor, but also the agency director, the placement supervisor, and anyone else with some role to play in student's placement) will have electronic resource access to the Laurier library through a login provided by the Field Education Office. Field personnel also have the option to sign up for a community borrower card to access hard copy items in the library. There is no charge for a community borrower card. Please see the field instructor guidebook/syllabus for details about accessing the library.

Athletic Complex

Field Instructors are provided membership in the Athletic Complex at the rate paid by faculty and staff, which is paid by the field contingency fund of the Faculty of Social Work.

Committee participation

The Faculty welcomes and values the participation of Field Instructors as formal members in various committees including:

- **MSW Curriculum, Admissions, Field Education and Student Affairs (CAFSAC):** is a standing committee at the faculty that reports to Divisional Council. The committee is chaired by the Associate Dean of the MSW program and includes representation from all MSW departments, instructors, field instructors, and MSW students. Decisions that impact the MSW curriculum, admissions and field education are made at this committee. Six to eight meetings are held during

an academic year (between September 1 and June 30) at the faculty in Kitchener. Virtual participation is possible. For consideration, please contact mswfield@wlu.ca

Divisional Council: all five standing committees at the faculty report to Divisional Council, which in turn reports to the graduate faculty council and the university senate. The council is chaired by the Dean at the Faculty of Social Work and includes representation from all full-time faculty, Indigenous field of study faculty and coordinators, Senior Administrative Manager, coordinators at the faculty, students, OASW, alumni, field instructors, Contract Academic Staff, and the FSW Librarian. Meetings are normally held four times during an academic year (between September 1 and June 30) at the faculty in Kitchener. For consideration, please contact FSWDeansOffice@wlu.ca.

Field Advising

The strength of the Faculty of Social Work program lies not only in the quality of the campus courses and the placement opportunities but also in the coordination and communication between these two components in the education process. Provision for such coordination and communication must be ensured not only by suitable organizational structures within the faculty but also by means of allocation of appropriate personal responsibilities.

To further strengthen and facilitate the process of learning in the placement, the FSW assigns a field advisor for each instructor and student during the field placement. The field advisor is an experienced social worker employed by the Faculty of Social Work. The field advisor provides a connection between campus and field for the student and placement setting. Each term the field advisor is assigned to a group of students. To ensure continuity of learning for students, efforts are made to assign each advisor the same group of students for the foundational and advanced placements when possible.

Responsibilities of field advisors

Field advisor overall responsibilities include:

- Assist agencies and instructors to feel positively connected with the Faculty of Social Work.
- Establish and maintain an atmosphere of trust, supportiveness and openness with the field instructor and student.
- Ensure early in the placement those field goals as required by the curriculum will be met.
- Ensure that specific student educational needs and/or problems in learning are being addressed.
- Act as a contact person from the Faculty of Social Work for agencies, instructors, and students to address questions, procedures, and possible problems, should they occur, in a collaborative manner.
- Provide students with an individual resource person; and offer field preparation workshops.
- Review students' written learning plan, evaluation reports and, if required, address problems when identified (with instructor and student).
- Initiate and implement [Field Resolution procedures](#) and [Placement Dissolution procedures](#) in situations where the field instructor has identified that the student is not meeting expectations, in collaboration with the MSW field education coordinator.
- Connect with students as well as instructors by the first day of placement.
- Assist with and monitor the placement as to whether it meets the learning requirements of the MSW program.

- Provide relevant support for field instructors and other agency personnel.
- Conduct site meetings as identified by the Field Education Office.

Role of Instructors, Advisors & Students

Role of Field Instructors	Role of Field Advisors & Coordinators
<p>Overview: The role of the Field Instructor in the education of social workers is crucial. The Field Instructor teaches complex skills, models professional behaviours, and facilitates the growth and development of values and ethics in the student. The emphasis is on the teaching and learning of methods within the respective placement setting.</p>	<p>Overview: The Field Advisor & Placement Coordinator plays an integral role in connecting the FSW to students and agencies in the field.</p>
<p>Responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception and orientation of students. • To become familiar with the educational philosophy and curriculum of the School. • To develop a learning plan with the student. • To provide practice assignments based on the learning plan. • Provide one hour of supervision time weekly (full-time placements) or bi-weekly (part-time placements). Supervision is a structured meeting or series of meetings. Individual or group supervision is appropriate to teach values, knowledge and skills. • To allow the necessary time for student participation in concurrent courses offered during the Field Education period. • Communicate any learning issues to Field Advisors and make use of Advisors as appropriate. • Approve tracked hours via email • Evaluate students learning, prepare, and submit midterm and final evaluation reports. Provide a final grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. 	<p>Responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Field Instructor and student and provide introduction, contact information and facilitate site meeting. • Conduct virtual site meetings with field instructors and students for all placements. • Provide relevant support for Field Instructors, students, and other agency personnel. • Initiate and implement Field Resolution Procedure or Placement Dissolution Procedure for any student experiencing learning issues or any agency/instructor issues. • Review learning plans and evaluations submitted by students and instructors and address problems when identified. • Ensure that specific intern educational needs and/or problems in learning are being addressed.

Virtual site visits

The advisor meets virtually with both the field instructor and the student at the beginning of the placement. Instructors and students also reach out to the advisor for consultation on any matter pertaining to a student’s performance in the placement. At least one site meeting is required for each placement setting. These meetings are held via zoom or phone conferencing.

Site visits are booked by students through the Advisor’s [MSW Field Appointment Calendar](#). Students are expected to book the site visit within the first two weeks of placement. Students who are attending

placement at a rate of 4 to 5 days/week are expected to arrange for the site visit to take place within the first month of the placement. Students who are attending placement at a rate of 2 to 3 days/week are expected to arrange for the site visit to take place within the first 8 weeks of the placement. It is the student's responsibility to book the site visits within this time frame. In the event a site visit is not booked by the student within the time periods identified, the placement will be paused until the site visit occurs.

For new placement sites in the region of Kitchener-Waterloo, an additional meeting with the field office may take place prior to the student starting their placement.

Further meetings may be made at the request of the instructor, student or Field Education Office.

Field Advisor Webinar

Field advisors host a virtual Placement Information Session with students prior to the start of the placement term. Students are expected to attend this meeting. Advisors are also available to meet with students as needed.

Check-In Meetings for Regular Track Part-Time Students

Due to the longer timeline for these placements, students in the Regular Track Part-Time program are also expected to participate in two check-in meetings with their Field Advisor and Field Instructor(s) during their placement. These meetings are typically briefer than the site visit and take place via Zoom. The Advisor will lead a discussion around learning opportunities, any placement changes/updates, upcoming or past evaluations, and areas of growth or concern, among others. Students and Field Instructors also have the opportunity to ask questions or bring up any concerns. One meeting will take place during the first half of placement, and a second meeting during the second half. The Field Advisor will initiate booking the first check in meeting at the Site Visit, and will reach out to book the second meeting at a later date during placement.

Field resolution procedure

The field instructor initiates a discussion with the field advisor as soon as a student is experiencing problems. This makes it possible for the advisor and instructor to work together to assist the student early in the placement while there may be still enough time to resolve the difficulty. The [Field Resolution Procedure](#) was established by the faculty to assist advisors in addressing placement related issues. Students are also expected to contact the field advisor should they face any issues in placement.

Field advisors initiate and implement the [Field Resolution Procedure](#) in situations where the field instructor has identified that the student is not meeting expectations. This procedure is also initiated to report any conflict that arises between a student and the field instructor, or when a student identifies learning issues or challenges within the placement. If the issue is not resolved, the [Placement Dissolution Procedure](#) may be initiated as per the recommendation of the agency, instructor, or MSW field coordinator.

Student's responsibilities

As adult-learners, students are expected to participate actively in the field supervision sessions and share the theoretical knowledge they are learning in the classroom to help guide supervision. The curriculum emphasizes the development of critically reflexive practice skills through the ongoing integration of knowledge, theory and practice within a framework that promotes the advancement of equity, inclusivity, reflexivity and social justice.

As adult professional learners, students are expected to:

- Adhere to the [Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#).
- Review the policies outlined in the MSW Field Education Manual.
- Complete a learning plan in consultation with the field instructor and submit it by the deadline.
- Submit hours on a weekly basis on Navigator.
- Complete the required placement hours.
- Take initiative, and meaningfully engage with their instructor and the placement agency in their learning and address any needs or challenges related to their field learning.
- Consult with Field Advisors to address any issues.
- Regularly check myLaurier email accounts.
- Attend placement as scheduled, maintain punctuality and communicate regarding any absences or lateness as per the agency's policies.

The field office ensures that placements are progressing according to faculty and accreditation standards. When this cannot be assessed due to lack of engagement, communication, or completion of placement requirements (e.g. registration in field courses, scheduling a site visit within the timeline, submission of WSIB forms on Navigator, learning plan or weekly hours, etc.), the field office will pause placement until all requirements are completed.

Depending on the placement setting, during the beginning of placement students can be expected and encouraged to:

- Understand policies, procedures, and the agency's structure, mission and values.
- Observe/shadow instructor and colleagues.
- Offer crisis intervention and short-term/brief counselling.
- Collaborate on projects and co-author research/reports.
- Apply theory and the Code of Ethics to practice.
- Co-facilitate groups/workshops.
- Participate in program planning, implementation and evaluation.

Halfway through the placement, and depending on the learning opportunities available and the experience level of the student, students are encouraged to:

- Take initiative for independent learning and identifying gaps/areas of need.
- Independently conduct assessments, interviews and research.
- Manage case files, develop and implement treatment plans grounded in theory.
- Collect and analyze data.
- Coordinate and liaise with interdisciplinary team members or community leaders.
- Develop and facilitate groups and workshops.
- Lead the implementation and evaluation of projects and programs.
- Actively participate in working groups and committees.

Instructors support student's learning in various ways including:

- Introducing/teaching new concepts and skills and guiding student learning.
- Working through ethical dilemmas.
- Encouraging the application of theory to practice and supporting student's skill refinement.
- Facilitating a deeper understanding of concepts.
- Providing opportunities for independent learning and practice.
- Engaging in critical analysis and linking of complex social problems.
- Encouraging reflexivity and fostering the development of a professional self.

- Modeling professionalism and use of self.
- Monitoring progress and providing clear feedback.

Supervision meetings

Students are expected to utilize supervision meetings with their instructor to discuss learning goals and progress in placement. Instructors are expected to provide students with feedback that identifies areas of growth and learning as well as how the student is progressing. Students ask questions and take the time to build rapport with their instructors, understand the instructor and agency expectations of the student, and share their own learning and expectations from the placement.

Building a professional relationship with an instructor is critical to the success of any placement. Additionally, it is not uncommon for students to seek employment or references from instructors. Students are encouraged to connect with their Field Advisors for help in navigating these conversations and building rapport with instructors.

Placements and supervision will be different for each student

The role of the field instructor in the education of social workers is crucial. The field instructor teaches complex skills within the respective practice areas, models professional behaviours, and facilitates the growth and development of values and ethics in the intern. The profession of Social Work practice relies on agency-employed field instructors to mentor students during placements.

Variety of supervision models

Instructors are encouraged to provide an hour of supervision per week for full-time placements. Instructors are encouraged to use scheduled one to one meetings as well as other supervision models. Other models of supervision which are prevalent in the field of social work include dyadic, peer, interdisciplinary and team supervision. In addition, the nature and type of supervision varies by practice area, type of agency, single or shared supervision role, number of students supervised by instructor, etc.

There is no best way to supervise which meets the needs of all students, instructors, agencies and practice areas. Every placement is different, and every student-instructor relationship is different. The trust and rapport built, as well as the skill level of students and teaching/learning styles, will all dictate the nature of the learning that occurs. Instructors will vary in the way they supervise, and agencies will vary in the level and type of supports offered to the student.

Caseload/workload

Number of clients or projects assigned to a student's caseload depends on the placement site, experience of the student, assessment of the instructor, nature of the interaction with the client or project etc. Instructors have the responsibility to their clients and agency partners and assign workload taking into consideration these various factors. Students are encouraged to re-focus their learning experience on the transferable skills they are developing. Even within the same agency setting, students will have different learning experiences depending on their program, level of experience, trust built with instructor, and individual learning interest.

Learning Plan & Placement Evaluation

The planning and evaluation documents are designed in accordance with the Faculty of Social Work's field objectives and the standards of its accrediting body, [Canadian Association for Social Work Education](#). The

Learning Plan serves as the formal field course learning contract. Nine essential social work practice areas based on the social change process have been identified. Each of these practice areas is important for **all** students. Depending on the student's field course (foundational or advanced), the emphasis and focus will differ. Other basic and broad areas of practice may be added when deemed appropriate for the student, instructor and agency.

For each field course there are two written evaluations to be submitted to the faculty: the midterm and the final evaluation. The midterm evaluation is a review and revision of the initial goals and objectives as it has evolved from the Learning Plan. It is also a record of assignments and evidence of goal attainment to that point. It especially affords the student and field instructor an opportunity to identify gaps in learning that may be a focus for the remainder of the field placement course.

Learning goals & practice areas

1. Practicing from a social work knowledge base

- a. apply a broad range of social work theory constructs, with particular attention to concepts and principles related to the nature of the field course (foundational with opportunities for integrated learning in micro and macro social work practice, or advanced social work practice)
- b. apply social work concepts and principles regarding diversity and oppression
- c. apply social work theory regarding organizational behaviour, systems/ecological perspectives, human development and helping relationships

2. Developing a professional self in terms of social work values, ethics, principles and practices

- a. according to the Canadian Social Work Code of Ethics, the Ontario Standards of Practice; and the Ontario Human Rights Code, i.e., section 5 including race, ethnic origin, class, colour, creed, heritage, sex, age, mental and physical ability, gender, sexual orientation, record of offences, family status
- b. self reflection
- c. self awareness
- d. differential use-of-self
- e. initiative
- f. collaboration and teamwork
- g. advocacy
- h. a balance of autonomy and accountability
- i. time management
- j. administrative task responsibility such as case notes and reports
- k. sensitivity to personal and professional boundaries
- l. sensitivity to placement's political and relational realities in the agency and community
- m. creative, effective use of resources

3. Engaging in and maintaining social work relationships

- a. engage in and maintain social work relationships by:
 - using trust building skills
 - focusing on strengths
 - working effectively on a team

- responding professionally to the intellectual, mental, emotional, social and dynamic components of relationships at all systemic levels. This includes for examples issues of loss, conflict, difference, power, resistance, ambivalence, dependency, etc.
 - respecting personal and professional boundaries
 - negotiating social systems
 - advocating with and for clients/consumers/communities
 - becoming familiar with history, development, context and mandates
- b. Learn effectively from the teaching /learning relationships with the instructor(s) and others
 - c. Using effective confrontation and conflict resolution skills where a power difference exists

4. Assessing

- a. apply the assessment methods and tools of the placement setting
- b. assess the organizational and community context as applicable
- c. assess from a systems or person-in-environment perspective
- d. collaboratively identify and formulate a shared understanding of strengths, capacities, gaps, needs and priorities
- e. organize and record all assessment information clearly and analytically

5. Planning

- a. identify relevant community resources
- b. collaboratively develop a dynamic action plan which includes short and long term goals based on the assessment
- c. take initiative in clarifying with all participants the purpose, roles, boundaries and expectations of the contract/plan
- d. articulate the rationale for the plan and modify it as is appropriate
- e. take leadership in the resolution of difficulties arising within the context of the plan
- f. practice social planning with all the systems and stakeholders involved

6. Implementing strategies, methods, practices

- a. collaboratively determine interventions based on the assessment and plan
- b. apply these interventions including the following skills: empathy, active listening, support, empowering, focusing, tuning into non-verbal communication, problem solving, effective use of resources, referral, advocacy, negotiating, consulting, program development, policy analysis, research techniques, mediating, facilitating, motivating, networking
- c. use the strength of the social work relationship(s) purposefully at all levels to facilitate change and development
- d. be aware and flexible regarding the need to respond differentially as situations change

7. Documenting

- a. document practice, i.e., assessments, process notes, reports, proposals, correspondence, case recording, minutes, in accordance with the policies and procedures of the placement setting
- b. describe the process, progress and outcomes of practice clearly and concisely
- c. respect confidentiality and legal implications
- d. complete required written work in a competent, timely and organized manner

8. Evaluating

- a. evaluate the process collaboratively including feedback from all participants

- b. respectfully inform all participants regarding evaluative reports
- c. contribute to the development of agency programs, policies and procedures based on the evaluative work
- d. contribute to agency evaluative research projects where feasible, e.g., program evaluation
- e. critically reflect on her/his own practice (and the practices used in their setting) and identify subsequent learning and growth
- f. engage in a constructive evaluation of the placement teaching/learning experience

9. Closure

- a. effectively bring direct practice situations, projects and social work relationships to a conclusion
- b. transfer ongoing direct practice situations and projects to another social worker, team and/or other community resources
- c. in consultation with the instructor, conceptualize the learning/practice experiences in terms of transferability to other practice situations

Practice elements according to practice area

The following describes components that may be included in the field course planning process or the student's workload, taking into account the student's field course (foundational or advanced), agency requirements, and placement opportunity that is offered.

Macro social work practice

Depending on the context of the agency, the following provide examples of workload:

- **Guideline for workload:** a varied, inclusive, clear project which has a time frame (or a couple of projects) which includes the required elements. A flexible workload that provides time for practice related reading, reflection and planning is important.
- **Community:** community practice in a group context within organizations such as community based social agencies, grassroots groups, neighbourhoods and social action groups, participating in leadership capacities, in social change committees.
- **Social planning:** using a team approach, developing proposals and participating in aspects of program planning, implementation, evaluation and related research.
- **Social policy:** analyzing and developing policy in a collaborative context.
- **Organizations:** practice with organizational and administrative change.
- The foundational placement will also offer opportunities for integrated practice, with a few hours per week of formal or informal micro social work practice, such as counselling with individual consumers/clients and families. The advanced placement may focus on macro social work practice.

Micro social work practice

- **Guideline for workload:** A few cases (individual or group), and/or a small community outreach project are appropriate for the foundational placement. A flexible workload that provides time for practice related reading, reflection and planning is important.
- **Individual practice:** short term and ongoing varied counselling (include therapy, case management, crisis intervention) – if feasible. Observation and extensive shadowing during the foundational placement is expected.
- **Family practice:** counselling with families or parts of families (formal family therapy where feasible, couples where feasible - not required).
- **Group practice:** facilitating or co-facilitating at least a process and/or psycho-educational group
- The foundational placement will also offer opportunities for integrated practice, with a few hours

per week of macro social work practice, such as participating in a small project in, for example, community outreach, program development, committee work, or needs assessment. Alternatively, students can participate in a time-limited way in, for example, a clinical research project at the agency, program evaluation, or policy development. The advanced placement may focus on micro social work practice.

Integrated social work practice

- **Workload guideline for integrated macro placement:** varied, inclusive, clear projects that incorporate community, planning, policy and organizational work. Ongoing client/consumer cases, (or more if brief intervention work) and, if feasible, a group, all of which integrate with macro social work practice. (E.g. working on policy and program development on family violence in a team format and providing a community education group program on family violence while carrying a case or two of that nature that require support, advocacy and crisis intervention and referral).
- **Workload guideline for integrated micro placement:** Case management/psychotherapy with ongoing cases, including some crisis and brief intervention, supportive counselling and possibly intake work, co-leading a psycho educational, support, or community action group, community work project that integrates with that particular population. (E.g., working with community adolescent support service, providing supportive counselling on a drop in basis, advocacy work, developing and facilitating some structured group programming for the teens, liaising with schools, mental health and addiction facilities).

Student learning plan - process & instructions

The development of the Learning Plan is a collaborative process between the student and instructor(s) and begins immediately. The instructor and student meet to determine the student's learning interests considering agency opportunities, and practice activities that will provide learning within the nine social work practice areas identified. It serves as the basis for evaluating learning at the mid-term and completion of the field placement course. Assessment of learning occurs on an ongoing basis throughout the placement via weekly meetings between student and instructor(s) and the use of clear evaluative measures including for example, live observation, AV tapes, case/project review, reports, process recording, team contribution, one-way mirror, reflective team, etc. The Learning Plan is shared with the Field Advisor early in the placement.

Instructions on completing the Learning Plan

1. The **Learning Plan**, which gives focus and direction to the placement, is written up by the **student**, and the final document is reviewed by the field instructor and student, with final approval from the instructor. The Learning Plan document is accessed via **Navigator**.
2. This plan is completed within the first **three to four weeks** of the placement and may be modified throughout as needed.
3. The learning plan is reviewed by the Field Advisor.
4. As part of the mid-term and final evaluation process, students update the plan to indicate their progress in each of the areas identified. This is then reviewed by the instructor.
5. The plan is reviewed by the MSW Field Education Office as part of the mid-term and final evaluations.

Evaluation of learning - process & instructions

A formal written evaluation is completed at midterm and again at the completion of placement using the Learning Plan as a guide. The evaluation is a collaborative process between Instructor and student; however, as course instructor, the instructor evaluates the student's progress. Evaluation of all nine social

work practice areas is required at the mid-term and final evaluations. The normal procedure for the completion of the evaluation includes joint planning and preparation with detailed discussion of the student's work and goals during the placement. Following an evaluation meeting it is the instructor's responsibility to prepare the written evaluation report, recommend a grade of satisfactory or unsatisfactory (pass or fail) and complete the evaluation on Navigator. Any student disagreement with the evaluation should be noted and the student can add his/her own report if he/she wishes.

Evaluation, of course, is an ongoing process and begins on the first day of placement. The student and the field instructor are aware of the level of performance throughout the field practice period. It is expected that every meeting between the student and the instructor, whether it is on an individual basis or in group supervision, provides the opportunity for evaluating the student's performance. Each instructor should be prepared to discuss the criteria for assigning a failing grade to a student so that unnecessary anxiety may be alleviated. The MSW Field Learning Plan & Evaluation provided to the student and the instructor facilitates this model of learning and evaluation.

Instructions on completing the progress evaluation (SK600)

Students completing placement hours in the online regular track program are assessed on their progress prior to the mid-term and final evaluation. This provides the student and instructor a space to address areas of strength and concern prior to the formal evaluation of the student.

The instructor evaluates the student's progress on the nine areas of social work practice by identifying and commenting on the following:

1. Areas of success: student is performing as expected and/or demonstrating success in this area. You do not consider this an area that the student needs to improve on.
2. Areas of growth: student is encouraged to continue building their skills and learning.
3. Areas of concern: requires the attention of the student and improvements need to be made in this area in order to succeed in the placement.
4. Not applicable: the student has not completed activities in this area to date.

Instructions on completing the mid-term and final evaluation

1. At least three weeks prior to the due date of the evaluation, the student revisits the learning plan and completes his/her progress for the appropriate evaluation (mid-term or final).
2. The student also provides overall feedback for the appropriate evaluation.
3. The field instructor reviews this on Navigator.
4. The instructor completes their section of the evaluation by providing an overview of the student's activities for the appropriate evaluation (mid-term or final), evaluating the student's progress in each of the nine social work areas, and providing overall feedback for the evaluation.
5. This final evaluation is then reviewed by the Instructor and the student.
6. The instructor then signs off on the document and selects the submit button.
7. Evaluations are reviewed by field advisors and the Field Education Office, and are part of the student's records.

Field education course grading procedures

The field education course is graded by the field instructor at mid-term and at the end of the placement. The Learning Plan that is negotiated between the student and the instructor provides the framework upon which the student's learning is assessed. Field education is considered a pass/fail requirement of the MSW degree. As such, the Instructor provides the Field Education Office with a satisfactory (pass) or unsatisfactory (fail) mark on the mid-term and final evaluations. In addition to the provision of a

satisfactory or unsatisfactory mark, the placement hours required must be completed. The placement hours are tracked via Navigator and are confirmed by the field instructor. The field coordinator or the program coordinator are assigned course instructors for all field courses and are responsible for submitting grades to the [Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) on behalf of all field instructors. The following procedures are used:

Mid-term evaluation

Satisfactory grade on the mid-term evaluation and approved hours (if completed by due date):

- Student receives a Continuing mark (000).

Satisfactory grade on the mid-term evaluation and approved hours (if submitted after due date):

- Student receives an Incomplete grade (INC).
- This mark may be revised to a Continuing grade (000) once the evaluation and hours are received and reviewed. Delayed submissions result in delayed grades, which may impact student's ability to register in courses in a timely manner.

Unsatisfactory grade on the mid-term evaluation:

- The field advisor will initiate the [Field Resolution Procedure whenever possible](#).
- If the placement continues: student receives a Continuing grade (000) or Incomplete (INC) at the discretion of the coordinator in consultation with the field advisor and instructor.
- If the placement is [discontinued](#): student receives a Fail grade (F). The fail will be part of the student's official transcript. If the course is repeated, a "Repeated Later" notation will be seen on the official transcript and the repeated course will be subject to the course grading procedures. The student will remain on academic probation until the course is successfully repeated. The student has the right to petition the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to have a grade removed as a historical record change prior to convocation.

Final evaluation

Satisfactory grade on the final evaluation and approved tracked hours (if submitted by due date):

- Student receives a Satisfactory grade (S), which is a Pass.

Satisfactory grade on the final evaluation and approved tracked hours (if submitted after due date):

- Student receives an Incomplete grade (INC).
- This mark may be revised to a Satisfactory grade (S) once the evaluation and placement hours are received and reviewed. Delayed submissions result in delayed grades, which may impact student's ability to register in courses or apply for graduation in a timely manner.

Unsatisfactory grade during the final evaluation:

- Student receives an Unsatisfactory grade, Fail grade (F). The fail will be part of the student's official transcript. If the course is repeated, a "Repeated Later" notation will be seen on the official transcript and the repeated course will be subject to the course grading procedures. The student will remain on academic probation until the course is successfully repeated. The student has the right to petition Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to have a grade removed as a historical record change prior to convocation.

Process for assessing a failed evaluation

When a field instructor provides an Unsatisfactory final grade (F), the Field Advisor & Coordinator initiates a process to assess the rationale for the grade. In very few situations where the field instructor does not provide a final grade, the Field Advisor & Coordinator initiates a process to determine whether there is sufficient information and feedback to determine a final grade for the student's course. These processes include a review of concerns presented, field resolution processes during the placement, and feedback

from the student and field instructor. Based on this grade assessment process, the coordinator and field office determine a final grade for the student's field course.

Field Placement Planning Process

Students are informed of placement expectations at the time they apply to the MSW Program. All incoming students agree to the MSW Field Placement Agreement prior to acceptance to the program:

MSW field placement agreement

All MSW applicants must read and agree to the following declarations:

- I have read the information on the Faculty of Social Work website pertaining to the [MSW Field Education](#) and have reviewed the time-frames and planning procedures that apply to my MSW program.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to review all field documents prior to the start of my field course(s): MSW Field Education Manual, Student Guidebooks, and other field resources provided by the field office.
- I understand that I will be required to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document if admitted to the program: <https://laurier-fsw.blitzen.com/form/MSW-Applicants----Professional-Practice-Guidelines-and-Ethical-Standards-Form>.
- I understand that the Faculty of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University requests field placements without remuneration in order to complete the MSW program.
- I understand that students are generally not paid while completing their field placement course. Students may participate in paid workplace placements, should they meet the conditions of approval identified by the Faculty of Social Work. Field placement is a course with a curriculum for which students are assigned a grade.
- I understand that financial planning is important before I commence the MSW program in order to ensure I can fulfill the requirements of the field courses within the timelines provided. Students in placement should expect additional costs such as travel to and from the agency, as well as parking fees.
- I understand that students are required to follow the placement term structure in order to graduate in a timely manner. The MSW Field Education website lists the placement timelines for each cohort of students.
- I understand that students must not arrange their own placement without approval from the Field Education Office.
- I understand that placements generally do not offer highly specialized training in, for example, psychotherapy. More specialized certifications, some of which are offered by our Professional Development Department online, may be pursued when they are available and do not interfere with MSW program requirements.
- I understand that it is important to make every effort to have access to a vehicle as most agencies require possession of a car for the work they do. I understand that placement opportunities may be more limited for students who do not have access to a vehicle.

- I understand that many placement settings have requirements for a criminal record check and/or vaccinations prior to commencing the placement and that I am responsible for any expenses associated with these tests.
- Agencies conduct interviews to determine a suitable student for the placement opportunity. The final decision will be made by the Field Education Office.
- I understand that placements in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) are competitive and limited.
- I understand that if I wish to undertake a practicum in an agency where I have any prior relationships, I must declare a potential conflict of interest to, and discuss the appropriateness of the situation with the Field Office. I understand that I may have a potential conflict of interest if I am, or have been, or an immediate family member is or has been a client or an employee of the agency, or if I have, or an immediate family member has relatives at and/or other close relationships with staff members of an agency. It is my responsibility to either inform the Field Office of a potential conflict of interest or to refrain from requesting a placement setting in which there is a conflict of interest if I choose not to enter into the necessary discussion. I understand that if the Field Office discovers a conflict of interest that I have not declared with respect to my placement, the Field Office may in its sole discretion terminate that placement, and makes no guarantee that it will be able to arrange a substitute placement within the time limits of my program.
- I understand that if I have been subject to a finding of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity by a regulated health profession in any jurisdiction, or if I have been convicted of a criminal offence for which I have not received a record suspension (pardon) there may be challenges to secure a field placement. Placement agencies may screen and impose restrictions for the protection of their agency and client population. Please be aware that you are required to complete all placement hours for the field courses that are part of your MSW program in order to meet the degree requirements for graduation.

For online MSW applicants:

- I understand that as a student in the online MSW program I am required to lead the field planning process and propose viable placements in order to continue my registration in the program.
- When the proposed placement is not possible, we require student flexibility in terms of geography and placement settings.
- Students attend placement for a minimum of 16 hours across two days/week, during the agency's hours of operation, and during the availability of the field instructor. Working professionals are expected to negotiate time off with their employers prior to starting the MSW program. The majority of agencies expect students to attend placement during a structured timeline during weekdays. Students who are unable to take time off from work (e.g. 2 days/week or a leave of absence) to attend placement in a structured manner will likely be unable to secure a placement.

For in-class MSW applicants:

- I understand that the Field Education Office does not guarantee placements in a student's home city.
- I understand that students may be placed by the Field Education Office in centres that are normally located within a radius of 150 km of the Kitchener campus.
- I understand that the Field Education Office at the Faculty of Social Work will determine a suitable placement and assign me to a placement.

- I understand that I will be required to participate in the field planning process and accept any field placements selected by the Field Education Office of the Faculty of Social Work in order to continue my registration in the program.
- Flexibility is required of students in terms of geography and placement settings.
- If you are in the two-year program: one of your field placements may be completed at your workplace in accordance with the criteria outlined in the workplace placement policy.

I have read and understand the above procedures that guide the field placement planning process. By checking the box below, I agree to abide by these procedures and understand that I am required to accept any placements selected by the Faculty of Social Work in order to continue my registration in the program.

Application information is collected under the authority of the Wilfrid Laurier University Act to administer the university-student relationship. This includes but is not limited to maintaining your academic and ancillary records, contacting you, and others on your behalf, and releasing such information as is appropriate for the operation of the university. Visit our [privacy coordinator's web-page](#) for more information and the Notice of Collection and Use or Disclosure of Personal Information.

I have read and agree to the declarations (check the box to agree).

Proposing placements

Part-time Online MSW Program

Once admitted to the program, students participate fully in the placement planning process, which begins immediately upon their acceptance as a graduate student at the Faculty of Social Work. The Field Education Office communicates with incoming students and provides an outline of the placement planning and matching process via zoom webinars.

Students in the part-time program are responsible for proposing a viable placement of interest no later than the deadline provided. Considering the demographic of part-time students, who are adult learners and working professionals, this process allows students to seek out opportunities that align with their personal and professional interests, consider opportunities within their immediate community settings, and engaging in advanced learning within their [work setting](#).

This process requires students to submit a placement proposal form to the Field Office via Navigator. Students are responsible for proposing a placement opportunity at their workplace, or with an agency that has confirmed an interest in considering the student for a placement.

Full-time MSW Program

The purpose of a proposal is for students to provide information about an agency of interest which the field office does not already have a connection with and where the student would like to complete a placement. Student proposals are due several months in advance of the placement start date. Students need to check their communications from the field office for these dates. Students may propose **one** agency of interest, create a tailored cover letter and resume, and complete the proposal form on Navigator. There are no

guarantees that a proposed placement will be a viable placement, as the field office needs to investigate that the agency meets the accreditation standards regarding placements and instructors.

Field Placement Policies

Field course registration

It is the student's responsibility to ensure they are registered in the appropriate field course for each term they attend placement. Students may not earn hours towards a placement and are not covered for insurance purposes unless they are registered in the appropriate field education course.

In the event a student started placement but did not register in the field course, the placement will be paused immediately, and any placement hours completed will not count. The field office will inform both the student and the field instructor that the placement will be paused until the student resolves any registration concerns. Once the student registers in the field course, they may resume their previously negotiated placement, if permitted by the agency. If the student is able to restart the placement, they will negotiate a new start and end date, which may be extended into a new term due to the placement interruption. Once the placement dates are confirmed by the field advisor, the student may begin to accumulate placement hours.

Placement learning assignments

- Readings or assignments in relation to MSW courses should not interfere with field placement time.
- Students may be asked by their field instructors to complete readings and other assignments related to their field education.
- If a placement is discontinued for any reason, the placement course may be repeated once.

Placement hours requirements

- At a minimum, students are required to complete the minimum field hours (450 hours for SK541-foundational field course; 500 hours for SK649-advanced field course; and 950 hours for SK600-regular track field course for students in the online MSW program).
- All **field hours** are strictly hours dedicated to the placement social work activities identified by the field instructor and student in the learning plan (e.g. virtual counselling, research, program evaluation, etc.).
- Students begin accumulating placement hours once their placement begins. Agency requirements that are needed prior to the placement start (e.g. police checks, trainings) do not count towards placement hours.
- Students are encouraged to access online professional development resources provided by the field office to enrich their learning; however, any professional development training, workshops, **do not** count towards placement hours.
- Any faculty related meetings and events **do not** count towards placement hours.
- For in-person and hybrid placements:
 - Students are expected to attend placement during the agency's regular business hours. Evening hours may be required by some agencies in order to facilitate group programs and students must make arrangements to be at placement during those hours.

- Agencies do not offer placements that take place strictly in the evening or weekends. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements to be in attendance at placement during regular business hours.
- Students attend placement during the availability of the onsite field instructor.
- Weekend hours are possible if the instructor is available to supervise the student, and the agency is open and functional during weekend hours.
- Students must track their hours weekly as instructed on Navigator.
- Students must attend placement at the rate negotiated and within the start and end dates provided by the field office. Placement start and end dates cannot be adjusted without approval from the Field Education Office.
- Overtime cannot be used to end the placement early unless this was approved by the field office coordinator as outlined in the [overtime](#) policy.
- Placement hours required **do not** include scheduled breaks (e.g. lunch break).
- The maximum hours/week a student can attend placement is outlined in the [field hours](#) section for each field course. In the event the student needs to negotiate a permanent or temporary reduction in the weekly field hours, the student must plan to attend placement at a minimum rate of 16 hours/week over a 2 day period. This is the minimum weekly standard that will be considered by the field office, and negotiated with an agency setting.
- In the event a student needs to attend placement overtime in order to make up missed time (e.g. sick leave), total placement hours in a day may not exceed nine placement hours per day or 40 hours in a week. This can only be done as a temporary measure.
- Successful completion of a field course requires:
 - Regular supervision from the approved Field Instructor
 - Completing a site-visit
 - Weekly submission of placement hours
 - Completion of all placement hours
 - Tracked hours approved by Field Instructor on Navigator
 - Satisfactory evaluations

Documenting placement hours

Students utilize a tracking hours form built on [Navigator](#) to document completed placement hours. Students are responsible for documenting and monitoring placement hours to ensure that total hours will be completed by the end of the placement timeframe. Students submit their tracked hours to their instructors on a weekly basis.

In the event of a [placement disruption](#), only hours entered and approved will be accounted for. The **approved tracked hours and evaluations are required to enter a grade for the field course**. Late submissions of these documents result in a delayed grade entry.

Changing placement timelines

Placements cannot start prior to the placement start date, and cannot be extended after the placement end date without approval from the Field Education Office. Students who wish to alter their placement schedules need to submit a formal request to their Field Advisor. If approved, students may then negotiate an alternative timeline with their Instructor and agency. It is the student's responsibility to contact the appropriate program staff (Online MSW programs: onlinemsw@wlu.ca or Full-time MSW programs:

fswassist@wlu.ca), to determine the implications on their course registration, sequencing and graduation timelines.

Agencies provide placement opportunities taking into consideration the length of time a student will be in placement. Placements cannot end early and overtime cannot be used to shorten the length of a placement except in the circumstances outlined in the [overtime](#) policy.

Overtime

Understandably, students may accumulate overtime hours at some point during their field placement. The student is responsible for adjusting their hours to ensure they are attending placement as per their negotiated placement timeline. The student should arrange for compensatory time to be taken within two weeks following the accrual of any amount of overtime.

In rare situations, and when approved by the field coordinator, overtime may be accumulated as a temporary measure to make up any missed time. Overtime hours will not count towards ending placement early, or towards reducing the length of the placement except in the following circumstances:

- Documented critical event that requires the student to complete placement early. This can be done with the instructor's approval and in consultation with the field advisor. The advisor considers these cases individually to assess the student's completed hours and outstanding hours required based on the student's MSW program.
- **MSW regular track full-time program:** If a student in this program has approval from the field office to participate in a summer placement in lieu of the advanced fall placement. This also requires approval from the foundational placement instructor and agency to end the foundational placement in time for the beginning of the summer placement in May.

Holidays and reading weeks

As per the FSW regulations, students are required to complete the total hours required for their field course. Students who are absent for any reason (including unexpected agency closures) are expected to make up the time missed during their placement timelines as identified on Navigator (placement record section). There may be additional holidays observed by the agency that are not observed by the university. Students who take holidays or any other holiday must ensure that they will complete the required total placement hours prior to the scheduled placement end date.

The fall reading week includes Thanksgiving and the four days following. The winter reading week includes Family Day and the four days following.

Part-time MSW programs

Students in the part-time program need to attend placement through the reading weeks in order to complete the placement hours within their program's timeline.

Full-time MSW programs

Based on the structure of the courses and program, the placement timelines for students in the full-time MSW program take into consideration Laurier's reading weeks. Accordingly, placement timelines for full-time MSW field schedules have been structured to allow students to take time off during reading weeks. The Field Education Office plans most placement start and end dates with the assumption that students will take reading week(s) off. Time off does not count towards placement hours.

Students who opt to attend placement during reading week, may negotiate with their instructor to take time off during other days, and complete placement no earlier than the end date. The following conditions or considerations apply:

- School board and students completing placement in a school board setting take March break off instead of, not in addition to, Laurier's reading week.
- Students may choose to work through Laurier's Fall reading week to compensate for an extended agency/school board Christmas break.
- Agencies and students may negotiate days off at other times throughout placement as it suits the needs of all concerned.
- Students may not take these days off at the end of placement as the requirement is to maintain the length of the placement period.

Absences

Any absences must be made up over the course of the placement timeframe. This includes planned and unexpected absences, such as notices of closure by agency (e.g. snow days, strike), as well as critical events (documented illness, serious family difficulties, etc.). If Laurier University is closed due to inclement weather on a day that students are to attend placement, the field office encourages students to use their judgement about travelling to placement. If students decide it is not safe to travel, then they need to follow their agency's procedure for recording an absence. This absence would need to be made up over the course of the placement.

If the missed time cannot be made up within the placement timeframe students are expected to contact the Field Advisor to negotiate an altered schedule.

Process for reporting absences

Students are professional learners and adhere to the agency's policies while on placement including the process for reporting absences. As any professional setting, students are required to communicate absences to the instructor immediately, and as per the agency policies (e.g. reporting absence no later than official start time of placement day) to report illness or any other situation requiring absence from placement. The student is expected to inform the MSW field advisor of any absences *exceeding three consecutive days*.

If a situation requires more time away, the field instructor, and field advisor must be notified, by the student immediately. An individualized plan suitable to the circumstances will be determined through discussion among the instructor, advisor and student. The plan will include a schedule to make up the time off. Normally, the make-up time is either within the placement period and/or at the end of the usual placement period. Overtime accrued before the situation occurred as per the [overtime](#) policy will serve as make-up time. Depending on circumstances, the student may need to complete placement at another time within the structures and regulations of the faculty. The main consideration is that students complete all field requirements of the MSW program as outlined throughout the field education manual.

Community & professional development workshops

A student who wishes to be away to attend a workshop, specialized learning modules or conference in the community or through professional development will negotiate that with the instructor. Make-up time is required as a condition for approval of a request for special leave. Time to attend workshops must be approved by the instructor and students are required to make up missed time through an extension of their placement that must be approved by the Field Education Office.

Workshops or professional development activities organized by the field instructor or agency are considered part of the placement hours.

Expenses

Expenses incurred by the student in the placement agency may be covered by the agency. Normally the student's gas costs for agency business are covered by the agency. Parking costs are normally not covered. Costs for workshops, police record checks and immunizations (where required) may or may not be covered by the agency. If not, costs are covered by the student.

Remuneration

Students may not charge clients fees other than those that may be usual for the agency to charge. Students completing a placement in their workplace may negotiate payment with their employer distinct from the Faculty of Social Work as outlined in the policy related to workplace placements. This is usually possible for part-time students who complete a workplace placement on a part-time basis while working with the agency as a part-time employee.

Agency requirements

Most agencies require police record checks, including vulnerable sector checks, and/or updated immunizations and records, including TB test and mask fittings (all hospitals and medical clinics). These requirements must be met by the student **before** the placement is scheduled to start. These requirements are normally stated in Navigator on the placement record. The process of meeting these requirements must begin several weeks ahead of placement due to length of time required to complete them.

Vulnerable sector record checks

There is a cost associated with vulnerable sector police checks, which is the responsibility of the student to cover. The process can take between 6-10 weeks. All students are highly encouraged to apply for their police check at least 10-12 weeks prior to the start of placements. This requirement is normally stated on Navigator for each placement opportunity, and/or students are advised of this requirement by the agency during the placement interview.

MSW students with accommodation needs

Students who require academic and placement accommodations for disability-related reasons are encouraged to contact the [Accessible Learning Centre](#). Taking into consideration the student's consent, Accessible Learning may share the accommodation plan with the Field Education Office. The accommodation plan assists the Field Education Office in helping facilitate a suitable placement and the provision of required accommodations at the placement setting. Some examples of accommodations include flexibility with the placement's time structure, physical equipment such as technological supports, or more time for report writing. In co-creating an environment to facilitate learning, students have to be able to fulfill the core functions of the placement. Accommodations must balance the professional integrity of field placement and professional requirements. Should you wish to discuss your accommodation placement needs with the field office at any time of the placement planning process or during placement, please reach out to your Field Advisor & Placement Coordinator.

Liability insurance

Wilfrid Laurier University provides general liability coverage for students on field placement. This policy covers bodily injury, property damage and malpractice liability. Students must be registered in the

appropriate field placement course prior to the start of their placement, and must attend placement within the start and end dates provided to remain eligible. Currently, private insurance offered by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and Laurier excludes coverage for COVID-19, but the university is continuing to explore insurance options.

Workers' compensation & WSIB

By law, Wilfrid Laurier University is responsible for registered students in the event of an unpaid workplace injury. All social work students in this program who are involved in an unpaid field placement as part of their degree program and are placed in a setting registered with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) are covered by that Act. In the event of placement related injury or illness students may be eligible for benefits related to uninsured health costs and in some cases lost pay. Students who are in placement settings in Ontario that are not registered with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board are covered by an insurance plan paid for by the Province of Ontario.

In the event of a workplace injury at an unpaid placement, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) is responsible for providing coverage. The process of reporting to WSIB and managing the return to work after an injury is facilitated by Laurier's Safety, Health, Environment & Risk Management (SHERM). Students who receive stipends that are paid by Laurier are considered unpaid students and would be eligible for MTCU coverage in the event of an injury at the placement setting. In the event of a workplace injury in a paid workplace placement, students would be covered by insurance (WSIB or other) that must be provided by the employer, i.e. workplace placement agency.

Reporting incidents

In the event of a placement related injury or illness, or the possibility of a placement related injury or illness, students and field instructors are advised to follow the procedures outlined by the agency and communicate the incident to the MSW field coordinator at mawfield@wlu.ca **within 24 hours** of incident. The time frame for claims is very short and stringent so immediate action is required. This benefit to students is at no cost to agencies and will not impact their risk assessments with WSIB.

For unpaid placements, Laurier is responsible for reporting the incident to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. The Field Education Office will share a WSIB Accident Report, which will need to be completed by the student and agency. The student is responsible for returning the form to the appropriate department at Laurier and following the required procedures. The Field Education Office will assist the student in facilitating the process and contacting the appropriate department.

Student WSIB form

Students are required to submit a completed **Student Declaration of Understanding**. This form is now located on Navigator and is captured in the **Terms & Conditions** module. By accepting these Terms & Conditions, students are confirming that they understand that WSIB or private insurance coverage will be provided through the MTCU while they are on a placement arranged by the university as a requirement of their program of study. This form must be completed on Navigator before or within the first week of placement. Students cannot continue in placement if this form is not completed.

Agency WSIB forms

Agencies are required to submit a completed **Letter to Placement Employers**. By signing this form, agencies are confirming their understanding of their responsibility to protect student trainees from health and safety hazards in the workplace and to ensure appropriate supervision during their placement. They are also

agreeing to report workplace injuries to Laurier immediately. This letter of understanding only needs to be completed every three years for each placement employer.

Agencies are also required to submit a complete **Pre-Placement/Field Trip Due Diligence Checklist**. This checklist is used to document health and safety orientation provided to a student prior to exposure of hazards. If an agency is training a group of students, one checklist may be submitted for all students that includes an attached list of student names and signatures. This checklist is also used to identify unsafe exposures in facilities/locations where students may be required to work, study or perform research activities and also to document safety measures in place to protect students from exposure. This form only needs to be completed once for an agency.

These forms are due within the first week of placement. Students cannot continue in placement if these forms are not submitted by the deadline.

Field Concerns & Resolutions

Field placements are an essential part of social work education and the successful completion of a placement is a basic requirement for every student in the MSW program of the Faculty of Social Work (FSW). All placements used by the FSW are considered to provide sufficient opportunities for learning. Each student is assigned a qualified field instructor to assume the major teaching task while the student is in placement.

It is presumed that each student assigned to a placement is well motivated to effectively use the learning-teaching relationship with the field instructor and all other opportunities in the agency to promote their professional development and that this combination will result in the successful completion of the requirement of the placement.

To further strengthen and facilitate the process of learning in the placement, the FSW assigns a field advisor for each instructor and student during the placement. Ongoing communication between the FSW campus and the placement setting is considered essential for the support of the student's learning experience both in the classroom and in the placement.

As professional adult learners, Laurier MSW students have roles and responsibilities in relation to their program and field placement and are expected to adhere to professional Codes of Ethics namely, the [Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#), as well as the [Standards of Practice set by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers](#). Students are also expected to maintain professional and respectful behaviour as outlined in the following Laurier policies: [Laurier's Student Code of Conduct and Discipline](#) (12.2), [Non-Academic Intern Code of Conduct](#) (12.3), [Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination](#) (6.1), and the [Workplace Violence Prevention Policy](#) (7.18) and Laurier's academic and health [policies](#) applicable to graduate students.

As a professional field of practice that services vulnerable populations, any breaches of ethical, behavioural, learning, or professional standards in the field are considered serious. [The Faculty of Social Work Procedures for the Review of Students' Professional Behaviour](#) (2016) was developed to provide a framework for the review and/or resolution of professional behaviour breaches in both classroom and field settings. This procedure, which is required by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education Standards for Accreditation, is designed to provide support to both student and instructor while providing a

process that would represent the obligation of the Faculty of Social Work to require students to perform their professional responsibilities in accordance with social work codes of ethics. As part of the review and/or resolution process, the Faculty of Social Work adheres to the aforementioned Laurier policies.

It is recognized that in some instances the placement experience will not proceed according to the expectations of either the student or the instructor or both. The student may not be able to progress due to his/her own inability to make appropriate use of the placement learning experiences, or, the student may indicate that problems in the learning-teaching experience preclude his/her appropriate investment in the placement.

In 2012, The Curriculum, Admissions, Field and Student Affairs Committee (CAFSAC) was tasked with revising policies for the resolution of placement issues. As a result, the Field Resolution Procedure was formalized to support students, instructors and agencies experiencing difficulty with the field experience. It is expected that the Field Resolution Procedure will be followed by all parties concerned.

Establishing expectations to enrich the learning experience

Within the first three weeks of the placement, it is the field instructor's responsibility to initiate with the student discussion about his/her expectations and impressions of the placement learning experience including the student-instructor relationship. Through this early feedback discussion, it is hoped that the instructor and student can begin to mutually evaluate the content of the placement learning experience and style or method in which it is reinforced in the supervision tutorial. Throughout the placement, they will also continually evaluate the student's progress in making use of the learning experiences offered. The field advisor would be available to clarify the faculty's goals and requirements for the placement experience. The [Learning Plan and Evaluation](#) provides a written account of the learning experience.

It will be incumbent upon both the student and the instructor to identify problems, if any, and initiate changes in the teaching-learning experience according to a mutually satisfactory plan. It is hoped that the ideas, plans and insights generated from this discussion will advance the learning and teaching opportunities in the placement experience to the mutual benefit of both the student and the instructor.

Responding to a concern at placement

When a concern is raised around the placement by the student, field instructor or agency representative, it is incumbent on this party to initiate a discussion with the field advisor as soon as they are aware of this information. This makes it possible for the advisor and/or instructor to work with the student to determine suitable supports.

When difficulties persist despite the instructor's efforts to assist the student to identify ways to address concerns regarding learning difficulties, professional or ethical behaviours, and resolve problems, the instructor is expected to contact the advisor requesting a review of the situation. The instructor contacts the advisor when there are concerns around a student's ability to meet learning requirements, professional behaviour conduct, ethical issues, or any concerns that may jeopardize the student's ability to continue in the placement or complete the placement successfully. A student normally contacts the advisor regarding any concerns related to their learning, placement, agency, or instructor.

In response to any concerns observed by the Field Education Office, student, instructor, agency or Field Advisor & Coordinator, the coordinator will promptly initiate a review of the expressed concerns in the following manner:

- The coordinator will connect with the appropriate individuals at the placement setting and discuss

the areas of concern with the instructor, the student, and/or both of them together. The coordinator may request and review documented material and it is the student's and instructor's responsibilities to ensure that appropriate materials are available. Follow up conversations or meetings with the student and instructor as well as with other appropriate persons in the setting may also be arranged. The primary purpose of this process is to identify and resolve the problem areas.

- This process is facilitated through the [Field Resolution Procedure](#) initiated by the coordinator. It is hoped that the results of this process will permit the teaching-learning experience to continue through to the end of placement course.
- The coordinator may initiate a [Review of Students' Professional Behaviour](#) if the concern regarding the student is of a serious nature (e.g. unethical conduct in placement).
- If a concern is raised with respect to the instructor or agency where the concern is unethical/illegal conduct or alleged harassment/discrimination of the student the appropriate procedure documented in the field manual is followed.

Field Resolution Procedure

Whenever possible, field advisors initiate and implement the Field Resolution Procedure in situations where the field instructor has identified that the student is not meeting expectations (professional, ethical, behavioural, learning, etc.). The procedure is also initiated to report any conflict that arises between a student and instructor, or when a student identifies any learning issues, changes, or challenges within the placement setting. In the event the student identifies accommodation needs within the placement setting, the student must contact the Accessible Learning Centre to negotiate any placement related accommodations.

Whenever possible, and depending on the situation, the field coordinator may initiate the following processes:

1. Initiate a conversation with the student and/or field instructor to discuss the issue. Often, this involves providing direction to the student, and results in a resolution.
 - a. The advisor follows up in writing with all parties outlining the outcome of discussion(s) and agreed upon plans.
 - b. Confirmation from the student and instructor is requested to ensure all are working together towards the same goal.
2. If appropriate, and if the issue is not resolved, initiate a meeting with the field instructor and student to discuss the areas of concern.
3. Work with all parties to develop a plan to address the issue(s) identified including timelines and check-in points.
4. Document all notes in a detailed Field Resolution Agreement that includes:
 - a. Declaration of Field Concern
 - b. Identification of issues
 - c. Outcome of meeting(s) and shared understanding of how the issue(s) will be resolved
 - d. Goals to be achieved for successful placement completion
 - e. Timeframe for follow up, and any changes to placement timelines
 - f. The expectations that must be met by the student for placement continuation including a plan for the student (e.g. pausing the placement until the concern is remedied, or revising the learning plan)
5. The coordinator shares the Field Resolution Agreement with the student, instructor, and any other appropriate personnel involved in this process.
 - a. Confirmation of the outlined agreement is required from the student and instructor within a week of receiving the Agreement.

In some situations, the agency or field instructor, may attempt to address and resolve issues at the placement directly with the student without involving the field coordinator. If the issue continues to escalate, the agency or instructor may involve the coordinator to assist with a resolution, or ending the field placement. Participation in the Field Resolution Procedure and continuation of a placement is at the discretion of the agency.

Placement continues with concerns or failed evaluation

If the placement continues when the student is not meeting expectations (e.g. learning, professional, ethical or behavioural concerns), the coordinator was not informed of the issues, and/or the instructor evaluates the student with an unsatisfactory mid-term grade:

- The Field Resolution Procedure is facilitated whenever possible.
- The learning plan may be re-evaluated and the field advisor works with both the instructor and the student to facilitate this process. This makes it possible for the field advisor and field instructor to work together to assist the student early in the placement while there is still enough time to resolve the difficulty.
- It is the responsibility of the field instructor to assess the student's progress. In some cases, the instructor may need more time to adequately assess the student's progress, especially in situations where the student needs additional time to work towards the implementation of the learning plan. An extension of the placement may also be recommended by the field coordinator. Accordingly, the placement end date may be extended and hours may be increased to ensure the student has sufficient time to address the learning gaps identified.
- [Review of Students' Professional Behaviour](#) may be initiated by the coordinator if it is deemed necessary considering the concerns identified.

Procedures for situations involving allegations of unethical or illegal conduct in placement

- a. A student perceiving the possibility of ethical or legal concerns may consult the field advisor who will ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the information regarding the type and level of the perceived problem.
- b. If, after such consultation, the student is convinced that a serious situation with ethical or legal implications exists, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the MSW field coordinator of the nature and extent of the specific problems. All such allegations shall be in writing and shall include documentation of relevant events (times, dates, places, individuals, etc.). The student may consult with the MSW field coordinator and/or a faculty field advisor regarding the implications of these actions or the writing of this report.
- c. When the MSW field coordinator receives a serious allegation from a student, it is the responsibility of the coordinator to discuss the implications of the allegation with the student and then to immediately (no later than the end of the next working day) contact the agency coordinator (or the equivalent individual), the field instructor and the Dean, or if the Dean is unavailable, the Vice-President: Academic.
- d. Upon a thorough review and assessment of the situation, the MSW field coordinator, after conferring with the Dean, the agency coordinator, the field instructor and the student shall make a decision regarding the handling of the situation.
- e. These decisions made by the MSW field coordinator (in cooperation with the Dean, the agency coordinator, the field instructor and the student), shall be binding upon all parties until such time as a formal administrative review has been conducted to determine the long-term resolution of the

- problem.
- f. The Dean shall, without delay, commence a formal administrative review based upon the principles of natural justice for all the parties involved. The review shall include the student, the field instructor, the agency coordinator, and the MSW field coordinator. Following this review, the Dean shall prepare a written report, within one week, to be shared with all participants. The report will clarify the status of the student, field instructor and the placement in regard to the issues. In addition, the report will confirm or change those decisions made in (d) above.
 - g. It is to be understood that in those situations where allegations are made by agency-based personnel and/or clients concerning student conduct during the placement, it is the responsibility of the field agency to handle those allegations according to agency procedures and then immediately advise the MSW field coordinator.

Procedures regarding alleged incidents of harassment/discrimination in placement

Preamble

The Faculty of Social Work is committed to the creation of a safe environment where students can be protected from harassment and discrimination. Wilfrid Laurier University has developed an extensive formal policy and procedure for the [Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination](#) (6.1). This document, as well as the accompanying [Procedures Relating to the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination](#), fully outline the philosophy, principles and procedures related to issues of harassment and discrimination as they affect the Wilfrid Laurier community. The Faculty of Social Work fully supports, and is bound by, this document. The faculty has utilized it as a framework to design specific procedures that MSW students can follow if an incident of harassment and/or discrimination occurs during their placement in a community agency. The University policy cannot legally bind its placement agencies to its harassment/discrimination policy. However, the signed agreement between a placement agency and the Faculty of Social Work indicates a mutual consent to blend the harassment/discrimination policies of both organizations as is deemed appropriate. This will thereby ensure the most positive outcome for all parties concerned as regards to an alleged incident of harassment and/or discrimination.

Procedures

- a. The student is encouraged to discuss the experience with individuals from her/his personal support network as well as other potentially helpful individuals within the university or professional community, including the WLU Harassment/Discrimination coordinator. Note: At any point in the process described in this procedure, the student may be accompanied by a trusted individual.
- b. The student is encouraged to document the experience immediately. Documentation may include such information as the date(s) and place(s) the incident(s) occurred, a description of the actual harassment experience(s), any earlier related incidents, discussions, observations made by others, etc. and the personal impact of the experience.
- c. At this initial thinking-through period, the student is encouraged to consult with her/his field advisor, the MSW field coordinator, the harassment/discrimination coordinator of the university and/or others to review her/his options. During this time the student will make the decision regarding what action to take. She/he, with consultation, will need to decide to continue or terminate the placement temporarily or permanently. A decision to terminate the placement may be made initially or at any point throughout the complaint process. Whatever decisions the student makes will be fully supported by the Faculty of Social Work. Should the decision be made to terminate the placement, the student will be placed in a new setting as soon as possible.

- d. Should the student decide to proceed with a complaint of harassment and/or discrimination, the following process will occur (Note: At any stage, the student has the right to proceed with, or withdraw, the complaint. Should she/he decide to withdraw the complaint, the situation will be resolved as deemed appropriate by the Faculty of Social Work and the teaching centre.)
- e. The student will provide a written description of the incident(s) to the MSW field coordinator. The coordinator will forward this statement to the FSW Dean and the field advisor.
- f. The Dean or designate will initiate contact with the executive coordinator or administrator of the teaching centre to inform her/him of the incident(s), engage her/him in the resolution process and forward her/him a copy of the student's statement. It will be the responsibility of the executive coordinator or administrator of the teaching centre to inform the individual accused of harassment and/or discrimination of the allegations against her/him.
- g. Involving the Dean, student, field coordinator, faculty advisor, teaching centre representative, and possibly the WLU Harassment/Discrimination coordinator, a plan of action will be developed. Others will be included in the planning process as deemed appropriate by all parties.
- h. This plan, with modifications as needed, will be implemented with all parties working collaboratively to facilitate a satisfactory solution. During the course of proceedings, both victim and accused will be ensured due process.
- i. At any point in the process the student may decide to pursue her/his complaint through the Human Rights Commission, the Ontario College of Certified Social Workers and/or the courts.

Addendum

Should it be alleged that the MSW student in placement is the perpetrator of harassment and/or discrimination, the placement agency may implement the Wilfrid Laurier University [Procedures Relating to the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination](#), in conjunction with its own policy as is deemed appropriate.

Procedures for an administrative review of a field instructor or setting

If identified problems primarily concern the agency's alleged inability to provide a suitable learning experience the matter is called to the attention of the MSW field coordinator by the agency administrator, the field instructor, the field advisor or the student. The MSW field coordinator ensures that the field instructor, field advisor and the student are closely involved in evaluating the situation, or in working out alternative plans. Among the options available would be the following:

- a. With respect to the student's learning needs, the coordinator confirms that the setting and field instructor can adequately meet the student's needs and the student is asked to continue placement.
- b. The coordinator may conclude that an alternative teaching-learning experience in the same setting is needed. This could mean transferring the student to a different department or unit of the agency and/or a change in field instructor, if possible.
- c. The coordinator may decide that the student should be relocated in a new field agency. This solution could be considered only within the first four weeks of placement and would be used only in very exceptional situations considering the availability of placements.

If option (b) or (c) above is selected, the field instructor submits a written report to the Dean. With the approval of the Dean, the MSW field coordinator then proceeds to the implementation of the selected option.

Ending the Placement

Placement dissolution procedure

In the event that the [Field Resolution Procedure](#) does not result in an adequate solution, and/or there is a consensus concerning the student's lack of progress, the field course may be discontinued at the discretion of the field instructor, the MSW field education coordinator, or the agency. This results in a failing grade for the student's field course. Considering that field education is a required course, a student may not opt out of the placement [without approval](#) from the field office. Students who choose not to attend the required field course are expected to repeat the course in order to fulfill graduation requirements. If a placement is discontinued for any reason, the placement course may be repeated once.

Implications on the student's field course, program sequence, and next steps are determined considering the field course instructor's feedback and outcome of the evaluation. Each case is assessed individually to determine whether the student will benefit from a delayed placement, a break in their term, or starting a placement at the next placement cycle (January, May, or September). This process requires the student to complete an individualized **Readiness for Practice Workplan** that is developed by the MSW Field Education Office. Registration in the field course is contingent upon completion of the recommendations outlined by the Field Education Office. Placement interviews are not set up immediately.

Placement discontinued due to concerns or failed evaluation

If the placement is discontinued when the student is not meeting expectations (e.g. learning, professional, ethical or behavioural concerns) considering any of these circumstances: prior to mid-term evaluation, an unsatisfactory mid-term evaluation, at any point after the unsatisfactory mid-term is submitted, or the student receives an unsatisfactory grade at the final evaluation, the following procedures take place whenever possible:

- The Field Advisor & Coordinator facilitates an exit meeting with the instructor, student and appropriate agency members to discuss reasons for ending the placement, or requests feedback from all parties to clearly identify the reasons for ending the placement. The instructor provides feedback to the student and coordinator identifying the areas of growth expected from the student.
- The student and coordinator meet to address the feedback provided, and discuss the learning opportunities this has created for the student.
- Following this meeting, the coordinator will initiate a [grade assessment](#) process and determine appropriate recommendations including the conditions required for completing a new placement course and required placement hours. Possible next steps may include:
 - Student must seek appropriate supports prior to being placed again. Placement cycle contingent on receipt of this assistance.
 - Student must complete a **Readiness for Practice Workplan** prior to being considered for a placement interview.
 - Student must complete learning assignment/identified training prior to being considered for a placement interview.
 - Student may be encouraged to consider a leave of absence from the program to attend to personal issues.
- Upon completion of the recommendations outlined by the field coordinator, the student will need to repeat the field course, including all placement hours. **Placement hours or assignments completed do not carry over** to the new placement setting. The student may be placed at the next available field placement cycle if appropriate. Placement cycle is determined considering completion of readiness plan, and placement cycles (January, May, or September).

If in the field coordinator's opinion, after consultation with the field office, there has been a breach in the Professional Conduct Policy, or the student is failing to meet the requirements of the faculty, a formal Review will take place in accordance with the Faculty of Social Work Procedure for the [Review of Student's Professional Behaviour](#). Students will be advised that their behaviour is under review as per the policy. This is a formal review process, which may result in removal from the program. Student may be required to withdraw from the program (a student may apply for re-admission at a later date, and after demonstration of sufficient progress in relation to the student's former difficulty, be considered in accordance with regular admissions procedures).

Implications on field course grade

- If a placement is discontinued prior to the receipt of the mid-term evaluation, a grade is not assigned **only if** the student drops the field education course prior to the deadline for dropping courses. This course will not appear on a final transcript. If the student does not drop the course, and the course requirements have not been completed as a result of a discontinued placement, a Unsatisfactory (F) grade, must be assigned.
- If the progress evaluation, mid-term or final evaluation is graded Unsatisfactory, as per the [grading procedures](#):
 - The student receives a fail grade (F) towards the field course and repeats the course based on the recommendations of the field coordinator and MSW Associate Dean to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The student may appeal the grade. The student will remain under academic probation until the course is successfully repeated.
 - The fail grade (F) will be part of the student's official transcript.
 - If the course is repeated, a "Repeated Later" notation will be seen on the official transcript and the repeated course will be subject to the course grading procedures. The student has the right to petition the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to have a grade removed as a historical record change prior to convocation.

Placement discontinued when student is progressing successfully

In the event the placement is discontinued when: the student is progressing successfully, a successful evaluation was submitted, and due to unexpected agency/instructor reasons (e.g. strike, instructor moves to a new role, apparent safety concern, extenuating medical circumstance), the field committee will determine whether a portion of the completed placement hours may possibly carry over to a subsequent placement at the same agency or a new agency. The committee makes this determination by assessing various factors including: the FSW and CASWE's required hours for the MSW designation, FSW standards for field learning, the placement status, mid-term evaluation, evidence for the application of learning, and considering the field instructor's feedback.

Considering the time required for orientation to a new agency setting, the FSW and CASWE's required field standards and hours, and other factors, a portion of placement hours could possibly carry over if the student is beginning a new placement at a new setting.

In absence of these circumstances, if a placement is discontinued, placement hours do not carry over.

Request to decline or withdraw from a placement

The Field Education Office is aware that from time to time exceptional situations occur where a student wishes to decline a placement. Field courses are required courses. Accordingly, any student who wishes to decline the placement after a match has been made is required to submit the [Petition to Decline Placement](#)

to the MSW field education coordinator. All students who wish to decline a placement are encouraged to contact the MSW field education coordinator to assess whether a Petition and supporting documentation are required.

Students who have extenuating circumstances as defined in the Petition, may not be required to submit a Petition; however, supporting document may be required. Extenuating circumstances include accommodation plans from the Accessible Learning Centre, bereavement, serious personal difficulties, and changes in life circumstances that hinder placement attendance. Within five business days of submitting a petition, the student will receive an email response indicating when a final decision is expected to be made.

Petitions submitted may result in one of the following possible outcomes.

- Based on the student's feedback and/or the agency's feedback and/or a field visit, if it is determined the placement opportunity is not suitable for a MSW student considering the student's MSW program and field placement course (foundational or advanced year):
 - The student is matched with an agency for an interview as soon as a suitable placement is available at the next placement cycle (January, May, or September).
- Based on the student's feedback and/or the agency's feedback and/or a field visit, if it is determined that the placement opportunity is suitable for a MSW student considering the student's MSW program and field placement (foundational or advanced):
 - The student's request is denied or
 - The student's request may be considered if a placement opportunity is available, within the appropriate placement cycle (January, May or September).

This procedure is built in place for the benefit of all students and the ability of the faculty to continue relationships with partnering agencies. Declining a placement after a match has been made is a very challenging request to consider. It impacts the relationships the faculty has with agencies, the consideration of future MSW placements for Laurier students, availability of placements, etc. These are all very important factors considering that placements are sought after by students from various universities, and the agency conducts interviews to determine appropriate candidates for its placement setting. As a result, the Field Education Office takes the time to communicate field expectations prior to the beginning of the program via the [Field Placement Agreement](#), and when students start the program via field webinars, emails, and MSW Field Education manual.

Appendices

A. Faculty of Social Work MSW curriculum and course content

The Faculty of Social Work has designed the MSW part-time curriculum to provide a wholly integrated foundational year that grounds all students entering the program without a BSW in essential and interconnected social work practice areas. Students entering the program with a BSW complete the advanced year of study only.

The curriculum emphasizes the development of critically reflexive practice skills through the ongoing integration of knowledge, theory and practice within a framework that promotes the advancement of equity, inclusivity, reflexivity and social justice. It is our anticipation that graduates of our program will walk alongside those with whom they work, in collaborative, inclusive, reflexive and caring ways and that they will stand up for what they believe is just.

Regular Track, Full-time MSW Program

SK501: Approaches to Community Organizing and Group Practices

This course provides an introduction to concepts, theories and methods associated with social work practice in communities locally, nationally and internationally. The scholarship on feminist community organizing, group processes, health promotion, advocacy, civic-engagement, grassroots organizing, capacity building, community economic development, international development and social movements inform the theoretical foundations for this course. Working with marginalized populations is an essential component of the course which hopes to promote systematic and reflexive thinking about specific determining factors influencing the lives of marginalized individuals globally and our roles as social work practitioners to be aware of factors such as power, privilege and our capacity to transform these factors.

SK504: Research 1

This course will offer a broad sampling of research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) and an introduction to concepts of data analysis. The aim is that students acquire knowledge and skills for conducting social work research and evaluating professional practices as well as in becoming critical consumers of research. The course also explores how decolonizing, anti-oppression and social justice perspectives can operate in current research approaches to strengthen the research enterprise. An important component of this course is the critical examination of the ethical aspects and issues of the research process. An applied research project offers students the opportunity to integrate the course content with their practicum.

SK507: Social Justice and Transformative Social Work Practices

Transformative social work practice is understood to encompass critical reflexivity and action that aims to disrupt current social inequalities and manifestations of power inherent in the delivery of social services and community work. The fluid concept of social justice will be deconstructed and explored through a variety of theoretical lenses including, but not limited to Indigenous, anti-racist, feminist, queer, disability and transnational perspectives. Theories of progressive social change practices will be explored in order to lead the student to think about concepts such as colonialism, intersectionality, power and resistance within social work practices. Students will also be encouraged to engage in reflexivity with regards to their own experiences of intersecting identities and how they are situated within relations of power.

SK522: Social Work Practice with Individuals

In this course students learn the basic tenets and skills of a range of theories applicable to practice with individuals. The course emphasizes an experiential approach to teaching and practicing skills. The main elements of the course are: the processes and stages involved in social work practice with individuals; an introduction to the importance of reflexivity and self-awareness in the co-construction of the social work relationship; ethics; skills of interviewing, holistic assessment, and developing a complex understanding of the service user within an ecological systems context; and issues important in working with diverse and marginalized populations, including a trauma-informed perspective and indigenous worldviews.

SK541: Foundational Field Education Course

The Foundational Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 450 placement hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their foundational field education placement. This may require up to 2 terms or more of registration.

SK545: Introduction to Ethical Thought and Reflexive Practices

This course is designed to expose participants to ethics and reflexivity as they intersect and are performed in social work practice. Professional and relational ethics, ethical decision-making models and the intersections between the law and professional ethics are reviewed and scrutinized from a critical perspective. Self-awareness as an aspect of reflexivity and as it relates to ethics and values in our working relationships, is considered throughout. Contemporary workplace examples are used to ground theory and reflexivity to practice. Such reflexive practices are rooted and framed by our epistemological foundations – or the ways in which we understand the nature of knowledge and its creation. Thus, a consideration of how we know and how such knowing is socially and culturally constructed will support our considerations of ethics and reflexivity.

SK536: Integrating Theory and Practice

This experientially oriented course aims to support students in connecting and applying foundational social work theory to practice and practicum settings. It is offered over the same time period as the practicum. The course provides an opportunity for students to understand the interconnections between research, theory and practice within the context of their own practice including the role of the mind, body, emotions and spirit. It will provide a space for students to grapple with dilemmas arising in placement through the medium of hands-on exercises and simulations.

SK665: Relational Accountability: Transforming Social Work with Indigenous Peoples

This course provides students with the conceptual tools and knowledge for understanding the nature of First Nations historical/structural problems; the role and operation of social services in Indigenous contexts; alternative (culture based and healing focused) methods of intervention; and present day Indigenous concerns and issues including concepts of Indigenous title.

SK649: Advanced Field Education Course

The Advanced Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 500 placement hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete

additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their field education placement. This may require up to 2 terms or more of registration.

SK615: Research 2

Consistent with the social work goal of contributing to social justice and social change, this course aims to expand students' research knowledge and skills. Students will acquire and develop skills in qualitative and quantitative data analysis. This course offers students extended practice and knowledge on a sample of research methods that are designed to expose and transform social arrangements that perpetuate inequalities and marginalization. Emphasis will be placed on how to work in collaborative and participatory ways to generate and analyze qualitative and quantitative data, integrate analyses in mixed methods research, evaluate social work programs, and mobilize knowledge in ways that are respectful.

Students select one of SK621 or SK508

SK621: Reflexive Practices

The emphasis of this course is on the use of self as it relates to the direct practice experience of the student. The overall objective is to enhance self-awareness and interpersonal skills that are related to the conscious use of self in social work practice. A focus on self-reflective awareness will include an examination of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that arise in practice interactions, including how these are influenced by personal history, social location and attitudes toward issues of diversity and difference (e.g., race/ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, class, sexual orientation and disability). (Graded as Pass/Fail.)

SK508: Reflective Group and Community Practice

This course focuses on five broad areas of learning: (1) theory of small group development and functioning; (2) principles and methods of adult empowerment, as well as member/leadership development; (3) the use of self in groups/meetings and various community practice settings; (4) understanding the implications of the social location of professional helpers and various populations using social services and other relevant groupings; and (5) the appropriate use of discussion, decision-making and problem-solving procedures in groups/meetings. Particular consideration is given to adapting our ways of working for different types of participants, including various disadvantaged and marginalized populations.

Students select one of SK651 or SK690

SK651: Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals

This course builds on SK522 by taking a more in-depth look at the integration of theory and practice in clinical work with a variety of client presenting problems. It includes an overview of major classes of psychiatric diagnoses and a critical look at the value of such diagnostic categories considering race, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation and so forth. The strengths and weaknesses of various theoretical approaches to intervening with specific client problems and populations are reviewed.

SK690: Social Inequality, Poverty and Income Support: A comparative perspective

This course focuses on the nature of inequality in the context of Canada and Canadian public policy. Recent theories tie social inequality in its various forms to social exclusion and to citizen disengagement. Social work roles in shaping policy, in social planning and in community development are considered in responding to these divisive social issues. The nature and types of inequality and why it arises are all explored. Poverty is associated with many of the social problems that affect social work clients. This course examines theories about poverty and considers the ways that it might be addressed. Why, in Canada are the poor often racialized, women, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, and First Nations? We will discuss the current ideas about poverty alleviation including a living wage, welfare and a guaranteed annual income.

Comparative policy research, theories and practices will be addressed including how to understand and resolve these issues. Comparative policy analysis will examine different policies within Indigenous nations, Canada, the United States and other industrial countries including European countries. These approaches will be contrasted to the situation and approaches used in the global south. A major focus of the course will be upon what is working and for whom.

Two Advanced Electives

Available electives change on an annual basis.

Advanced Standing, Full-time MSW

SK504: Research 1

This course will offer a broad sampling of research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) and an introduction to concepts of data analysis. The aim is that students acquire knowledge and skills for conducting social work research and evaluating professional practices as well as in becoming critical consumers of research. The course also explores how decolonizing, anti-oppression and social justice perspectives can operate in current research approaches to strengthen the research enterprise. An important component of this course is the critical examination of the ethical aspects and issues of the research process. An applied research project offers students the opportunity to integrate the course content with their practicum.

Students select one of SK621 or SK508

SK621: Reflexive Practices

The emphasis of this course is on the use of self as it relates to the direct practice experience of the student. The overall objective is to enhance self-awareness and interpersonal skills that are related to the conscious use of self in social work practice. A focus on self-reflective awareness will include an examination of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that arise in practice interactions, including how these are influenced by personal history, social location and attitudes toward issues of diversity and difference (e.g., race/ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, class, sexual orientation and disability). (Graded as Pass/Fail.)

SK508: Reflective Group and Community Practice

This course focuses on five broad areas of learning: (1) theory of small group development and functioning; (2) principles and methods of adult empowerment, as well as member/leadership development; (3) the use of self in groups/meetings and various community practice settings; (4) understanding the implications of the social location of professional helpers and various populations using social services and other relevant groupings; and (5) the appropriate use of discussion, decision-making and problem-solving procedures in groups/meetings. Particular consideration is given to adapting our ways of working for different types of participants, including various disadvantaged and marginalized populations.

Students select one of SK651 or SK690

SK651: Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals

This course builds on SK522 by taking a more in-depth look at the integration of theory and practice in clinical work with a variety of client presenting problems. It includes an overview of major classes of psychiatric diagnoses and a critical look at the value of such diagnostic categories considering race, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation and so forth. The strengths and weaknesses of various theoretical approaches to intervening with specific client problems and populations are reviewed.

SK690: Social Inequality, Poverty and Income Support: A comparative perspective

This course focuses on the nature of inequality in the context of Canada and Canadian public policy. Recent theories tie social inequality in its various forms to social exclusion and to citizen disengagement. Social work roles in shaping policy, in social planning and in community development are considered in responding to these divisive social issues. The nature and types of inequality and why it arises are all explored. Poverty is associated with many of the social problems that affect social work clients. This course examines theories about poverty and considers the ways that it might be addressed. Why, in Canada are the poor often racialized, women, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, and First Nations? We will discuss the current ideas about poverty alleviation including a living wage, welfare and a guaranteed annual income. Comparative policy research, theories and practices will be addressed including how to understand and resolve these issues. Comparative policy analysis will examine different policies within Indigenous nations, Canada, the United States and other industrial countries including European countries. These approaches will be contrasted to the situation and approaches used in the global south. A major focus of the course will be upon what is working and for whom.

SK649: Advanced Field Education Course

The Advanced Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 500 placement hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their field education placement. This may require up to 2 terms or more of registration.

SK615: Research 2

Consistent with the social work goal of contributing to social justice and social change, this course aims to expand students' research knowledge and skills. Students will acquire and develop skills in qualitative and quantitative data analysis. This course offers students extended practice and knowledge on a sample of research methods that are designed to expose and transform social arrangements that perpetuate inequalities and marginalization. Emphasis will be placed on how to work in collaborative and participatory ways to generate and analyze qualitative and quantitative data, integrate analyses in mixed methods research, evaluate social work programs, and mobilize knowledge in ways that are respectful.

Four Advanced Electives

Available electives change on an annual basis. Previous electives included the following courses:

- Community Capacity Building
- Marital and Couple Counselling
- Social Work Practice with Survivors of Trauma
- Brief Therapies
- Addictions: Assessment and Treatment
- Death, Dying and Bereavement
- Advanced Social Work Practice with Families
- Treatment of Children and Adolescents
- Social Work Practice with Older Adults
- Human Rights in a Globalizing World
- Poverty in Canada and its Implications for Social Work
- Alternative Social Work Interventions
- Health and Mental Health

- Crisis Intervention
- Entrepreneurship for Social Workers
- Counseling in Today's Digital World

The Faculty of Social Work has designed the MSW curriculum to provide a wholly integrated foundational year that grounds all students entering the program without a BSW in essential and interconnected social work practice areas. During the advanced year, program design allows for optimal flexibility and allows the student to focus on preferences toward micro and/or macro practices. **Students entering the program with a BSW complete the advanced courses only with slight modifications to their research courses.**

The curriculum emphasizes the development of critically reflexive practice skills through the ongoing integration of knowledge, theory and practice within a framework that promotes the advancement of equity, inclusivity, reflexivity and social justice. It is our anticipation that graduates of our program will walk alongside those with whom they work, in collaborative, inclusive, reflexive and caring ways and that they will stand up for what they believe is just.

Online, Part-time Regular Track Program

SK501: Approaches to Community Organizing and Group Practices

This course provides an introduction to concepts, theories and methods associated with social work practice in communities locally, nationally and internationally. The scholarship on feminist community organizing, group processes, health promotion, advocacy, civic-engagement, grassroots organizing, capacity building, community economic development, international development and social movements inform the theoretical foundations for this course. Working with marginalized populations is an essential component of the course which hopes to promote systematic and reflexive thinking about specific determining factors influencing the lives of marginalized individuals globally and our roles as social work practitioners to be aware of factors such as power, privilege and our capacity to transform these factors.

SK504: Research 1

This course will offer a broad sampling of research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) and an introduction to concepts of data analysis. The aim is that students acquire knowledge and skills for conducting social work research and evaluating professional practices as well as in becoming critical consumers of research. The course also explores how decolonizing, anti-oppression and social justice perspectives can operate in current research approaches to strengthen the research enterprise. An important component of this course is the critical examination of the ethical aspects and issues of the research process. An applied research project offers students the opportunity to integrate the course content with their practicum.

SK507: Social Justice and Transformative Social Work Practices

Transformative social work practice is understood to encompass critical reflexivity and action that aims to disrupt current social inequalities and manifestations of power inherent in the delivery of social services and community work. The fluid concept of social justice will be deconstructed and explored through a variety of theoretical lenses including, but not limited to Indigenous, anti-racist, feminist, queer, disability and transnational perspectives. Theories of progressive social change practices will be explored in order to lead the student to think about concepts such as colonialism, intersectionality, power and resistance within social work practices. Students will also be encouraged to engage in reflexivity with regards to their own experiences of intersecting identities and how they are situated within relations of power.

SK522: Social Work Practice with Individuals

In this course students learn the basic tenets and skills of a range of theories applicable to practice with individuals. The course emphasizes an experiential approach to teaching and practicing skills. The main elements of the course are: the processes and stages involved in social work practice with individuals; an introduction to the importance of reflexivity and self-awareness in the co-construction of the social work relationship; ethics; skills of interviewing, holistic assessment, and developing a complex understanding of the service user within an ecological systems context; and issues important in working with diverse and marginalized populations, including a trauma-informed perspective and indigenous worldviews.

SK536: Integrating Theory and Practice (two-term course)

This experientially oriented course aims to support students in connecting and applying foundational social work theory to practice and practicum settings. It is offered over the same time period as the practicum. The course provides an opportunity for students to understand the interconnections between research, theory and practice within the context of their own practice including the role of the mind, body, emotions and spirit. It will provide a space for students to grapple with dilemmas arising in placement through the medium of hands-on exercises and simulations.

SK545: Introduction to Ethical Thought and Reflexive Practices

This course is designed to expose participants to ethics and reflexivity as they intersect and are performed in social work practice. Professional and relational ethics, ethical decision-making models and the intersections between the law and professional ethics are reviewed and scrutinized from a critical perspective. Self-awareness as an aspect of reflexivity and as it relates to ethics and values in our working relationships, is considered throughout. Contemporary workplace examples are used to ground theory and reflexivity to practice. Such reflexive practices are rooted and framed by our epistemological foundations – or the ways in which we understand the nature of knowledge and its creation. Thus, a consideration of how we know and how such knowing is socially and culturally constructed will support our considerations of ethics and reflexivity.

Students select one of SK552 or SK509**SK552: Social Work Practice with Families**

This course provides a critical study of widely used approaches to practice with diverse family forms within social work settings. Emphasis will be placed on influential theories that impact and guide the methods used in the practice of family social work.

SK509: Social Work Practice with Groups

This course provides an introduction to clinical group work. The history and evolution of social group work is reviewed. Emphasis is placed on the application of basic knowledge and skills to clinical group work. This includes consideration of stages of group development and other group dynamics, therapeutic factors in groups and generic group work skills. An introduction to the application of various clinical theories to group work is also provided.

SK600: Part-time Regular Track Field Education Course

The Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 950 placement hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their field education placement. This may require up to 4 terms or more of registration.

SK615: Research 2

Consistent with the social work goal of contributing to social justice and social change, this course aims to expand students' research knowledge and skills. Students will acquire and develop skills in qualitative and quantitative data analysis. This course offers students extended practice and knowledge on a sample of research methods that are designed to expose and transform social arrangements that perpetuate inequalities and marginalization. Emphasis will be placed on how to work in collaborative and participatory ways to generate and analyze qualitative and quantitative data, integrate analyses in mixed methods research, evaluate social work programs, and mobilize knowledge in ways that are respectful.

SK621: Reflexive Practices

The emphasis of this course is on the use of self as it relates to the direct practice experience of the student. The overall objective is to enhance self-awareness and interpersonal skills that are related to the conscious use of self in social work practice. A focus on self-reflective awareness will include an examination of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that arise in practice interactions, including how these are influenced by personal history, social location and attitudes toward issues of diversity and difference (e.g., race/ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, class, sexual orientation and disability). (Graded as Pass/Fail.)

SK641: Critical Social Policy and Activism

This course provides a critical overview of the historic processes of marginalization and resistance in social policy development in Canada, starting with First Nations since colonization up until the present. It outlines the roots of social welfare and the role of neoliberalism, globalization, state restructuring, social inclusion/exclusion, citizenship and the impact of policy on social identity. Policy development will be examined in relation to colonization, capitalism, racism, sexism, ableism, ageism and homophobia. Practical skills will be taught in relation to activism, advocacy and collaboration in order to critique social policies and bring about social policy change.

SK651: Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals

This course builds on SK522 by taking a more in-depth look at the integration of theory and practice in clinical work with a variety of client presenting problems. It includes an overview of major classes of psychiatric diagnoses and a critical look at the value of such diagnostic categories considering race, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation and so forth. The strengths and weaknesses of various theoretical approaches to intervening with specific client problems and populations are reviewed.

SK665: Relational Accountability: Transforming Social Work with Indigenous Peoples

This course provides students with the conceptual tools and knowledge for understanding the nature of First Nations historical/structural problems; the role and operation of social services in Indigenous contexts; alternative (culture based and healing focused) methods of intervention; and present day Indigenous concerns and issues including concepts of Indigenous title.

Two Advanced Electives

Available electives change on a term basis. Previous electives included the following courses:

- SK509: Social Work Practice with Groups
- SK605: Leadership in Social Work Organizations
- SK619: Landscapes of Power, Violence and Resilience: Exploring Gender and Systems of Oppression
- SK656: Death, Dying & Bereavement

- SK668: Social Work Practice with Survivors of Trauma
- SK690: Social Inequality, Poverty and Income Support: A Comparative Perspective
- SK693: Crisis Intervention

Online, Part-time Advanced Standing Program

SK504: Research 1

This course will offer a broad sampling of research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) and an introduction to concepts of data analysis. The aim is that students acquire knowledge and skills for conducting social work research and evaluating professional practices as well as in becoming critical consumers of research. The course also explores how decolonizing, anti-oppression and social justice perspectives can operate in current research approaches to strengthen the research enterprise. An important component of this course is the critical examination of the ethical aspects and issues of the research process. An applied research project offers students the opportunity to integrate the course content with their practicum.

SK615: Research 2

Consistent with the social work goal of contributing to social justice and social change, this course aims to expand students' research knowledge and skills. Students will acquire and develop skills in qualitative and quantitative data analysis. This course offers students extended practice and knowledge on a sample of research methods that are designed to expose and transform social arrangements that perpetuate inequalities and marginalization. Emphasis will be placed on how to work in collaborative and participatory ways to generate and analyze qualitative and quantitative data, integrate analyses in mixed methods research, evaluate social work programs, and mobilize knowledge in ways that are respectful.

SK621: Reflexive Practices

The emphasis of this course is on the use of self as it relates to the direct practice experience of the student. The overall objective is to enhance self-awareness and interpersonal skills that are related to the conscious use of self in social work practice. A focus on self-reflective awareness will include an examination of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that arise in practice interactions, including how these are influenced by personal history, social location and attitudes toward issues of diversity and difference (e.g., race/ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, class, sexual orientation and disability). (Graded as Pass/Fail.)

SK649: Advanced Field Education Course

The Advanced Field Education course is a supervised field experience designed to develop competence pertinent to social work practice. As part of the requirements of the field course, students participate in activities facilitated by the MSW field education office. At minimum, students complete 500 placement hours within pre-approved start and end dates. In some instances, students will be required to complete additional placement hours in order to be adequately assessed by the field instructor and field coordinator. Graded on a S/F basis.

Note: Students will register in this course each term they are actively engaged in their field education placement. This may require up to 2 terms or more of registration.

SK651: Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals

This course builds on SK522 by taking a more in-depth look at the integration of theory and practice in clinical work with a variety of client presenting problems. It includes an overview of major classes of psychiatric diagnoses and a critical look at the value of such diagnostic categories considering race, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation and so forth. The strengths and weaknesses of various theoretical approaches to intervening with specific client problems and populations are reviewed.

Four Advanced Electives

Available electives change on a term basis. Previous electives included the following courses:

- SK619: Landscapes of Power, Violence and Resilience: Exploring Gender and Systems of Oppression
- SK641: Critical Social Policy and Activism
- SK656: Death, Dying & Bereavement
- SK665: Relational Accountability: Transforming Social Work with Indigenous Peoples
- SK668: Social Work Practice with Survivors of Trauma
- SK690: Social Inequality, Poverty and Income Support: A Comparative Perspective
- SK693: Crisis Intervention

B. Learning plan & evaluation

*This is a sample of the Learning plan & Evaluation. The content below is built into Navigator, which is where the various sections of the document are completed. Please refer to Navigator for the latest version of the learning plan for all programs.

MSW LEARNING PLAN & EVALUATION

Student's Name:	
Placement level:	<input type="checkbox"/> Foundational (450 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced (500 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Track – Part-time (950 hours)
Placement start & end dates:	
Agency & Department:	
Field Instructor(s):	
Field Instructor's email:	
Field Advisor:	

INSTRUCTORS: please complete this section when submitting the Midterm Evaluation	
Midterm evaluation outcome:	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory
Placement hours completed by student to date:	
Date of submission:	

INSTRUCTORS: please complete this section when submitting the Final Evaluation	
Final evaluation outcome:	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory
Placement hours completed by student to date:	
Date of submission:	

INSTRUCTIONS

The learning plan, evaluations, and placement hours are tracked and submitted via [Navigator](#).

Learning Plan:

- Completed by the student in consultation with the instructor within the first four weeks of placement.

Midterm & Final Evaluation:

- Students complete their portion of the evaluation and submit it to the instructor at least one week prior to the due date.
- Instructors complete their portion of the evaluation, review and provide feedback to student.
- **Instructor to submit completed evaluation and approve the tracked hours on Navigator**

A. LEARNING PLAN

Students are evaluated according to their learning plan as well as their performance in placement. The learning plan is a working document. The plan allows the student to identify specific, concrete goals they would like to achieve as well as identify how they will work towards their learning goals for each of the nine essential social work practice areas. **For explanation and examples of the social work practice areas, please review the MSW Field Education Manual.**

Briefly describe your overall work/learning plan. For example: community based projects and activities, nature and type of individual work, case management activity, service coordination, referral and linkages, group/team/committee work, best practice research, program development, research, social administration, and other social work roles and functions as they pertain to your learning opportunities:

--

Social Work Practice Areas	What do you aim to achieve for each social work practice area?	What activities, models or strategies will you undertake to achieve your goals?
1. Practicing from a social work knowledge base		
2. Developing a professional self in terms of values, ethics, practices		
3. Developing and maintaining social work relationships		
4. Assessing		
5. Planning		
6. Implementing strategies, methods, and practices		
7. Documenting		
8. Evaluating		
9. Closure: completing the work		
10. Other		

B. MIDTERM EVALUATION

OBSERVATIONS

INSTRUCTORS: The FSW requires the instructor to observe the student's progress as directly as possible. Please note that self-report and discussion, while valuable, are not on their own sufficient measures for education.

Observations	Yes	No
Direct observation		
Case/project review		
Documentation (assessments, proposals, case notes, reports)		
Interdisciplinary team contribution		
Documented use of community resources		
Shadowing		
Feedback received from colleagues in the organization		
Presentations in the community		
Other (specify):		

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

STUDENTS: Provide a brief description of overall activities which have been started and/or completed to date.

Overview of activities at Midterm:

EVALUATION OF LEARNING

STUDENTS: Complete status of activities undertaken in placement. Indicate progress in each of the nine areas by outlining the goals/outcomes/outputs you have achieved.

INSTRUCTORS: Review status of activities with student. Please check (X) in the appropriate box on the continuum that best reflects student's performance.

Social Work Practice Areas	Progress at Midterm: Status of Activities Completed by Student	Instructor: Check (X) in the appropriate box				
		Unsatisfactory	Limited	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
1. Practicing from a social work knowledge base						
2. Developing a professional self in terms of values, ethics, practices						
3. Developing and maintaining social work relationships						
4. Assessing						
5. Planning						
6. Implementing strategies, methods, and practices						
7. Documenting						
8. Evaluating						
9. Closure: completing the work						
10. Other						

OFFICIAL MIDTERM GRADE:	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory
--------------------------------	--

OVERALL COMMENTS at MIDTERM:

<p>STUDENT's overall feedback at Midterm: Comment and reflect on your learning goals, as well as your overall learning process and growth. Include any new areas of focus to achieve the learning goals as you progress in the placement.</p>

INSTRUCTOR's overall feedback at Midterm:
Comments, concerns, and recommendations with a focus on continued learning.

C. FINAL EVALUATION

OBSERVATIONS

INSTRUCTORS: The FSW requires the instructor to observe the student's progress as directly as possible. Please note that self-report and discussion, while valuable, are not on their own sufficient measures for education.

Observations	Yes	No
Direct observation		
Case/project review		
Documentation (assessments, proposals, case notes, reports)		
Interdisciplinary team contribution		
Documented use of community resources		
Shadowing		
Feedback received from colleagues in the organization		
Presentations in the community		
Other (specify):		

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

STUDENTS: Provide a brief description of overall activities which have been started and/or completed to date. Please include any new additions to the learning plan.

Overview of activities since Midterm:

EVALUATION OF LEARNING

STUDENTS: Complete status of activities undertaken in placement. Indicate progress in each of the nine areas by outlining the goals/outcomes/outputs you have achieved.

INSTRUCTORS: Review status of activities with student. Please check (X) in the appropriate box on the continuum that best reflects student’s performance.

Social Work Practice Areas	Progress at Final: Status of Activities Completed by Student	Instructor: Check (X) in the appropriate box				
		Unsatisfactory	Limited	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
1. Practicing from a social work knowledge base						
2. Developing a professional self in terms of values, ethics, practices						
3. Developing and maintaining social work relationships						
4. Assessing						
5. Planning						
6. Implementing strategies, methods, and practices						
7. Documenting						
8. Evaluating						
9. Closure: completing the work						
10. Other						
		OFFICIAL FINAL GRADE:		<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory		

OVERALL COMMENTS at FINAL:

STUDENT's overall feedback at Final: Comment and reflect on your learning goals, as well as your overall learning process and growth. Include any new areas of focus to achieve the learning goals as you progress in the placement.
INSTRUCTOR's overall feedback at Final: Comments, concerns, and recommendations with a focus on continued learning.

FINAL REVIEWED BY:

Student's Name/Signature*

Instructor's Name/Signature*

Secondary Instructor's Name/Signature*
(if applicable)

*Signature is only required if the Field Instructor is not submitting the evaluation electronically.

C. Faculty of Social Work Procedures for the Review of Students' Professional Behaviour

Preamble

The procedures outlined in this document for the review of students' professional behaviour are meant to address the following accreditation standards of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE; Standards for Accreditation, August, 2014):

- SB/M 2.4.4 The academic unit has a policy requiring that the performance of professional responsibilities of social work students be in accordance with the relevant social work codes of ethics.
- SB/M 2.4.5 The academic unit has a policy regarding the professional suitability of the student for the profession of social work. Students are made aware that serious or repeated violations of the Code of Ethics put them at risk of exclusion from the program on the basis of professional unsuitability

Students will be advised through the course calendar, program marketing materials and during their first week of classes that they are expected to adhere to professional Codes of Ethics (Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers [OCSWSSW] and the Canadian Association [CASW] Code of Ethics) (collectively, the "Codes of Ethics").

This behavioural expectation applies to:

- 1) Conduct that occurs on the premises of the University/Faculty or its affiliated or federal colleges;
- 2) Conduct that occurs at a University/Faculty sanctioned program, event, activity, whether the program, event or activity is on or off-campus;
- 3) Conduct that occurs off-campus,
 - i) When the individual is acting as a designated representative of the University/Faculty or a student organization affiliated with the University /Faculty or when the individual holds out that they are a representative of the University/Faculty or a representative/member of a student organization affiliated with the University/Faculty
 - ii) When the individual is participating in a course-related activity including but not limited to a field placement where;
 - iii) That has, or might reasonably be seen to have an adverse effect on, interfere with, or threaten the proper functioning of the University/Faculty, its mission, its reputation, the rights of a member of the University community to use and enjoy the University's learning and work environments
 - iv) That has, or might reasonably be seen to have an adverse effect on, interfere with, or threaten the proper functioning of the placement agency, its mission, its reputation, the rights of staff, and the vulnerable individuals, families and communities served.

Students are required to sign a statement agreeing to adhere to professional Codes of Ethics. It is important that students review and remain familiar with the professional Codes of Ethics and relevant university policies that address student conduct and behaviour.

This document outlines procedures to address concerns regarding students' behaviours that are not consistent with the Codes of Ethics and to provide students with a clear set of behavioural expectations

with respect to compliance with the Codes of Ethics. Students are also expected to comply with other University policies, procedures and guidelines. Processes for dealing with breaches of those documents are set out therein.

In professional programs such as social work, the academic program includes both professional and scholastic components. This procedure is intended to set out a process to address behaviour in a way that attempts to balance the commitment of the Faculty of Social Work to meet Standards for Accreditation, with the need to support and assist students, and the obligation to prepare students for social work roles in which they will have responsibility for, and can directly impact, vulnerable individuals, families and communities. This procedure is intended to provide guidelines that will enhance the Faculty's ability to identify behaviours that suggest that a student may require assistance in order to meet current standards of professional social work practice.

Professional Behaviour

Professional Behaviour is defined as behaviour that is consistent with the social work Codes of Ethics.

Behaviour that May Result in a Review

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

Breaches of any of the Codes of Ethics (as defined above) in the learning environment, at a University/Faculty affiliated sanctioned program, event, or activity and/or in a field placement.

Reasons for the concern may include, but are not limited to, breaches of the Codes of Ethics, speech or behaviour that contravenes the Ontario Human Rights Code (e.g., discrimination or harassment because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability); breaches of confidentiality; any threat or attempt to physically harm another person; and intimidation or threats to harm another person in non-physical ways.

Note: If the behaviour of concern falls more appropriately under another University policy, including the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy (12.2) or the Non-Academic Student Code of Conduct Policy (12.3), the concern will be addressed under those policies and procedures. The Dean or Designate will determine which policies and procedures apply.

Assessment Process

Three levels of review can occur in the Faculty of Social Work regarding Professional Behaviour that is not consistent with the Codes of Ethics of the profession of social work. The review and response will depend on the nature of the conduct and the seriousness of the allegation of a breach of Professional Behaviour.

Level One

A Level One review involves a classroom instructor and a student or a field instructor and a student. When either a classroom instructor or a field instructor has concerns about a student's behaviour as it relates to professional behaviour that instructor will:

- Give notice of the meeting and topic of discussion
- Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the concern
- Document dates and content of meetings with students.

If a problem arises in the field, the placement instructor will discuss concerns directly with the student and **also** inform the field advisor following the procedure outlined in the relevant Field Education Manual (BSW or MSW). In many instances, meetings between the parties resolve the concern. However, if the concern is not resolved at Level One or through a series of Level One discussions, the parties will proceed to Level Two. The field advisor is responsible for completing a Field Resolution Report which is provided to the Field Education Office.

The Faculty will document discussion and resolution of the meetings at Level One and has the right to retain this record.

Level Two

If a concern is raised by a classroom instructor relating to a student's conduct in the classroom and it cannot be resolved at Level One, or through a series of Level One discussions, or if that concern is substantial in nature (e.g., breaches of confidentiality, conflicts of interest, etc.), a Level Two review is conducted.

The student will be given written notice in advance of a Level Two meeting which specifies the nature of the concern. This meeting involves the instructor, student, and the relevant Associate Dean (BSW or MSW). Depending on the nature of the concern, the Associate Dean may consult with the Dean and other university employees who have a need to know in order to provide advice. The student will be presented with the concern and facts supporting the concern and will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond. Students may bring a personal support person with them for all Level Two meetings and will confirm in writing with the Associate Dean, in advance, the identity of the person who will be accompanying the student. Additional support persons may also attend if required for accessibility support for persons with disabilities.

If a concern arises in the field and cannot be resolved at Level One, or through a series of Level One discussions, or if it is substantial in nature (e.g., breaches of confidentiality, conflicts of interest, etc.), it is the responsibility of the field advisor to inform the Field Education Coordinator of the concern. The Field Education Coordinator will hold a Level Two meeting with the student, the placement instructor and the field advisor. The student will be given written notice in advance of a Level Two meeting which specifies the nature of the concern. The student will be presented with the concern and facts supporting the concern and will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond. Depending on the nature of the concern the Field Education Coordinator may consult with the relevant Associate Dean and other university employees who have a need to know in order to provide advice. Students may bring a personal support person with them for all Level Two meetings and will confirm in writing with the Field Education Coordinator, in advance, the identity of the support person who will be accompanying the student. Additional support persons may also attend if required for accessibility support for persons with disabilities.

The Associate Dean (in the case of concerns arising from the classroom) or the Field Education Coordinator (in the case of concerns arising from the field) will determine the nature of the concern, gather sufficient information to determine whether the concern is supported by the evidence and develop a written action plan to address that concern, if one is needed. The determination will be communicated to the student in writing with reasons. No further action may be required, or the student may be asked, in writing, to modify his or her behaviour and/or seek appropriate help. This process is designed to assist students in dealing with identified concerns that have an impact on their performance as a social worker.

The discussions and resolution of the meetings at Level Two will be recorded in writing and the Faculty has the right to retain this record.

If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Associate Dean or Field Education Coordinator, the student may request a meeting with the Dean of the Faculty of Social Work. The student would be responsible for completing a Level Two Appeal Form prior to this meeting. Students may bring a personal support person with them to the appeal meeting and will confirm in writing with the Dean, in advance, the identity of the person who will be accompanying the student. Additional support persons may also attend if required for accessibility support for persons with disabilities.

Level Three

When concerns have not been resolved in prior levels and/or where given the seriousness of the concerns and contemplated consequences, the Associate Dean or the Field Education Coordinator will bring the concerns to the Dean of the Faculty of Social Work. The Dean will consider the conduct and determine the most appropriate university policy or process to address the issues. The Dean may consult with other University staff as appropriate.

Note: Students should consult the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendar and the Office of the Registrar for regulations governing Petition and Appeals procedures.

D. Petition to Decline Placement

*This is a sample of the Petition to Decline a placement. The content below is built into a [Qualtrics form](#), which is the form used to submit this petition.

Petition to Decline Placement: Instructions

Rationale for Petition: Students registered in the MSW program who wish to request a change in their placement after a match has been made¹, and in the absence of extenuating circumstances², must submit a *Petition to Decline Placement* to the Field Education Office.

Outcomes: Petitions submitted may result in one of the following:

1. Based on the student's feedback, the agency's feedback and/or a field visit, if it is determined the placement opportunity **is not suitable** for a MSW student considering the student's program of study (Advanced or Foundational):
 - The student is matched with an agency for an interview as soon as a suitable placement is available within the field course timelines (January, May, or September).
2. Based on the student's feedback, the agency's feedback and/or a field visit, if it is determined the placement opportunity **is suitable** for a MSW student considering the student's program of study (Advanced or Foundational):
 - The student's request is denied or
 - The student's request is approved and the student is considered for placements that are available within the appropriate placement cycle (January, May or September).

Timeline: within 5 business days of submitting a petition, the student will receive an email response indicating a decision or when a final decision is expected to be made.

[1] Request is submitted after student has commenced a placement, or after the student has been matched for an interview with an agency that:

- the student ranked as one of their top ten choices or indicated interest in
- the student proposed
- approved the student for a placement

[2] Extenuating circumstances: Accessible Learning Accommodation Plans, bereavement, serious personal difficulties, changes in life circumstances that hinder placement attendance. Supporting documentation may be required.

Petition to Decline Placement: Form

Student Name (last, first):	Student ID:
WLU Email:	Field course (Advanced or Foundational):
If applicable: # this placement was ranked in your Ranking form:	Placement you are petitioning (agency name):

Use section below to outline your reasons for this petition. Attach additional sheets if necessary, and any supporting documents. Petition should address:

- Lack of suitability and learning opportunities considering your field course (Foundational or Advanced year)
- New information presented after a match has been made (before or after interview, or after placement started) that resulted in your decision to decline the placement
- Rationale for ranking this placement as one of your ten choices

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Date Received: _____	Received by: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Petition completed
Decision: <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Approved with condition <input type="checkbox"/> Denied	Date: _____
Comments/Conditions:	
Reviewed by: _____	
Signature of MSW Field Coordinator: _____	

E. Learning Plan Suggestions for Remote Placements

In developing your own remote learning plan, please draw upon these ideas in consultation with your field instructor. Please use the ideas listed here as suggestions to use in developing your own learning plan. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather examples of tasks and goals that can be accomplished while working remotely. When preparing your own remote learning plan, you will want to consider these opportunities within the context of your agency. Also included are questions for you to consider as part of your reflexive practice.

Suggestions for the Nine Areas of Social Work Practice

Practicing from a social work knowledge base

- Research practical resources on a particular therapeutic modality of interest and prepare a tip sheet on ideas for implementing this modality in practice. Include bibliography.
- Build and apply social work concepts related to diversity and oppression by attending virtual working group meetings with members of the indigenous community to witness engagement grounded in reconciliation.
- Learn the brain science behind stress, trauma, and resilience and how this impacts youth addiction.
- Explore municipal, provincial and federal policies that (could) impact your placement organization and/or the affected community with which you are working.
- Conduct a literature review on the strengths, challenges and systemic factors impacting your agency's clients and/or client group (i.e., barriers to accessing resources or community supports)
- Create a list of ways the agency could advocate for social, economic, environmental justice and human rights in the agency's work
- Continue to strengthen your knowledge base of bottom-up approaches to HR program development by completing an environmental scan of HR programs across the social services sector
- Review literature on best practices regarding behavioural contracts and how these apply to "difficult" clients.
- Prepare curriculum for a six week group for students experiencing depression. Include a biography.

Developing a professional self in terms of values, ethics, practices

- Review scholarly and gray literature related to culture and cultural humility and write about how it impacts your work in the agency and how services are delivered (include a bibliography)
- Review the resources on Boundaries and Dual Relationships provided on the OCSWSSW website. Create two case examples of how a dual relationship could be present at your practicum and how this would be navigated.
- Keep a journal to explore your work-life balance during remote placement and emotional reactions to your remote placement work
- Review the history of the CASWE Code of Ethics. Reflect on how it has evolved to address ethical gaps and concerns. In a written summary, identify specific areas where gaps remain specific to your agency.
- Select a standard in the CASW Code of Ethics. Reflect, in writing, on differences or points of tension between the Code and your agency policy/procedure and/or services.
- Participate in reflexive writing to build your personal awareness of your own social location and the impact this has on your role within your agency.
- Explore ethical considerations that are specific to working remotely.

- Enhance your awareness of personal biases, strengths and weaknesses and work to include reflexive writing in your practice
- Read the CASW Code of Ethics and related professional articles and scholarly articles and write a summary about how the Code applies to social work practice; consider writing about the Code of Ethics in relation to disaster and emergency preparedness and response
- Explore agency best practices for maintaining confidentiality while working remotely.

