

THE SELECTION OF FIELD AGENCIES AND FIELD INSTRUCTORS

The impetus for designating an agency as a field site may originate either from the agency or the Department of Social Work. Interested agencies or social workers can contact the field education coordinator to begin their application. Requests initiated by the Department of Social Work will typically be made to the agency director or individual social workers known to the Department.

The following principles are considered fully before an agency is designated as an official field site.

- The opportunities for student learning in the agency are consistent with the philosophy, mission and educational goals of the Department of Social Work.
- The agency administrators and staff show an interest in taking responsibility for field instruction and for working collaboratively with the field education faculty and staff to provide an optimal field education experience for students. They demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the philosophical and value base of professional social work education.
- The board or governing body of the agency, when applicable, is committed to a field instruction program and to undertaking the responsibilities involved.
- The agency is in good standing in the community.
- The staff is sufficient to maintain the basic program of the agency without reliance on students.
- When the field instructor does her/his work in a host setting, such as a school, the host agency or institution agrees to the presence of students and to the utilization of staff for student supervision.
- The agency provides a qualified field instructor who has the time necessary for supervisory meetings, selection and review of assignments, participation in faculty field liaison meetings, and preparation of required evaluation reports. In addition, field instructors must agree and be allowed to attend field education seminars designed to enhance their ability to serve as supervisors and instructors for Social Work students.
- For MSW student placements, the agency provides a field instructor who holds a masters degree in social work, has been out of school for at least two years, and has been employed by the agency for more than six months.
- For undergraduate student placements, the agency provides a field instructor who holds either a masters or bachelors degree in social work, has been out of school for at least two years, and has been employed by the agency for more than six months..
- The size, scope, and flow of agency activities are a good match for social work student learning. A helpful question for agencies to consider is, “can we provide experiences that will enable students to meet the course learning objectives?” (See the Field Course Syllabi Link on the Field Homepage.)
- The agency makes available suitable space and working facilities for the student. These facilities are consistent with those considered necessary for the proper functioning of any staff member and include desk space (even if it is shared), access to a telephone, computer, and office supplies, and a secure place to put belongings.