

**MSW Field Placement Manual
for Foundation and Advanced MSW Field Placement Students**

Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work

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Introduction

The field experience is an invaluable component of social work education that supports students' professional growth. The Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work Field Program depends on field instructors' professional input and support, faculty's dedication to quality instruction, and students' commitment to curiosity and learning. Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work's partnerships with the affiliated field agencies are designed to create professional social work learning experiences for our students.

This manual is intended to be a comprehensive guide to the purposes, structure, and policies of the MSW Field Placement Program. It is designed for use by students, field instructors, and faculty field liaisons in Social Work 595 and 596 (Foundation) and in Social Work 695/696 (Advanced). Policies, procedures, or guidelines pertaining to field are detailed in this manual. This manual also includes descriptions of the specific roles and responsibilities of each key person within the field experience.

There are key terms that the School of Social Work uses to identify specific roles. Please familiarize yourself with these terms to know who is the appropriate person to answer specific questions or concerns:

The Field Office consists of the Field Director, the Field Placement Coordinator, and the Field Program Graduate Assistant.

The Field Director oversees all major issues pertaining to field. This person can be a point of contact before field placement has begun with questions regarding larger policy and procedure issues. This person will also address field placement concerns shared by faculty liaisons throughout the course of the placement experience. The Field Director ensures that the field program is in compliance with CSWE policies and procedures and will facilitate meetings with students, faculty liaisons and field instructors when necessary to address significant field placement concerns.

The Field Placement Coordinator is the contact person between agencies and the school during the pre-placement period and refers students to appropriate field placement sites. The Field Coordinator is another person that one can go to with questions pertaining to policies and procedures within the field placement experience. Students should meet with this person if they would like to enter field placement.

The Faculty Liaison is the EMU Social Work faculty who teaches the accompanying field seminar and who visits the student and placement site field instructor once each semester. Once the semester begins, the faculty liaison becomes the point of contact for the student and the field instructor. The faculty liaison works with the placement site and student regarding their learning experiences and academic requirements. Feedback or questions about students' performance, attendance, and involvement in the placement site should be addressed to the liaison. In the event that a field instructor cannot reach the Faculty Liaison, the Field Director or Field Coordinator can be contacted and will forward

the message. The field office will be brought into issues as determined by the faculty liaison.

The Field Instructor is a professional social worker (with an MSW degree and two years post-MSW degree experience) who is designated by their placement site and the EMU Field Program to provide field supervision to MSW students.

Please see pages 22, 23, and 24 to read more about specific responsibilities for the faculty liaison, the field supervisor, and the student.

School of Social Work Mission Statement

The Mission of the EMU School of Social Work is to prepare graduates to help poor, oppressed, and vulnerable and underserved people to build competence and confidence as they improve their lives. The program grounds students in culturally competent and gender sensitive practice. It is founded on a commitment to social and economic justice.

Our graduates work with individuals, groups and communities to alleviate social problems. They strive to enhance community problem solving, helping clients to engage their environments in ways that improve social functioning and provide opportunities.

The school prepares its graduates to work in advance social welfare policy that builds upon a community's strengths and develops leadership in community and organizations.

EMU School of Social Work Statement on Anti-Racism

“The EMU School of Social Work continues to stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement as we mourn the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks and the numerous other Black lives that have been taken at the hands of police. We recognize the insidious roles systemic and institutional racism and White Supremacy have played and continue to play in the lives of persons who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color. The injustices we are witnessing provide moments to act, stand firm and speak loudly and clearly – that hate and discrimination in any form are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

We recommit as individuals and as a School to actively dismantle systemic and institutional racism and, to restructure our community, state, and country to reflect inclusivity, diversity, and equity. We stand behind [our School's mission](#) as we fight against discrimination of any kind. We are committed to the empowerment of oppressed individuals, families and communities and believe that social workers can impact change through direct service, the creation of equitable social welfare policies and laws, and community-based partnerships. Together, we will develop action steps with our students,

faculty, staff, alumni and community partners to ensure that we are advancing anti-racist conversation and action in the classroom, throughout our University and within our local communities” (<https://www.emich.edu/chhs/social-work/>)

Accreditation

Eastern Michigan University is a non-profit public institution accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities. The School of Social Work is in the College of Health and Human Services and is a member of the Michigan Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Educators.

The BSW Program has been fully accredited since 1974 by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE). It was one of the first undergraduate programs in the State and is now one of the largest. The MSW Program became fully accredited by CSWE, effective February 1992.

The School of Social Work organizes its curriculum to meet all CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation standards. The CSWE’s Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) guide the development and operation of all MSW/BSW programs. It details how the curriculum is constructed in order to provide students with a coherent and integrated professional education. This document can be obtained from the CSWE website.

MSW Program Overview

A major goal of the MSW program is to provide graduate education in social work to human service providers who, for economic or other reasons, cannot leave their current employment to attend graduate school full-time. The School of Social Work class schedule is geared to meet the needs of both traditional students and non-traditional students including those who are working and students returning to school after long absences. Opportunities for part-time, evening, and weekend courses, as well as negotiated work site placements are the cornerstone of this commitment. **Students who cannot do work site placements will need to be available for field placements during more traditional placement site hours.** This may mean arranging to take personal leave, vacation, or working flex time in employment in order to be available 16-20 hours a week for a field placement assignment in a community placement site. **Students cannot expect to do non-work site placements in the evening or on weekends.**

Field Placement Program Overview

The Field Placement Program is an integral part of the curriculum in the Master of Social Work Program at Eastern Michigan University. To fulfill the spirit of our school’s mission, field placements are made in non-profit and public agencies that are committed to working with client populations and communities who are adversely impacted by social forces operating in our society. There are some for-profit agencies that are utilized for placement, but they must align with the School’s mission and the majority of the consumers served must be receiving Medicaid. The Field Director will review these potential placement sites on a case-by-case basis. Placement site settings within the

community provide students with practice experiences working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. These direct and indirect service experiences provide students with the opportunity to operationalize social work values and apply the knowledge and skills learned within the foundation and advanced years of the program. Specifically, field placement settings serve under-resourced, oppressed, vulnerable, and underserved populations. Additionally, field placement sites include agencies and organizations that use an ecological-systems empowerment perspective in their work and support the philosophical orientation of the MSW Program. Professional leadership may be developed through the use of empowering techniques in direct services, program development, program evaluation, and/or administration.

A field placement experience must allow students to engage in in-person contact with clients and constituencies in their field placement experience. This can include the use of digital technologies. According to the Council on Social Work Education, “during the COVID-19 pandemic, at program discretion, remote field activity, field supervision field seminar hours, and simulations, may be counted toward the accrual of field hours through May 31, 2022. Such activities should be based upon enhancing student social work competence in real or simulated practice settings” (<https://www.cswe.org/CSWE/media/AccreditationPDFs/DOSWA-FAQs-to-COVID-19-3-18-21.pdf>).

Agencies used as field placement sites are an extension of the Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work. As such, they must be suitable learning environments with a commitment to the collaborative process of educating students in the field of social work. In addition, legal affiliations are developed with the agencies in which students are placed.

MSW students entering the program without a BSW have two different placement sequences (Social Work 595/596 and Social Work 695/696). During the Foundation Year placement (Social Work 595/596), students are assigned to a placement site that provides them with micro, mezzo and macro practice opportunities consistent with the generalist knowledge and skills, areas learned during this phase of the program. During the Advanced Year of the program (Social Work 695/696), students who have completed the foundation requirements will be assigned to agencies that provide them with experiences in advanced social work practice in their chosen concentration. Students entering the program with a BSW and who have been accepted into the Advanced Standing Program will only be required to complete the Advanced Year placement (SWRK 695/696).

Students will be enrolled in a concurrent field seminar that meets weekly or bi-weekly and will remain in the same seminar section throughout the duration of their field placement experience. The seminar instructor serves as the Faculty Liaison to the placement site, visiting the student on site once per semester. The seminar instructor determines the student’s grade in field.

The MSW program is designed as a part time program to accommodate the needs of employed students. **It is expected, however, that learning in the field placement will not be compromised by a student’s employment status.** To this end, it is important

that students negotiate “flex time” with their employers so that they can accomplish the goal of becoming an integrated member of an organization/placement site team. This often requires daytime hours for staff meetings, supervision, consultation, training, and possibly some service supervision. Students must be available for placement during the times that professional social work practice is occurring in agencies and will need to have day time hours for placement. Placements that are completed entirely outside regular daytime work hours are extremely rare for MSW students because they usually limit the types of experiences available to the student. In addition, in many settings, it is difficult to understand the context of the work without access to the daytime activities and routines of the organization/placement site. It is expected that students will be available for a block of at least six hours of daytime hours per week in every field placement. **If students cannot schedule the necessary hours, they may need to delay their placement.**

Part Time Student Field Placement Scheduling Pattern

Foundation: Year 1

Year 1	FALL	WINTER	SUMMER
	Classes only	Classes only	Classes only

Foundation: Year 2 (Total Hours: 400)

Year 2	FALL	WINTER	SUMMER
	Classes only	Class & Field (200 hr.@16/wk)	Field (200 hr.@16/wk)

Advanced: Year 3 (Year 1 for BSWs)

Year 3	FALL	WINTER	SUMMER
	Classes only	Classes only	Classes only

Advanced: Year 4 (Total Hours: 500) (Year 2 for BSWs)

Year 4	FALL	WINTER	SUMMER
	Class & Field (250 hr. @ 16-20 hr./week)	Class & Field (250 hr.@16-20/wk)	Classes or N/A

Full Time Student Field Placement Scheduling Pattern**

Foundation Year (Total field placement hours: 400)

FALL	WINTER	SUMMER
Classes or N/A	Classes & Field (200 hours @16/wk)	Classes & Field (200 hours @16/wk)

Advanced Year (Total field placement hours: 500)*

FALL	WINTER	SUMMER
Classes & Field 250 hours @ *16-20 /week	Classes & Field 250 hours @ *16-20 /week	Classes or N/A

***Full time advanced standing students are only in class for one year and take placement and other courses at the same time.**

****Please see COVID-19 policy regarding field hours on page 12.**

Field Placement Policies and Procedures

The professional practicum is a major component of graduate education in the MSW program. Social service agencies and the School of Social Work collaborate to design and provide opportunities for students to learn and practice new skills in supervised field placement settings. In the field setting, students have the opportunity to make appropriate connections between social work practice, values, and the knowledge base. The field placement experience is intended to assist students in integrating knowledge and skills from all areas of the curriculum. Students may not substitute work experience for field placement requirements.

Field Requirements

- **Students must apply and be approved for field placement before enrolling in field courses.**
- The application deadlines are communicated by the Field Office to all MSW students.
- A student’s field placement is contingent on meeting all requirements (See Foundation or Advanced placement requirements below) to enter field prior to the application and prior to the start of the semester in which field placement is scheduled.
- Students who do not meet the requirements may not enter field placement.
- Late or incomplete applications can result in a student having to delay field placement for an entire year. Students who have not completed foundation field placement cannot progress to the Advanced MSW concentration classes.

Foundation Placement Requirements:

All first year Foundation level requirements must be completed prior to entering Foundation field. Students may not enter Foundation field placement with any Incomplete grades on their transcripts and must have a grade point average of 3.0 or better. To continue to the second semester of a field placement course, students must complete all their hours and earn at least a "B" grade in each of the first semester field courses. Under no circumstances may students begin to work on the hours of their second semester without having received a grade of at least a "B" in their first semester of field.

Advanced Placement Requirements:

All students entering Advanced year placement must have at least a 3.0 overall grade point average and have no Incompletes on their transcripts. To be eligible for Advanced field placement, students must also have completed all Foundation level courses. Advanced Standing students must have taken SWRK 610 (Empowerment) and Full Program students must take it concurrently with SWRK 695. Students must attain a grade of B or better in SWRK 610 and all required practice courses taken prior to or during field placement in order to enter or progress in the field courses.

Students must attend the field placement course and fulfill all of its requirements and complete required field placement hours in the field in order to receive a passing grade of at least a "B" for a placement course. To continue to the second semester of a field placement course, students must complete all their hours and earn at least a "B" grade in each of the first semester field courses. Under no circumstances may students begin to work on the hours of their second semester without having received a grade of at least a "B" in their first semester of field.

Process for Students to Enter Field Placement:

1. Field Office staff will offer information sessions to share criteria to enter field, answer questions and discuss how to access the field application.
2. You will be provided with access to the Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) system. Log into IPT and create a new password.
3. Complete the field application and submit it within IPT, including an uploaded resume and unofficial transcript.
4. Set up a time to meet with Field Placement Coordinator to discuss placement interests and preferences once application is complete.
5. Fill out a "Request and Agreement for Work Site Placement" form if there is an interest to be placed at your place of paid employment. A student may talk to the Field Placement Coordinator about this option, and get the form from the Field Office. *See "Placement in Work Settings" below.
6. After hearing where one is referred, call or email the point of contact within the week.
7. Contact the Field Office if there is any trouble making contact with a placement site.
8. Attend an interview at the placement site.
9. Register for the field seminar class.

Field Assignment

The Field Director or Field Placement Coordinator are responsible for referring students to agencies for their field work experience. Students may not set up or establish their own placements. Only agencies and placement sites that have been designated as appropriate field placement sites may be used for field placement. Agencies must meet the requirements established by the School of Social Work and must be approved by the Field Director to be used as a field site.

Students may request work site field placements if the placement site meets all placement requirements. When students have limited hours in which to do field placement, this is often the best solution. (See Work Site Placement Policies for criteria).

Students may complete their Foundation and Advanced field placements in the same placement site if appropriate learning experiences are available for both levels of practice. In this situation student must still apply for each sequence using the regular procedure outlined in this manual. While it is possible to be reassigned to a previous field placement site, the decision is made at the Field Director's discretion.

While the Field Office makes efforts to match student's interests and geographical preferences when making placement referrals, the volume of students needing placements means that not every student can have every request granted. **It is expected that students will enter the field placement site with which they have been matched and meet their educational requirements in that placement site setting.** Students who initially object to the placement site to which they are referred, will be given no more than one additional referral from the Field Office. Additionally, students who interview at more than two agencies and cannot obtain placement will not be referred again until a meeting with the Field Office is held. Field placement settings may be within a 60-mile radius of EMU and students may not refuse placement on the basis of geographic location.

Field Hours

CSWE requires that all students graduating with an MSW complete a minimum of 900 hours in field placements (please see COVID-19 policy regarding field hours on pg. 10). Students who have not graduated with a BSW complete two field placement sequences. Students are expected to follow the scheduling patterns for full or part-time students, which appear on their plans of study.

During the Foundation placement, students complete 400 hours in a placement site setting that can provide opportunities for learning generalist social work practice skills at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. These placements are completed in a Winter, Summer semester sequence (January – August) in one assigned placement site. **In Winter semester, students complete 200 hours; in Summer, students complete 200 hours.** Additional hour requirements must have prior approval by the faculty liaison or Field Director. **Students are in placement approximately 16 hours a week.**

In the Advanced curriculum students complete 500 hours of field work in a placement site that provides experiences in the student's area of concentration. This

sequence is completed in the Fall and Winter semesters. Students complete **250 hours each semester**. Additional hour requirements must have prior approval by the faculty liaison or Field Director. Students are in placement approximately **16-20 hours a week**. Hours must be completed with no less than 12 hours per week and no more than 20 hours a week. All students complete the Advanced Year of field placement.

Field placement hours are expected to be completed over the course of the entire semester. Specific arrangements regarding field hours are to be discussed with the Field Office at the time students apply for field. The specific hours and days will then be confirmed through negotiation between the Field Instructor and Student in the field placement contract. **Students may not enter field placement before the semester begins and they may not finish field placement more than one week prior to the end of a semester**, regardless of the number of hours they have completed. Students may not continue to attend field placement between semesters, unless they are enrolled in the second semester of field placement and only with the permission of their Faculty Liaison and their Field Instructor. Students may not carry over more than 20 hours from the first semester of placement to the second semester and these hours must be approved by the field instructor and faculty liaison.

Students with special or unforeseen circumstances that may require individual arrangements to fulfill responsibilities, as indicated in the Field Placement Policies and Field Seminar Course Outline, must inform their field instructor and faculty liaison in advance or as soon as the unforeseen circumstance becomes known. However, **students cannot be absent from field placement for more than two weeks and still remain in the sequence**. Students who will be absent from field for more than two consecutive weeks will be required to meet with the Faculty Liaison and the Field Director regarding a new Plan of Study.

If students miss field hours for any reason, they must make special arrangements to make up the work and the time during hours agreed to by the Field Instructor and the Faculty Liaison. Students must satisfactorily fulfill all of their field placement responsibilities and field seminar requirements in order to receive a passing grade of "B" or higher. **Failure to attend field placement class and/or to be out of placement at any time without proper notification to the Field Instructor and Faculty Liaison may be grounds for dismissal from field placement or for receiving a failing grade.** Students who have had repeated absences field placement, without a valid reason or informing the field instructor and/or faculty liaison, may be terminated from placement immediately.

Students who need to complete the field hour requirements after the conclusion of the semester will need to have received a grade of an Incomplete. An Incomplete grade requires that the student has met all University and Field requirements for receiving an Incomplete and has contracted with their Faculty Liaison and their Field Instructor for the Faculty Liaison's and Field Instructor's continued availability during that period. On the rare occasions when a grade of Incomplete is awarded, the student must work directly with their Faculty Liaison to resolve the reason for the Incomplete.

All Incomplete grades should be resolved as soon as possible and in accordance with University policy.

Field hours do not include travel time getting to and from the placement site. Students may not substitute previous work experience for field placement requirements regardless of what experiences they may have, per CSWE educational policy.

Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Response to COVID-19:

CSWE is permitting students, with program discretion, to complete field placement with a reduction in field hours with the following requirements:

- a. Advanced MSW students must complete a minimum of 85% of the required 900 hours = 765 hours;
- b. MSW students must meet all of the required competencies and the associated practice behaviors (see MSW Field Evaluations); and
- c. The field placement experience must be commenced prior to May 31, 2022.

Any reduction in hours must be discussed with Faculty Liaisons and Field Instructors to determine if the hour reduction will impact the student's mastery of the competencies and practice behaviors. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the typically required amount of field placement hours. Please note that this hour reduction policy will only apply to Advanced MSW students enrolled in placement Fall 2020-Winter 2021 and will not apply to Foundation Year students because they will not begin their final field placement experience prior to May 31, 2022.

Changes in Field Placement

If a field instructor leaves the placement site during placement, another field instructor with the requisite qualifications may be assigned from within the placement site.

If both the faculty liaison and the student request that the student be placed in another placement site after the start of the placement, the Field Director will review the concerns using the information from the Field Placement Review Form.

In cases that warrant a change, no more than one additional placement referral will be made. This will be permitted only when there are no allegations of ethical and professional breaches during the first placement and the reason for the termination of the placement is not because of student conduct. **Students should not expect to take field hours accumulated in one placement site to another placement site.** Exceptions to this policy must be made in writing by the Field Director and only after request by the Faculty Liaison based on circumstances beyond the student's control. In short, the field experience at both the Foundation (SWRK 595/596) and the Advanced levels (SWRK 695/696) are considered to be integrated learning opportunities. These 2-semester experiences cannot be divided among agencies without an exception to policy based on extenuating circumstances approved by the Field Director. Please see the Field Placement Process Flow Charts on page 27.

Return to Field Plan

In instances where a student experiences a disruption in the field placement experience in which: 1. the student discontinues placement at any point during the 2-semester

placement experience; and 2. it has been determined that the student can be eligible to return to field in another semester, the student will be required to complete a **Return to Field Plan**. This plan must be reviewed and approved by the Field Director before the student will be permitted to return to field placement. This plan can be waived by the Field Director in instances where the disruption was due to circumstances unrelated to field performance, such as instances where students experienced financial challenges, family emergencies, or other such extenuating circumstances.

The **Return to Field Plan** should document the ways in which the student will be able to address the concerns or challenges that arose in the initial field placement experience. Upon approval, the student's action plan will be shared with their field seminar instructor/faculty liaison who can then monitor the student's use of the plan during their field placement experience. Challenges, additional needs, and/or significant deviations from the approved plan that arise during the course of the field placement experience should be brought to the Field Director for review.

Placements in Work Settings*

Students requesting to use their place of employment as a field site for either the Foundation and/or the Advanced field placement experiences must complete a "Request an Agreement for Work site Placement" form and return it to the Field Director or Field Placement Coordinator. This form requires that the student detail current job responsibilities and propose alternative duties that meet educational requirements for field placement. Students must take the initiative in preparing a work site proposal. The Field Office is available to consult with students and placement site personnel regarding requirements. For students in their Advanced year (SWRK 695/696), the field placement agency and assignments must match the student's chosen concentration.

The student must obtain agreement from their Work Supervisor, Field Instructor, and Placement Site Director (or designated administrator) in order to be considered for assignment to a work site placement. The employing placement site and the student must determine how a placement will be accomplished. Options include: 1) The student is released to do placement hours in lieu of other job responsibilities; 2) A combination of work and outside hours are used; or 3) All hours are above and beyond normal work hours. Students and placement site administrators have been very creative in these decisions. Students sometimes use leave, vacation, or flextime to accomplish the required field placement time. The Field Office does not negotiate the time considerations beyond ensuring that the required number of field hours are accomplished in significant blocks of time and ensuring that if students are working full-time and conducting their field placements over and above work hours, they do their field placements at a rate of 16 (or 16-20 for advanced) hours per week in blocks of time of at least four hours each. Students are expected to have at least six hours of day time hours in the placement site in order to obtain supervision, attend staff meetings, and participate in the daily routines of the organization in the student role.

Once the application is submitted, the Field Director or Field Placement Coordinator will contact appropriate placement site personnel to determine if the proposal meets all field

placement requirements. The written "Request and Agency Agreement for Work Site Placement" must designate a Field Instructor who is different from the student's regular employment supervisor. In most cases, this Field Instructor is an integrated member of the agency with assignments in the agency other than student supervision. These written forms must also be attached to the Field Placement Application. In addition, an affiliation agreement must be signed by both the official agency representative and Eastern Michigan University before the student begins their field placement. The affiliation agreement is initiated by the EMU attorney's office at the Field Director's request.

Agencies where students are employed must meet all of the same criteria as other agencies in order to be designated a field placement site, including:

- Work site placements must be in public or non-profit 501c3 agencies. There are some for-profit agencies that are utilized for placement, but they must align with the School's mission. The Field Director will review these agencies on a case-by-case basis.
- Work site field assignments must be completed in significant blocks of time of at least four hours each that are designated in their field contracts and are different than their working hours.
- Field placement assignments must be different from the normal work assignments.*
- An appropriate MSW Field Instructor with at least two years of post-MSW work experience and who is not the student's normal work supervisor must be designated. This person must be a part of the agency in which the student is working and be available for a minimum of one hour of face-to-face supervision a week.
- At the Advanced placement level (Social Work 695/696), the placement site and the supervisor's fields of practice must match the student's concentration.

***CSWE COVID-19 Response to Worksite Placements (effective until May 31, 2022):**

In addition to the typical worksite option, which requires that a student be engaged in tasks/roles separate from their work tasks/roles without duplication of hours, students now have the option of using their paid work time as field placement hours. This means they engage in their paid work tasks/roles that are then counted as field tasks/roles:

- a. The work activities must address the competencies and associated practice behaviors;
- b. The student must receive 1hr of supervision from an approved field instructor. This field instructor must be someone other than their work supervisor. The field instructor must have an MSW degree and at least two years post-MSW experience;
- c. The student's worksite must have a current affiliation with EMU in order to be approved;
- d. As in the case of typical worksite placements, the student must have submitted a worksite application to be approved by the Field Office.

Availability During Business Hours: It is expected that learning in field placement will not be compromised by the student's employment status. To this end, it is important that students negotiate some "flex-time" with their employers so that they can accomplish the goal of becoming an integrated member of an organization/placement site team. Students need at least six daytime hours (Mon-Fri) for staff meetings, supervision, consultation, training, and placement site practice. Any student who requests this type of placement needs to fill out the additional field application and be prepared to discuss the proposal with the field office.

Accommodations: Students who currently have a Letter of Accommodations (LOA) documented by the Disability Resource Center (DRC) are strongly encouraged to request an additional LOA that addresses their field placement experience. It is important to ensure that appropriate accommodations are developed to support student's learning in the field placement context. Students may also request accommodations from the DRC without ever having utilized accommodations in the past. Accommodations should be requested as early as possible. Students are strongly encouraged to share their field placement specific LOA with their field instructor at their placement site. Field placement sites cannot offer accommodations without such a letter. In addition, there are no retroactive accommodations. If you have questions or concerns about this process, please reach out to the DRC: <https://www.emich.edu/drc/index.php>

Incomplete Grades: On the rare occasions when a grade of Incomplete is awarded, the student must work directly with their field instructor and faculty liaison to resolve the reason for the Incomplete. All Incomplete grades should be resolved as soon as possible and in accordance with University policy. For other conditions which might necessitate review of students staying in field placement, see the *MSW Student Handbook* available on the School of Social Work website.

Student Ongoing Learning Contracts: Students work with their field instructor to create an ongoing educational contract. The ongoing learning contract states the student's individual learning goals and describes the assignments for which the student will be responsible in order to meet these goals. In addition, students work with their field instructors to identify the CSWE competencies and practice behaviors that are associated with the goals/tasks. Weekly supervision by the field instructor, as well as end of semester evaluations provide feedback to the student and field instructor regarding accomplishment of learning goals.

Student Field Grades: Using information provided by the student, the placement site field instructor, the field placement evaluation, and the visit to the placement site, the seminar faculty liaison assigns a final grade to each student in placement. Attendance, participation, integration of material from the seminar with practice in field placement are all factored into SWRK 595, 596, 695, and 696 grades. **A passing grade of a B or above that reflects performance in both the field placement seminar and field placement itself are required** in order to continue to the next semester of field..

Copies of Student Evaluations: The school will not make copies of field evaluations for

any purpose. Students who wish to keep copies of their evaluations should print copy of their evaluation from the IPT system immediately after the evaluation has been submitted in order to have a copy for their own records.

NASW CODE OF ETHICS

The School of Social Work operates under the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics*. Students, faculty, and field instructors are required to follow the *Code of Ethics* in their work and their interactions with each other. Students who engage in unethical conduct, who behave in an unacceptable manner according to the NASW *Code of Ethics*, agency policy, or field placement policy; who falsify records or who misrepresent themselves or their work are subject to dismissal from the Social Work program and will receive an 'F' in Field Placement. Students and supervisors should read the *Code of Ethics* and use it as a basis for field supervision. The *Code of Ethics* can be found at the following link:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

Repeating placement or seminar: Students who do not complete their field placement requirements and need to repeat the placement are also required to retake the field seminar and meet all seminar requirements during the time they are in placement.

Other Important Policy Information

Liability: Eastern Michigan University provides general liability insurance for students while they are performing activities that are a part of their field work assignment. Students are not covered for any criminal activity. If the field placement site does not have additional insurance that covers interns, students may consider purchasing additional liability coverage through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

Mandatory Reporting and Duty to Warn: In cases of mandatory reporting or duty to warn that occur during the student's field placement experience, students cannot be the primary reporter. The field instructor or other placement site staff person is required to ensure that these reporting requirements are fulfilled and can include the student in that process.

Home Visits: In many social service agencies, home visits are a part of the social worker's role. In some agencies, placement site cars and/or mileage reimbursement are available. In other settings, placement site cars and/or reimbursement are not available. Students may be required to use their personal cars for placement site work and home visits during the course of field placement. Students should check with their insurance company to be sure that they have appropriate coverage. Similar to other typical courses where there are costs for books and materials, field placement experiences may include costs related to driving to and from placement and to field placement activities/meetings.

Transporting Clients: In some agencies, transporting clients is part of the social worker's role. However, the School of Social Work does not require that students use their personal vehicles for transporting clients. If students are asked to transport clients, but do not feel

they can do this, they should tell the placement site supervisor. If this is still an issue, the faculty liaison can become involved in negotiating other assignments with the field supervisor.

In all cases, students are required to have appropriate automobile insurance coverage for their own transportation. If they are going to transport clients, they will need to check with their auto insurance companies regarding appropriate coverage. It is advised that without such coverage, clients should not be transported in students' cars.

Health Insurance: The University does not carry any health insurance for students while in field placement. However, all students are advised to have health insurance coverage. Students should review information on the University's website regarding health coverage: <https://www.emich.edu/uhs/student-insurance/>. All vaccinations should be current. In some agencies, students are required to provide health information and proof of health insurance prior to acceptance in placement.

Universal Precautions: In some field placement settings, there are risks from contagious disease. Students should discuss these risks and protections with the Field Instructor. In some agencies, students will be asked to use universal health care precautions.

COVID-19 Precautions: Students are expected to follow all University policies regarding COVID-19 precautions and reporting. Students should also be aware of and abide by agency requirements, State requirements, and should attend to the guidance of the CDC. Students can find the latest EMU guidance regarding COVID-19 here: <https://www.emich.edu/emusafe/>

HIPAA: All students who are involved with medical records or with issues regarding the health of their clients should consult with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, (HIPAA), updated with Privacy Rules in 2000 and 2003 and with Security Rules in 2005 and 2006 and are required to follow these privacy rules.

Inclement and Severe Weather: In cases of inclement weather, students should use caution and allow for extra time to travel to their field placement sites. If weather conditions make it unsafe for the student to travel to field placement, the student should notify their field instructor and make arrangements to make up the missed hours. If the field placement site and/or the University is closed due to severe weather on a day when the student is scheduled to be in placement, the student is not required to attend placement. However, the hours for that day(s) will not count towards the student's required placement hours. In such cases, field instructors are encouraged to provide students with alternative assignments that allow for the flexibility to complete such assignments off site.

Safety: As in any workplace setting, there are safety risks in field placement. There can be placement site/environmental, client interaction, health, home visit or community outreach, travel, or other types of safety concerns that need to be addressed with students. All students must complete the Field Placement Safety Assignment with their field

instructor. The assignment requires the student to discuss with their field instructor the field site's safety policies, plans and protocols and provides students with an opportunity to ask questions and identify preventative measures used to reduce risks. Students will share this information with their seminar instructors for their review. Students should continue to discuss issues involving safety with their supervisors throughout the placement experience and take appropriate precautions to reduce risks to safety. The NASW's *Guidelines for Social Work Safety in the Workplace* can be a useful resource for students and agencies in identifying safety guidelines:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=60EdoMjcNC0%3d&portalid=0%27>

Social Media & Electronic Communication Policies: The use of social media and other forms of electronic communication are common practice and have created new avenues for connection and accessing information. The NASW's *Code of Ethics* was revised in 2017 to address the use of social media and electronic communication in the professional social work context. In response to these ethical standards, the Field Program has identified the following policies and guidelines that should be adhered to by all EMU MSW and BSW students when enrolled in field placement:

- 1) Social media contact with placement site participants: Students should not engage in social media contact with current or past placement site participants during the field placement experience or after the conclusion of the field placement experience. Standard 1.06 in the *Code of Ethics* states that "social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships;" use of personal social media contact with placement site participants is a violation of this standard.
- 2) Use of online search sites: The NASW *Code of Ethics* provides the following guidelines regarding conducting an online search of placement site participants: "Social workers should obtain client consent before conducting an electronic search on the client. Exceptions may arise when the search is for purposes of protecting the client or other people from serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm, or for other compelling professional reasons" (NASW, 2017). This means that students should not engage in online research using social media or other tools to learn about their placement site participants. If any such search is required to ensure safety, students would first discuss this with their field instructor.
- 3) Electronic communication with placement site participants: Students should ask their field placement site about the policies regarding electronic communications with placement site participants in order to learn whether email or texting is a placement site sanctioned form of communication. Additionally, if email or texting is a placement site sanctioned form of communication, students should only use such communication for professional purposes. Email and texting should not be used for personal communication with placement site participants. Students should be aware of the risks to confidentiality and privacy when using such forms of communications and should discuss with their field instructor how they can ensure that placement site participants' privacy and confidentiality are protected when using these forms of communication. Students should not use their personal phone numbers to communicate with clients and instead should use a placement site phone or create a google phone number. Students who are engaging in telehealth

services with clients should be trained by their placement site in the use of appropriate software and should follow HIPAA policies and social work ethical standards in their use of such services.

4) Social media use and the placement site: Students should be aware that because social media platforms are public, posting information about their field placement site, experience, or its participants is subject to public viewing. Any such posts can pose a threat to confidentiality and privacy. Students should be aware of the privacy settings on their social media sites and also need to be mindful that even with privacy restrictions, there is never a guarantee that placement site participants (current and past) as well as placement site administrators will not have access to the student's social media sites. Students should learn about the placement site's social media use policies. Given the student's unique role in the placement site setting as a student intern, it is advisable that students not engage in personal social media contact with their social work field instructor or any placement site employee/staff during the course of the internship in order to preserve appropriate boundaries. This standard may differ for students in macro settings where social media use is often part of the professional communication; in such instances, students are using this type of platform or communication in a professional context rather than a personal context.

In addition to the above guidelines, it is important that students learn about their field placement site's social media and electronic communication policies and adhere to those guidelines. Additionally, students are responsible for the ethical standards as described in the NASW's Code of Ethics; the changes to the Code that include content specific to electronic communication and social media use are highlighted in yellow:

(<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Highlighted-Revisions-to-the-Code-of-Ethics>. Additionally, the NASW, the Association for Social Work Boards, CSWE, and the Clinical Social Work Association developed the following *Technology in Social Work Practice* guidelines:

https://www.socialworkers.org/includes/newIncludes/homepage/PRA-BRO-33617.TechStandards_FINAL_POSTING.pdf

University Policy on Weapons/Dangerous Substances: "It is the policy of Eastern Michigan University that no person shall possess or use any firearm or other dangerous weapon, concealed or otherwise, on property owned, leased or controlled by the University or otherwise in the course of University business. Further, no person shall possess or use explosive materials, incendiary devices or other dangerous objects or substances on property owned, leased or controlled by the University or otherwise in the course of University business"

(<https://emich.policYTECH.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=132&public=true>).

Other Human Resource Issues: Students may be asked to submit a criminal background check and/or drug testing by placement site human resource departments. Agencies have their own standards regarding issues that might prevent students from being accepted for a field placement. Agencies have the right to terminate any student who does not meet the human resources requirements of the placement site.

Eastern Michigan University Policies on Discrimination

“Eastern Michigan University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ancestry, disability, military status, veteran status or other non-merit reasons, in admissions, educational programs or activities and employment and complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act” (<https://www.emich.edu/nondiscrimination/index.php>).

EMU Policies on Sex-based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct

Title IX compliance requires that “Eastern Michigan University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment free from discrimination. Any gender based discrimination, including sexual misconduct which includes but is not limited to, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship violence and sexual exploitation committed by EMU students, staff or faculty will not be tolerated. This applies to academic, education, athletic, residential and other University operated programs. Eastern Michigan University encourages individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct by an EMU student or employee to seek assistance” (<https://www.emich.edu/title-nine/index.php>). The Title IX policy can be found here: <https://www.emich.edu/title-nine/documents/emu-sexual-misconduct-and-sex-based-discrimination-policy.pdf?v=2021-01-29T18:29:28Z>

All students and employees are expected to ensure a work and educational environment that is free from intimidation and harassment.

Reporting Instances of Discrimination & Harassment

Instances of discrimination in the field placement context, including but not limited to discrimination based on race, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ancestry, disability, military status, veteran status or other non-merit reasons should be reported.

Title IX includes gender-based discrimination and sexual misconduct experienced by an EMU student in a field placement setting, a University program or activity (online or in person), or other instances on campus or on University owned property. The process for reporting sex-based discrimination and sexual misconduct can be found here: Instances of Title IX concerns or violations should be reported to EMU’s Title IX Coordinator, Anika Awai-Williams Anika Awai-Williams at aawaiwil@emich.edu, or by leaving a voice mail directly to Anika at 734.487.2202 or by making an online report at <https://www.emich.edu/title-nine/reporting.php> . All EMU employees are mandated reporters, and are required to report any disclosures, incidents, or reports of sexual misconduct or sex-based discrimination as soon as possible to the Title IX Coordinator.

In other instances of discrimination, reports can be made to the student’s faculty liaison

or in the event that this is not possible, reports can be made to the Field Director. The Field Director will work with students and faculty liaisons to access appropriate School of Social Work and University supports. Reports of discrimination and harassment can also be made to the EMU Office of the Ombuds (emu_ombuds@emich.edu).

Evaluation and Grading for SWRK 595, 596, 695, 696

Grades in the field placement courses are assigned by the faculty liaisons. Each liaison will provide the student with a syllabus detailing the specific assignments and requirements of the course. The following are the general criteria that are expected in every field class:

Students are responsible for:

- Developing a learning contract with the Field Instructor to set goals at the beginning of each semester
- Using the contract to track accomplishments of learning goals and to obtain feedback on assignments in the field
- Keeping a log of all field hours
- Participating in mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluations with field instructor
- Participating in weekly supervision with Field Instructor
- Following the NASW *Code of Ethics* at all times

Faculty liaisons use the following sources of information for grading:

- Student's evaluation of their work in the field
- Field Instructor's online (IPT) and oral evaluation of field work
- Faculty Liaison's visit to the placement site
- Student's written and oral participation in the field seminar class

The grades in field courses are based on a combination of the seminar and the field placement evaluations. **Students must pass the requirements in both the class and in the field portions of the course in order to obtain a passing grade in a field course. Students cannot earn a passing grade without a completed field evaluation and without having completed the required number of field hours.** Students should read their field syllabus closely to determine how these pieces fit together in their sections of the courses. The Faculty Liaison is the instructor of record in a field course and awards all grades. Students receive letter grades at the end of SWRK 595, 596, 695, and 696.

Faculty Liaisons will address any concerns regarding professional behavior in the field or in the seminar portions of this class. Students who violate the NASW *Code of Ethics* are subject to dismissal from the Social Work Program and will receive an "F" in Field Placement.

Online Field Evaluation

All evaluations are administered online through Intern Placement Tracking program (IPT). Field Instructors will be given a log-in from the Field Office and will collaborate with their intern to complete the form. Please save often so that it does not get lost. When complete,

save it, print a copy for the Field Instructor and the Student's records, and email the Student's Faculty Liaison to let them know it is complete.

Note: The Student should come prepared with behavioral examples of their performance to the meeting with the Field Instructor. The Student and Field Instructor are to complete the evaluation together.

Responsibilities of the Field Instructor

- To familiarize themselves with EMU's field program by attending orientation meetings or by appointment with the Field Placement Coordinator or Field Director.
- To prepare and educate the placement site concerning the incoming student's role and the responsibilities of the placement site as an educational site.
- To inform the Faculty Liaison and Field Placement Coordinator or Field Director as soon as possible if the student fails to appear for a screening interview or, once accepted, fails to begin placement.
- To orient the student to the placement site, its staff, structure, organization, policies and procedures, safety plans, and resources.
- To engage the student in the formulation of a mutually agreeable educational contract specifying expectations, as well as specific goals and tasks related to the field placement experience and connected to the CSWE competencies and practice behaviors (see 595/96 or 695/96 syllabi).
- To develop and monitor sufficient numbers of appropriate assignments for each semester. It is EMU's expectation that the student will have a full generalist experience for the Foundation Year MSW field placement with micro, mezzo and macro learning opportunities. The student will have a specialized experience during the Advanced Year MSW field placement. The student should obtain experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in all placement types. Engagement with client systems should occur early in the semester.
- To instruct the students on how to develop and maintain records of client and community contact deemed appropriate by the placement site. These records, as well as process recordings assigned by the Social Work Program, should be reviewed by the Field Instructor.
- To provide adequate supervision and instruction for students to assist them in integrating theory and practice. A minimum of one hour per week in a structured session is expected in addition to the informal supervisory contact that occurs in agencies. Supervision may occur individually or in groups. Students who receive group supervision should also receive individual supervision at least twice per month. It is recommended that the student prepare an agenda for this meeting.
- To be alert to strains or problems in the placement site-student relationship or in student performance. When such issues are not quickly resolved at the

placement site level, it is the field supervisor's responsibility to initiate contact with the Faculty Liaison.

- It is expected that the student will receive ongoing constructive feedback on their performance. The Field Instructor is asked to complete the online evaluation of the student's overall performance at the end of each semester. The evaluation should be based on the goals established in the educational contract as well as the student's performance in the placement site.

Supports for Field Instructors

The Field Office hosts a field orientation for field instructors at the commencement of each field placement experience (Fall and Winter semesters). The field orientation provides an overview of relevant field placement processes, guidance for field instruction and supervision, as well as a description of the problem-solving approaches used collaboratively by the Field Office, students, faculty liaisons, and field instructors. The orientation also includes a continuing education seminar focused on supporting field instructors in their supervision of social work interns. In addition to this event, the Field Office hosts additional continuing education events throughout the academic year designed for field instructors to connect with the Field Office and participate in continuing education events. Field instructors are introduced to their students' faculty liaisons at the outset of the placement experience and engage in ongoing dialogue with faculty liaisons about students' progress and areas for growth. The faculty liaisons meet with field instructors a minimum of once per semester to review the ongoing learning contracts and student progress.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Liaison

- To be familiar with and to follow the field policies and procedures.
- To attend orientation sessions and to assist the Field Director in orienting students and Field Instructors to field placement responsibilities.
- To notify the Field Director of any issue that may jeopardize the field placement and to submit a Request a Field Placement Review to the Field Director when there are serious issues in the student's field experience and efforts to problem-solve by making visits to the placement site have been unsuccessful.
- To facilitate and monitor the placement site-school relationship by facilitating communication, addressing needs and problems as they arise, and mediating differences or conflicts among any of the parties involved.
- To be available to placement site Field Instructors throughout the semester.
- To be available as a resource for students who may request assistance in understanding their responsibilities or in addressing field related issues.
- To review and approve the educational contract between placement site and student.
- To review and monitor process recordings, logs, and other student assignments to track the student's progress within the placement site.
- To seek feedback from Field Instructors regarding the field components of

the social work program. Such feedback should be made available to the Field Office for future planning.

- To participate in the field orientation, liaison meetings, and other field activities, when offered by the School.
- To review the student's progress with the Field Instructor; to meet at least once per semester with the Field Instructor and the student to review the Field Instructor's student evaluation; make one visit per semester to the placement site. This visit can be made in-person or via Zoom, per the preferences of the student and field instructor.
- To submit a grade as the instructor of record to Records and Registration on the schedule designated by the University.
- To report to the Field Director the appropriateness of certain agencies for particular student needs by completing the Field Placement Agency Evaluation Faculty Liaison form for evaluating placement site participation.
- To evaluate and monitor work site placements according to field policies and procedures to ensure that students are performing appropriate assignments.

Responsibilities of a Student in Placement

- To complete the application for field placement at the time indicated, providing information about skills, interests, and preferences for type of field placement.
- To participate in required pre-placement group meeting(s) with the Field Director or Field Placement Coordinator.
- To contact the agency to which a referral is made in a timely way, without exceeding five business days of receiving the referral.
- To attend and treat the interview professionally (like a job interview), dressing in appropriate attire, sharing an up-to-date résumé, and being prepared to ask and answer questions.
- To complete required field placement in accordance with the Social Work Program's policies and procedures.
- To regularly attend and actively participate in the weekly or bi-weekly field seminar class in order to facilitate the positive integration of the field and class experience.
- To participate in designing, at the beginning of each semester, an educational contract that includes mutual expectation for learning and performance, as well as specification of goals, tasks and assignments to be completed. This contract is developed by the student and Field Instructor and is approved by both the Faculty Liaison and the Field Instructor.
- To conform to the NASW *Code of Ethics* and the placement site's expectations for professional behavior in such areas as administrative protocol, confidentiality, record keeping, and accountability. Special attention should be paid to the issue of client confidentiality. Proceedings, recordings, or other placement site-based assignments required for class, which contain material about clients should be carefully disguised and

reviewed by Field Instructor.

- To notify the Field Instructor promptly when lateness or absence is unavoidable. Any client commitments that cannot be kept should be communicated to both the Field Instructor and to the client involved.
- To make up any missed hours in accordance with the policy statement requirements.
- To prepare an agenda for supervision session and to come to such conferences prepared with questions as well as to discuss aspects of the field work. Written material should be kept current and, if possible, be given to the Field Instructor for review in advance.
- To bring questions or concerns and problems to the attention of the Field Instructor. If any issues cannot be resolved at that time, it is the student's responsibility to call the issue to the attention of the faculty liaison as early in the semester as possible.
- To participate in an ongoing evaluation process as a developing professional social worker. The student and Field Instructor should review the educational contract and revise it when necessary. The student should be prepared to participate in the end-of-semester evaluation process with the Field Instructor and the Faculty Liaison. Students must complete a "student copy" of the field evaluation to be used by the Field Instructor in completing the final evaluation.
- To ensure that proper guidelines are followed when the place of employment becomes a field placement site.

Guidelines for Contracts

Ongoing Educational Contract

The field learning contract between the student and their field instructor is a written agreement regarding their respective roles and responsibilities. It also gives the student an opportunity to articulate learning goals that are facilitated through the assignment of activities, designed to help the student accomplish these goals. The contract is a tool for monitoring the ongoing field experience and for evaluating student performance. All Foundation MSW students must work towards acquiring and demonstrating the generalist social work competencies and practice behaviors. Advanced MSW students work towards acquiring and demonstrating the social work competencies and practice behaviors associated with their concentration.

After the first four weeks of placement, the student and field instructor enter into an ongoing contract, which spells out the student's learning goals and the specific assignments that will be used to accomplish these goals. Students' learning goals should be directly related to the CSWE competencies, which can be indicated by number after each goal. Similarly, each assignment should be designed to meet particular learning goal(s) and relate to the appropriate CSWE practice behaviors.

The Foundation contract can be found here:

https://www.emich.edu/chhs/socialwork/documents/learning_contract_bsw_and_foundation.pdf?v=2021-02-04T18:42:55Z

The Advanced MSW Learning contracts can be found here:

- [Health and Aging Services Learning Contract \[PDF\]](#)
- [Child and Family Services Learning Contract \[PDF\]](#)
- [Mental Health and Substance Use Recovery Services Learning Contract \[PDF\]](#)

The goals and assignments should be determined in supervisory sessions with input from both the field instructor and the student. It is the responsibility of the student to prepare the contract in written/typed form. Both the student and the field instructor must review and sign a final copy of the contract. The faculty liaison will set the date that the student must complete and submit the contract for review.

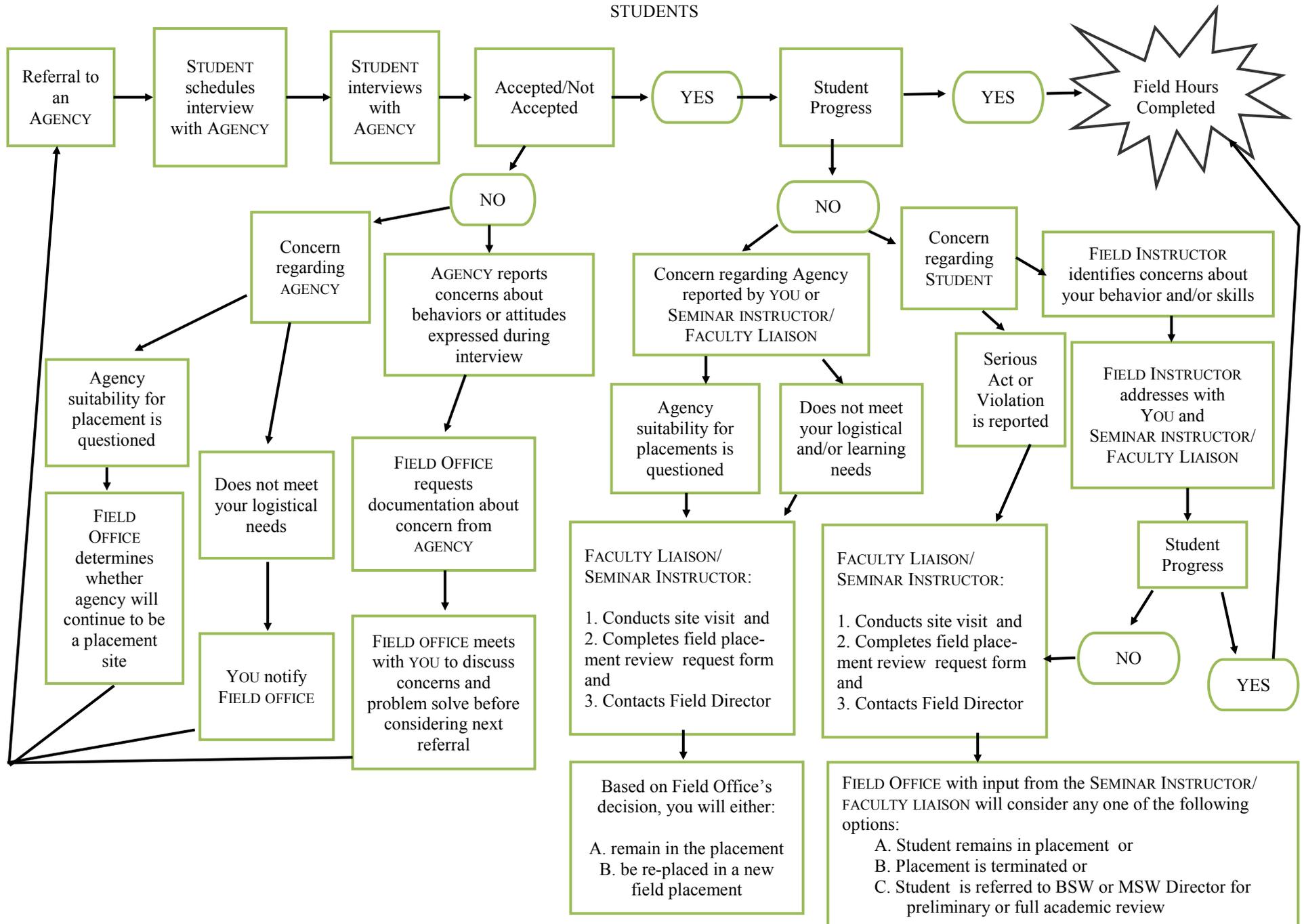
Contract Review and Revision

At mid-semester and the end of the first semester, the student and field instructor should review the ongoing educational contract to assess the student's progress in accomplishing goals. At any point the contract may be revised to reflect new goals and assignments. At the beginning of the second semester of field, the contract should be reviewed and revised as needed. Goals in which the student has demonstrated competence during the first semester may be removed in the second semester's contract. In many instances, the student has demonstrated a beginning ability to perform particular skills during the first semester and should use the second semester to develop competency in that area. Again, at mid-semester and the end of the semester the student and field instructor should review the contract as part of the evaluation process.

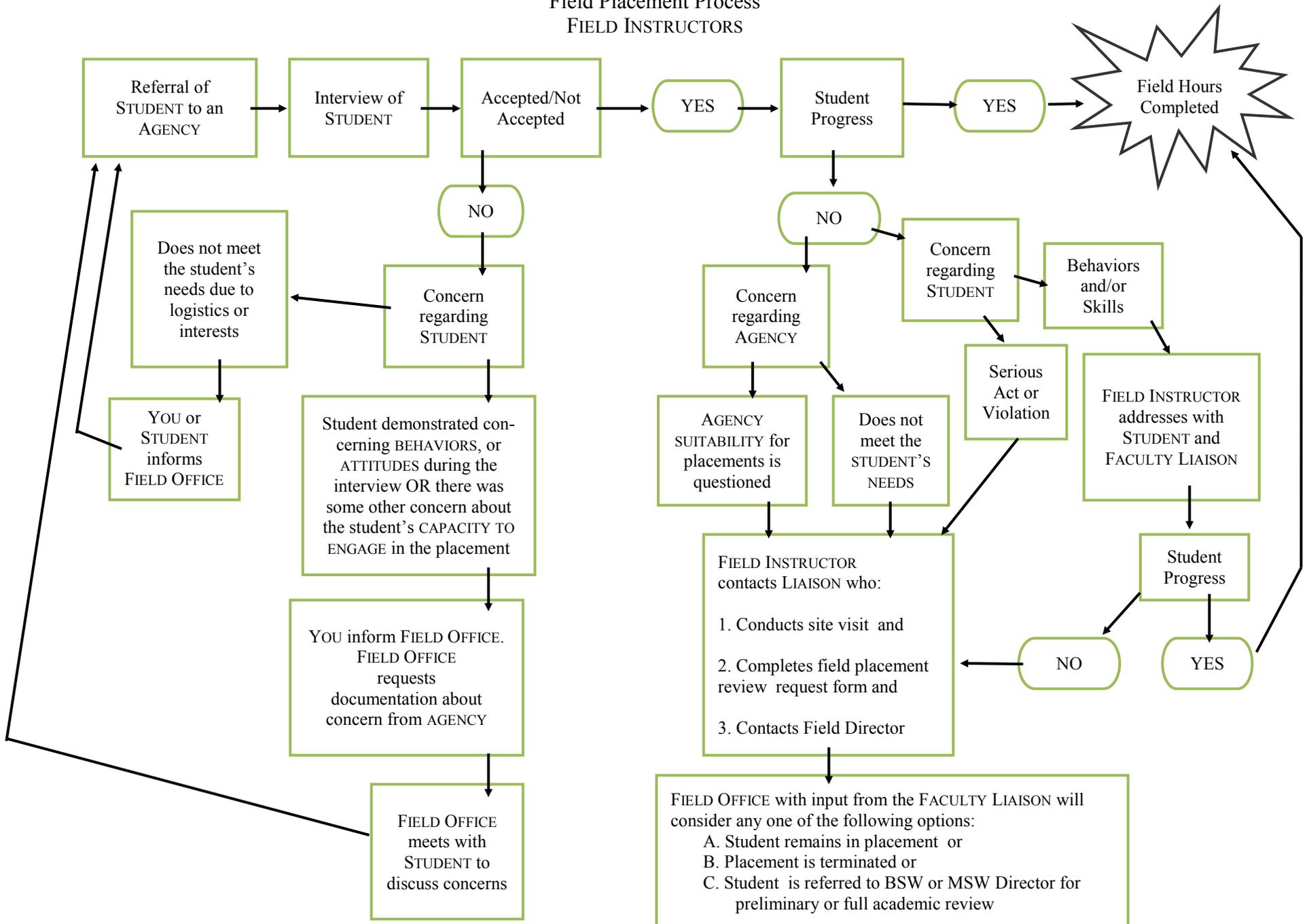
Student & Faculty Liaison Evaluation of Field Placement Sites

At the end of each field placement experience, students and faculty liaisons will receive an online survey inviting them to respond to questions about the field placement site(s) to which they were assigned/to which their students were assigned. Individual survey responses are not shared with field placement sites. The results of the survey provide the Field Office with important feedback about field placement experiences and support future planning. The Field Office uses the results of the survey to provide field placement sites with additional support when necessary and make determinations about future student referrals.

Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work
Field Placement Process
STUDENTS



Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work
Field Placement Process
FIELD INSTRUCTORS



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