Developing and maintaining social work relationships

- Develop research questions that emerge from work within the client system and agency setting. Discuss with field supervisor and identify academic references that inform (or answer) your research questions.
- Further develop an understanding of your agency's community partnerships and prepare a report on the findings related to client and community engagement.
- Research and explore the impact on staff relations during an unforeseen event such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic.
- Research programs and services offered by other agencies who serve the same client population. Create a spread sheet/ chart indicating the agencies' names, contact persons and description of the services offered. This will be a Resource Manual that your placement agency could use, especially when making external referrals to other agencies/ programs.
- Review advocacy agency website that you would like to learn more about and write a summary of how their work could impact the work completed by your agency.
- In collaboration with your field instructor or other agency staff, create a list of community resources for people to access during a crisis situation, and consider making this list specific to the current COVID outbreak.
- In collaboration with your field instructor or other agency staff, create a list of apps and online resources that may be suitable for addressing client needs experienced during isolation.
- Communicate your progress and learning needs regularly with stakeholders by sending email updates and scheduling team calls

Assessing

- Develop focus group questions or survey instruments related to a need in the agency.
- Develop research questions that emerge from work with the client system and agency setting. Discuss your findings with your field supervisor and identify resources that inform (or answer) the research question. Provide a bibliography.
- Write a policy brief. Your policy brief may give objective summaries of relevant research, suggest possible policy options, or go even further and argue for particular courses of action.
- Write a comparison of your growth as a social work intern between your foundational and advanced placement, or between the time of admittance to the program and the present.
- Read various case scenarios provided by your field instructor and answer questions related to assessing a client for capacity and/or discharge from the agency.
- Apply research skills to assess success and effectiveness of the community model for addiction recovery. Include a bibliography
- Become familiar with agency assessment tools and in consultation with field instructor, adapt these for remote work with clients.

Planning

- Develop a remote work plan, including due dates, for written products to be submitted to your field instructor. Include attendance at virtual meetings (if possible)

- Comment on appropriate and timely use of email, virtual supervision, and communication during uncertain times.
- Plan and participate in remote meetings, support groups, or other interventions (if possible)
- Consult with field instructor about how to notify clients if there is a work stoppage.
- Identify what you will need in order to be successful while working remotely
- Identify various formats of work plans. Utilizing a work plan, map out the various tasks necessary to complete one of my placement projects.
- Develop a timeline of topics and references for a psycho-educational online module

Implementing strategies, methods and practices

- Develop a resource guide for your agency which highlights key community referrals.
- Identify creative strategies and future resources that will support your agency in implementing its mandate. If you could create a resource your agency could use for future contingency planning (e.g. an unforeseen closure) what would this look like?
- Research grant writing and explore how this skill is used within your agency. Move towards completing an actual grant submission.
- Prepare a tip sheet for yourself (or to be shared with agency) regarding a therapeutic technique or an area of practice that is of interest
- Find and listen to a podcast episode that pertains specifically to your practicum site and topics relevant to the placement. Debrief in a written summary how this could be used in practice
- Apply facilitation skills by conducting remote focus groups
- Review sections of a grief training website and create a tip sheet for students supporting palliative clients and their families
- Explore training in video counselling and implement agency guidelines for participating in video counselling.

Documenting

- Develop knowledge around how to document a team work plan. Using an agency project, draft a plan for a set period of time.
- Prepare a tip sheet or quick reference guide for a specific documentation system that is used at your agency.
- Research the OCSWSSW website for resources on documentation and explore best practices for documenting while working offsite.
- Explore ethical considerations and breaches that can happen with documentation specifically while working remotely.
- Familiarize yourself with the documentation requirements and timelines within your agency. Participate in training on specific documentation software. View examples of case notes, if applicable.
- Review templates of meeting minutes and compare with agency meeting minutes. Practice taking meeting minutes and adjust accordingly for remote work.
- Utilize work plans, team calendars, Navigator, and remote learning updates as needed to record task completion
- Practice professional writing skills following agency policies for remote access to information

Evaluating

- Conduct a literature review on the strengths, challenges and systemic factors impacting your agency client group (i.e., barriers to accessing resources or community supports)

- Select a standard in the CASW Code of Ethics. Reflect, in writing, on differences or points of tension between the Code and agency policy/procedure and/or services.
- Develop focus group questions or survey instruments related to a need in your agency
- Identify barriers to accessing resources or community supports for your agency's clientele
- Conduct evaluation of harm reduction program with agency partners and submit evaluation data to field instructor
- Participate in work groups to discuss project target monitoring and how to use information in program planning
- While preparing monthly remote learning plan updates, reflect on your own learning, work ethic, professionalism and/or learning opportunities. Incorporate monthly reflexive writing to explore personal growth in these areas.
- Research examples of group evaluation tools. Develop an evaluation tool for one of the agency's group. Provide research to support this method of evaluation.

Closure

- Research the impact on closure by unforeseen circumstances (e.g. work stoppage, agency closing) on workers and clients
- Research the impact on clients and/or teams when an employee leaves the agency
- Explore client termination and the impact of planned versus unplanned termination on both the social worker and the client
- Review CASWE's webinar on "Ending Client Relationships". Reflect with your instructor your thoughts and how this plays out in your agency
- Explore techniques for closing a session with a client, or a project, and the important considerations involved in this skill. Practice this skill in your work and reflect on your comfort and areas of growth.
- Create a transition plan for passing on projects and/or client work to others when your placement is finished
- Reflect on your own feelings about closure related to your placement, or graduation

Other:

- Develop a personal wellness plan for working remotely

Reflexive Practice

Consider developing a reflexive paper to share with your field instructor as part of your remote learning plan. Reflect on the implications for individuals, and communities. As an advocate and agent of change, what can you do to help?

Implications for individuals

- How might the individuals you serve be impacted?
- How might your field instructor be impacted?
- How are you impacted? What can you do to take care of yourself?

Implications for communities

- How might the communities you serve be impacted?
- What is the larger impact on the communities we work with/within? (systems-level analysis)
 - E.g. healthcare, education, Indigenous, homeless, low-income, etc.

- Consider the impacts of individualism (e.g. panic buying, hoarding supplies) – how can we take a more collectivist approach? What can we do to support each other?
- Discuss capitalism and its deficiencies amidst this pandemic
- Which social justice campaigns are being overshadowed by COVID19 (e.g. Wet’suwet’en, public education strikes)? How might this impact those efforts?
- Where are social workers situated in this response? What role do they play in supporting communities?

What can we do to help?

- Get clear on the facts – what is true, how we can protect ourselves and each other? How do you empower others to engage in information rooted in facts? How do you respond to misinformation that is harmful?
- What are the necessary precautions you and your agency can consider at this time? What are the contingency plans in place?
- What will change? How will you adapt your decision-making as an individual, a member of a community, a field placement student?
- What can you contribute to your community and placement agency?
- How can you consult with community to understand needs, and assist with organizing accordingly?
- How can you leverage social media and other forms of communication? How may your agency consider using social media as a tool of communication in the future?
- How may you uplift and highlight the voices of marginalized groups and vulnerable people? How are their needs considered at this time?
- What are ways you could amplify voices of activists who have been fighting long, arduous social justice battles that are getting lost in the current media hype?
- How could you listen and provide support?
- How do you develop resiliency and balance self and community care while recognizing personal fears and concerns?
- Consider how you can leverage your privilege to support people in vulnerable positions

Reflexive Analysis Tool to Consider

- 1) **Observation** – what did you hear/see/observe?
- 2) **Reaction** – how did you react physically, emotionally, mentally?
- 3) **Personal Reflection** – what worked and what did not?
- 4) **External Reflection** – what are the larger social/historical/economic forces at work? What about theories?
- 5) **Interpretive Analysis** – based on above, does this change your initial interpretation? What ethical assessments can you make?
- 6) **Learning Integration** – how does this learning fit with what you have known/believed before? How will it change or reinforce your existing belief systems?
- 7) **Personal Transformation** – how can this new learning change your outlook/approach to your work? Will it change your moral outlook?
- 8) **Informed Action** – what will you do differently or the same in your next encounter? How will you be inspired to act?

F. Supervision Ideas for Instructors

The purpose of supervision is to ensure that students are able to integrate learning in the field with learning in their course work. We encourage students to reflect on their experiences in field to enable them to learn how to apply theory to practice, fully develop skills such as professionalism, analysis with regards to social work values and ethics, confidentiality, boundaries, and effective, empathetic practice.

Some Instructors ask students to reflect each week on one experience that was found to be particularly thought-provoking, challenging or relevant. Students can be asked to assess their experience in terms of the following aspects:

- 1) Observation – What did you observe? What did you hear and see?
- 2) Reaction - How did you react emotionally, physically and mentally?
- 3) Personal Reflection – What worked and what did not in your approach?
- 4) External Reflection – What have you learned in the program or in your life that might help you interpret this experience, such as a social work theory? What are the larger social, economic and historical forces at work?
- 5) Interpretive Analysis – Based on all of the above, do you interpret the events differently? What ethical assessments can you make? How does your own social location impact your interpretation?
- 6) Learning Integration – How does this learning fit with what you have known and believed before? How will it change or reinforce your existing belief systems?
- 7) Personal Transformation – How can this new learning change your outlook and approach to your placement/future work? Will it change your moral outlook?
- 8) Informed Action – What will you do differently or the same in your next encounter? How will you be inspired to act?

Other Topics/Questions:

- 1) Provide a typical situation that occurs at your site and have the student apply one Social Work Theory. Eventually work up to the application of multiple theories to allow students to use multiple lenses with which to view one experience.
- 2) If one has not yet happened, provide the student with an ethical dilemma. Have the student consider what makes an ethical dilemma and determine how to assess and address appropriately and compassionately.
- 3) Discuss professional development and workplace performance. Can the student identify strengths and challenges? Are there issues with regards to punctuality, communication, thoroughness or other work habits?
- 4) Assess a client situation using social work values such as anti-oppressive practice, social justice and advocacy and/or others.
- 5) Review the student's Remote Learning Plan and Goals and determine and discuss progress.
- 6) Discuss self-care, when and why it might be needed and how to best achieve for the student personally. How would the student know when it is needed?
- 7) Encourage reflexive writing. Ask the student to keep a journal and record personal reactions and interpretations to placement situations. Discuss themes that the student presents in supervision.

G. Placement Disruption Policy

Definitions

In-person placement: the student is completing learning activities at the agency setting.

Remote placement: the student is completing learning activities without attending placement in-person at the agency setting.

Hybrid placement: the student is completing learning activities in-person at the agency setting and remotely.

Active placement: a placement that has started and is in progress, and where the student is registered in the field course.

Placement Disruption Policy

The **Placement Disruption Policy** can be mandated by Wilfrid Laurier University or the Faculty of Social Work and applies to placement students registered in an active field course.

Parameters

The Placement Disruption Policy does not apply to field courses that have been completed where the student has received a final grade. Accordingly, any decisions made regarding a placement course only impacts students who are in an active field course (e.g. SK649) and cannot be retroactively applied to a student's completed field course (e.g. SK541).

The policy does not apply to concerns raised by a student, field instructor, or agency setting. In situations where students are advised by an agency, field instructor, or field advisor to not attend placement due to concerns related to the particular placement (e.g. student's performance, conflict of interest) or agency setting (e.g. temporary pause of placement due to union strike), students and field instructors should immediately consult with their Field Advisor. Procedures for addressing and resolving concerns shared by a student, agency, or field instructor are outlined in the [Field Resolution Procedure](#), and Laurier's applicable policies. Any pauses in a particular placement, that are initiated by the agency and are outside of the student's and Instructor's control, will be addressed on a case-by-case basis with the Field Advisor.

In the event of a university or faculty mandated disruption to a field course, the Placement Disruption Policy will apply to all students registered in field placements. It is the student's responsibility to ensure registration in the appropriate field course(s). Students who are attending placement, but did not register in a field placement course, cannot count any field hours they may have accumulated towards their field course.

In-person & Hybrid placements

Considering direction from the university, faculty and the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), the field office will communicate the date by which all in-person, and hybrid placements must be

paused. Once a placement is paused, students cannot enter any field hours in Navigator. At this point, only placement hours entered and approved on Navigator prior to the placement pause date will count towards the field course. Placement hours (regular or overtime) may not be entered retroactively. Overtime placement hours do not apply during a placement disruption and may not be accumulated.

The process for tracking outstanding hours from the student's last entry date on Navigator to the placement pause date will be communicated with students. Any decisions regarding placement requirements, including field hours, only impact students registered in an active field course and do not impact a student's completed field course.

At this time, students will be required to complete field surveys that will assess the capacity of the student to continue in placement, and the capacity of the agency and field instructor to support the continuation of the placement in-person, remotely or as a hybrid.

The field office will offer webinars to guide students through this process. While all efforts will be made to support students collectively, students can expect a delay in communications as all field office staff will work towards revamping field planning for each placement course. As individual follow-up may be delayed, students will be asked to present their questions during the identified drop-in zoom sessions with field advisors. This will include reviewing each student's survey, following up with agencies, assessing each student's program progression, finalizing the tracking of hours, coordinating with the online and on-campus program staff, and developing supports towards sustain placements where possible.

Depending on the MSW program the student is registered in (regular track or advanced standing) and their program status (full-time or part-time), their program progression, direction from the university and CASWE, and the agency's capacity to provide a remote placement, the following include some of the possible outcomes:

1. Taking into consideration the hours and evaluations completed, if the student's evaluation is successful, and in the absence of a readiness plan or any concerns related to the student's performance:
 - a. The field course may be considered completed and the field hours may carry forward to a new field course.
 - b. The field course may be considered incomplete, the field course may need to be repeated at a new term.
 - c. The placement may be temporarily paused and may resume at a later date.
 - d. Placement may be discontinued and any outstanding requirements will be transferred to a new field course at the same setting or a new setting.
 - e. The field course may resume remotely, in-person, or as a hybrid at the same setting on the start date provided by the field office.
 - f. The field course may resume remotely, in-person, or as a hybrid at a different setting on the start date provided by the field office.
2. If the student's evaluation is not successful, the student will be required to repeat the field course. The hours they have completed to date will not carry over, as the placement has been deemed unsuccessful.
3. If the field instructor cannot complete the required evaluations due to insufficient information (e.g. the field hours completed to date were dedicated towards placement orientation), the placement

hours will not carry over. The student will be placed in a new field course at the same setting or a new field setting.

4. If the field instructor is unable to respond to requests to complete the evaluation, the field advisor will assess the student's progress in placement and make a determination regarding their progress and completed hours.

Considerations will be made for students in placement settings that may be impacted differently (e.g. school boards, hospitals, workplace placements) and where a return path to placement may not be possible due to legislation or institutional policies.

H. Important Field Links

Navigator

- <https://navigator.wlu.ca>: (Works best with Google Chrome) Online field portal to view student information, agency information, placement details and to submit field related forms:
 - WSIB forms (Terms & Conditions)
 - Placement Record (Description, contact info, important due dates)
 - Learning plan & evaluations
 - Tracking Hours
 - Proposing a placement or a Workplace placement
 - Resources (Manuals, Syllabus, Career centre etc.)

Forms

- **Full-time program - Changing placement dates:**
https://wlu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6inxV5EYvzSWeV
- **Online program - Changing placement dates:**
https://wlu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eLKlzaEkOd9M2k5
- **Petition to Decline Placement:**
<https://students.wlu.ca/programs/social-work/msw/assets/forms/decline-placement-petition-form-msw.html>

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