INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION PLACEMENT PROCESS FOR BSW STUDENTS
All Social Work Field Program field application forms, documents, policies, and procedures can be accessed on the Social Work Field Program website located at:

http://uwm.edu/socialwelfare/social-work-field-education-program/
Application Periods for a field practicum beginning with the:

- Fall Semester..................February 15 - May 15
- Spring Semester..............July 15 - September 15
- Summer Semester.............January 1 - February 15
SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM STAFF

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FIELD EDUCATION IS INTENDED TO:

- Reinforce students’ identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the SW profession.
- Promote professional competence.
- Model understanding of and respect for diversity.
- Foster the integration of empirical & practice-based knowledge.

-Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
The SW Field Education Practicum is a “relationship” involving three important parties:

- The UW-Milwaukee HBSSW Social Work Department.
- The UW-Milwaukee SW Field Student.
- The Field Agency.

Practicing appropriate professional communication with all relationship parties is vital to the success of the Field Practicum experience.
Agency Field Instructor

Your Agency Field Instructor is a professional employee of the agency where you are having your field practicum who:

- is responsible for providing day-to-day field instruction and oversight of your field work at the field agency.

- is responsible for providing one-hour of weekly face-to-face supervision during each week of your field practicum.

- collaborates with you on the development of your Learning Plan

- evaluates your demonstration of competence in the 8 Learning Objectives on your Midterm and Final Evaluation Forms.

*Your Field Instructor is not paid by UW-Milwaukee for her or his work with you.*
Field Liaison

Your *Social Work Field Liaison* is an employee / faculty member of the UW-Milwaukee Helen Bader School of Social Welfare who:

- is responsible for arranging, coordinating, and overseeing your field practicum experience.
- is available for information and consultation throughout your field practicum.
- meets with your Field Instructor and you at the field agency each semester.
- intervenes if difficulties arise during the field practicum.
- reviews the completed Learning Plan, and all evaluations.
- calculates and assigns the final grade for your SW Field Course.
HAVING A FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY FOR INVOLVEMENT IN FIELD WORK

Field Work requires between:

- 16 hrs. / week during the Fall & Spring Semesters.
- 21 hrs. / week during the Summer Semester.

Most Field Agencies require students to be available for Field Work between 8 AM - 5 PM.

If you are only available for field work in the evenings and on weekends, it may be difficult to locate a Field Placement as we have limited options.

It is recommended that you try to make arrangements with your employer in advance of entering Field Work to have a flexible work schedule, in order to be available for Field Work during week day hours.
APPLICATION PROCESS: STEP ONE

- Step 1: Submit application forms online
  - Access electronic application forms from the SW Field Program website under “BSW Program.”
  - Read and follow all instructions
  - All application forms must be typed / computer prepared.
  - Upload the following documents to the BSW Field Application Submission Page:
    - Field Application- Part 1
    - Field Application- Part 2
  - Wait for further instructions from the Social Work Office via email.
Step 2: Order a background check & submit background forms

- All students entering a practicum are required to have a comprehensive background check through CastleBranch. The initial cost is $45.00 paid online directly to CastleBranch.

- After the student’s field application has been processed, the Social Work Office will send the student instructions via email on which background check to order.

- The student should then place their background check order through CastleBranch. They will also be required to upload the completed Background Information Disclosure and HBSSW Authorization Forms (available in the CastleBranch portal).
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON BACKGROUND CHECKS

Please note:

- Students will have access to the information, as will Field Program staff. Background checks will be sent to the field agency where the student has accepted a practicum upon request.

- The CastleBranch background check *must* be completed before the Field Liaison can work with a student on an agency referral.
LIST OF PREVIOUS AGENCY PLACEMENTS

- On the BSW page of the Field Website, students can view a list of agencies that BSW students were placed at during the previous academic year.

- Students may view this list to begin generating ideas of agencies where they may be interested in completing their field placement. When students have their initial meeting with the field liaison, they will be able to discuss available placement opportunities.

- This is **not** a comprehensive list of agencies that the Social Work Program works with.

- The Field Department **cannot** guarantee you a placement with one of the agencies on this list.
OVERVIEW OF THE PLACEMENT PROCESS

- Submit Part 1 & Part 2 of your field application online.

- Wait for email confirmation from the Social Work Field Office that your field application has been processed. Follow the email instructions to order your online background check.

