

Field Placement Matching

Students do the work in the spring and early summer to identify and confirm their field placement matches for the following fall. Likewise, if the need should arise, the field education coordinator also facilitates any unexpected field placement changes throughout the year. A student's specific participation in the selection and confirmation of a field placement is determined by the year of field within which they intend to enroll; all students, however, are responsible for completing an application. Potential field instructors also work to complete an application. This is an annual field site application, indicating their interests in having a student (or students), what year in the program they believe is the best match, and what learning opportunities they intend to give the students as assignments. These completed applications assist the field education coordinator in completing a successful matching process each academic year.

Undergraduate Field Placements

All undergraduate students will be oriented to the field planning process in the Theory and Integration Seminar (SWSS 163) either at the end of the fall semester or the very beginning of the spring semester depending on when they are enrolled. They will be introduced to the field readiness process and be given the application and other related materials. These are turned into the field education coordinator. After a review of each student's materials, the field education coordinator determines a placement that will first address the specific educational needs of the student and second is in or related to a practice opportunity of the student's stated interest. In March, each student's resume is sent to a single potential field instructor with the question of whether or not they are interested in moving forward with this particular student. If the field instructor says 'yes', the student receives notice of the match and begins the next step of the confirmation process. If the field instructor declines, then an alternate match is made. All students are expected to participate in the interview/confirmation process with prospective field instructor (supervisors) prior to April 15. In other words, by this date, students will have confirmation of their field placement for the following year.

Foundation Year Field Placements

Every student newly admitted to the M.S.W. Program is e-mailed a Foundation Year Field Practicum Application in the summer prior to the fall they intend to enroll and is asked to return it with a current resume within a specified period of time. It is imperative that full-time and part-time students who plan to enter the field in the fall return it to the field education coordinator by the required deadline so that individual interests and needs can be considered in the planning process. Part-time students

(already enrolled in the MSW program and taking classes) also begin the application process by completing a Foundation Year Field Practicum Application and submitting it with a current resume to the field education coordinator by the date specified.

After a review of the student's application, the field education coordinator determines a placement that will first address the specific educational needs of the student and second is in or related to a practice opportunity of the student's stated interest. The field education coordinator will connect with potential field instructors (supervisors) by sending the student resume with the question of whether or not they want to continue with a student interview. Once the interest from the field instructor is confirmed, the student receives their match (early June) and must participate in an interview and confirmation process with the prospective field instructor (supervisor) and field agency prior to August 15.

Specialized Practice Year Field Placements

All students who are completing or have completed foundation year field begin the application process by completing the Specialized Practice Year Field Practicum Application and returning it with a current resume (which includes their foundation field practicum experience) to the field education coordinator in the spring. Students then schedule an appointment with the field education coordinator to meet and discuss their foundation year field practica and options for Specialized Practice year placements. Because this is the only year that students have a bit of choice, as soon as this planning meeting has taken place, they will begin interviewing in 2-3 prospective, pre-approved field agencies. Field instructors treat this level of student meetings with quite a bit of discernment and may be interviewing 3-4 students for the same position. Therefore, it is important that students keep their options open, so to speak, as field instructors will only select the best candidate. Specialized Practice year students are expected to finalize and confirm their field placements by April 15th.

Advanced standing and transfer students who are accepted to the MSW program will participate in the same manner described in this section whenever possible. If a student's decision to enroll comes later than the beginning of April, the student will be matched similarly to the manner in which we match newly accepted foundation year students.