- Schedule an appointment with your assigned Field Liaison to review your application and discuss placement interests. (The Social Work Office will inform you via email of your Field Liaison assignment)

- Your appointment will be scheduled at a time consistent with the time table for the specific agency placement you are requesting.
INITIAL APPOINTMENT WITH SW FIELD LIAISON

- Field Liaison will review the field application with student. *Revisions may be required.*

- Discuss any concerns or special placement needs.

- Gather information about possible field placement sites in your identified Social Work Practice Area.

- Let the Field Liaison know of any Field Agencies you are interested in. *Students are not to arrange their own placement.*

- Discuss any negative information on your Background Check. *Background Check results with a “conviction” will be provided to the Field Agency after a student is accepted for a placement.*
ARRANGING AN AGENCY INTERVIEW

- Student is notified by the assigned Field Liaison of the details regarding the Field Agency in-person interview.

- Student may have to schedule the interview with the Field Agency or the Field Agency will contact the student directly.
FIELD AGENCY INTERVIEW

- The interview with a Field Agency is a two-way process.
  - The Field Agency interviews the student.
  - The student interviews the Field Agency.

- Refer to “Interviewing Tips” on the Field Dept. website.
  - Gather information about the Field Agency and the field placement from the Field Liaison and the Field Agency website.
  - Review the list of questions you may be asked.
  - Review the list of questions you may want to ask.
  - Know the location of the Field Agency and parking arrangements.
  - Dress professionally.
  - Timeliness counts.
FIELD AGENCY INTERVIEW

- Discuss any “convictions” on your Background Check during the latter part of the Field Agency interview. *If you decide you want a practicum with the agency.*

- Student completes the interview with the Field Agency with plans to follow-up with the Field Agency representative.

- Student contacts all involved Field Liaisons to provide an update on the status of each interview with a Field Agency.

- Student follows-up with *all* involved Field Agency representatives and *all* Field Liaisons when a final placement decision has been made.
REASONS FOR NOT BEING ACCEPTED FOR A PLACEMENT

- Students may not be accepted for placement by a Field Agency as a result of:
  - Limited Schedule Availability for Practicum
  - Criminal and / or Caregiver Background problems.
  - Competition with other placement applicants.
  - Poor presentation during the Field Agency interview.
  - Failed TB skin test.
  - Negative results in a health physical.
  - Positive drug test.
  - Failure to complete pre-placement requirements by the deadline
APPLICATION PROCESS REMINDERS

- Following the acceptance of a field placement, the student should not continue to explore additional placement possibilities.

- Upon acceptance of a field placement, student is to contact all other involved Field Agencies and Field Liaisons to inform them of the placement decision and to thank them for their involvement.

- Three failed interviews with Field Agencies requires an assessment and recommendation from the Field Liaison regarding the student’s continuation in the Field Education Program.
When you have accepted a placement, contact the Field Agency to inquire about any pre-placement requirements, such as:

- Field Agency orientation program.
- Medical examination
- TB skin test; Hepatitis test and/or vaccine
- Immunization records
- Flu shot
- Drug testing
- Field Agency Caregiver Background Check.
- Proof of driver’s license and auto insurance.
- Confidentiality acknowledgement.
- Professional references.
All undergraduate students registering for Social Work Field Course 421 should register under the appropriate section for SW 421 and for the LAB / Integrated Field Seminar that is required to be taken in conjunction with SW 421.

A LAB / Integrated Field Seminar is also required for Social Work Field Course 422. SW 422 is your second field practicum course.

The LAB / Integrated Field Seminar meets for 50 minutes during each week of the semester.

You receive one hour of field work credit for every LAB / Integrated Field Seminar you attend.

Contact your selected Field Liaison for assistance if you have questions.
SUMMER INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- International Field Practicum Opportunities
  - Plymouth, England (Harm Reduction AODA Programs)
  - Linz, Austria (limited placement options available)
  - Ghana, West Africa

For more information, contact Jeanne Wagner, SW Field Director at jeannew@uwm.edu
SOCIAL WORK FIELD PLACEMENTS OFFER MANY OPPORTUNITIES

FIELD PLACEMENT = OPPORTUNITIES

- NEW CHALLENGES.
- PROFESSIONAL GROWTH.
- PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.
- EMPLOYMENT POSSIBILITIES.
- NEW PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS.