



Master of Social Work Program Field Education Manual
Department of Social Work
College of Nursing & Health Professions Arkansas State
University
Jonesboro, Arkansas

A-STATE Master of Social Work Program
Field Education Manual

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Field Program of the Department of Social Work at Arkansas State University. This manual is designed to provide students, Field Supervisors and faculty with essential information regarding the actual field experience, including the objectives, requirements, and policies used throughout the internship. Field experience is a critical component of the A-STATE Social Work Program and is required of all students. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has defined field experience as the “signature pedagogy” of social work education. It is through the internship process that students have the opportunity to integrate classroom knowledge with hands-on experience in professional situations. Students work side by side with professional social workers, who provide ongoing mentoring and supervision, to promote the development of the social work competencies and practice behaviors set forth by CSWE. Students are required to read the field manual and use it as a reference throughout their time in their internship.

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM AT A-STATE

MSW PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the MSW Program at A-State is to provide a transformative educational experience that emphasizes respect for diversity and prepares graduates for compassionate, ethical, clinical practice that enhances the well-being and quality of life for individuals, families, groups, and communities. Graduates understand the importance of connectedness and work to improve the quality of life for all persons from the local to the global level. Graduates utilize contemporary, evidence-based theories and approaches to intervene and bring about positive changes including economic, environmental, racial, and social justice. MSW courses are developed and delivered with an emphasis on rural social work, trauma-informed care, the importance of human relationships, dignity and worth of person, human rights, and service. The MSW program graduates competent individuals who exemplify and uphold the CSWE and NASW Code of Ethics.

Accreditation

Arkansas State University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association (NCA) of Colleges and Schools. A-STATE was first accredited in 1928 and has had continuous accreditation since that time. The MSW Program at A-STATE was granted Initial Accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education effective in the academic year 2008-2009.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Arkansas State University Master of Social Work Program celebrates diversity. We welcome all applicants for admission without regard to race, color, gender, age, religious affiliation, ethnicity or national origin, physical condition, or sexual orientation. Arkansas State University’s diversity policy (as stated in the Student Handbook)

<https://www.astate.edu/a/student-conduct/student-standards/sh2223final.pdf>

The quest for knowledge is central to the very existence of Arkansas State University and universities in general. While portions of knowledge may be attained in various segments of the university and society, the fullness of knowledge can only be obtained when people of all

racess, ethnicities, colors, genders, religions, sexual orientation, and socio-economic statuses are free to gather and exchange their life's experiences, problem solving skills, methods and styles of communications, values, beliefs, and ways of thinking and learning in an environment that encourages the presence and participation of all who desire to be affiliated with the academy.

Achieving this fullness of knowledge begins with recognizing that no single people, group, personality, discipline or trade is the caretaker of all knowledge or life experiences. Rather, the pursuit and sharing of knowledge requires the presence, and meaningful participation of those who may contribute their unique qualities and experiences to this constantly changing mosaic we call diversity.

A-State will be known for its commitment to diversity as evidenced by its inclusive work and learning environments, its acceptance of differences as positive and enriching and its ability to attract, retain and advance a diverse faculty, staff and student body. A-State will have an environment where anyone, no matter who they are, will see a consistent reflection of themselves in their program.

Diversity at A-State is a process embracing the ideal of inclusion. Through continuous education, the A-State community constantly moves towards that ideal by accepting each person as an equal and valued member of the campus community.

MSW PROGRAM GOALS

1. Education for Clinical Practice: Building on a foundation of generalist social work practice, the MSW prepares graduates for competency-based, clinical practice with an emphasis trauma informed care within a rural context.
2. Knowledge Development: The MSW program contributes to the knowledge base of the profession through the faculty's leadership in scholarship and community collaborations. Students develop critical thinking and research skills to address the problems and needs of diverse, multilevel client systems and further contribute to the profession's knowledge base. Graduates of the MSW program will engage in career-long learning to continually develop their professional knowledge base and practice skills.
3. Service: The MSW program at A-STATE creates an environment that promotes in students and faculty a desire to serve others by contributing time, effort, and other resources to address the needs of the community in which we live and learn and beyond.
4. Education for culturally sensitive practice: Graduates of the MSW program at A-STATE will demonstrate a commitment to social and economic justice by changing conditions which oppress and marginalize people, particularly in rural environments.

MSW COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

The Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education define the competencies that are common to all social work practice. Each competency is composed of knowledge, values, and skills that define what social workers must know and be able to do to practice effectively. For social workers who practice at the advanced (MSW) level, each program articulates advanced practice behaviors consistent with its mission. The core competencies and foundation and advanced practice behaviors serve as the program objectives for the Arkansas State University MSW program and are as follows:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics and relevant laws.
- b. Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
- c. Use technology ethically and appropriately.
- d. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Recognize and resolve ethical issues common to clinical social work practice in the rural environment.
- b. Analyze and respond to relationship dynamics including power differentials.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels.
- b. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Use knowledge of the historical effects of oppression, discrimination, and historical trauma on client's systems, particularly those from rural communities to guide assessment, treatment planning and interventions.
- b. Recognize strengths, limitations and barriers of rural communities and develop strategies for enhancing social justice and equality of services.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels.
- b. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Identify and understand diversity, populations at risk and oppression.
- b. Differently adapt and apply clinical practice skills to respond to the characteristics of diversity, populations at risk, and oppression within the rural context of practice.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs.
- b. Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Critically evaluate research to determine generalizability and relevance for clinical practice with diverse populations and client systems in rural environments.
- b. Integrate evidence-based practice and best practice model research into clinical practice.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery and access to social services.
- b. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Analyze intended and unintended effects of policies on client systems in rural environments.
- b. Design intervention strategies that engage constituents from rural environments to advocate for policies that promote social justice, reduce disparities and promote quality of life.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients.
- b. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Collaborate with formal and informal resources in rural communities to enhance service and to effect positive change.
- b. Demonstrate capacity to engage and build clinical relationships with clients, including those who have experienced trauma.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies.
- b. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Synthesize bio-psycho-social-spiritual theories and diagnostic systems in the formulation of comprehensive assessments.
- b. Assess the impact of loss and trauma on clients and client systems physical, social, and emotional well-being.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals.
- b. Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Use appropriate clinical techniques including cognitive behavioral therapy and crisis intervention to respond to concerns identified through on-going assessment.
- b. Develop prevention strategies focused on at risk individuals, groups, and communities in order to prevent trauma and ameliorate its potential impact.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Foundation practice behaviors: Social workers

- a. Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes.
- b. Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Advanced practice behaviors: Advanced practitioners in clinical social work

- a. Contribute to the theoretical knowledge base of social work through practice-based research that explores trauma and loss and enhances the professions understanding and appreciation of rural communities.
- b. Implement practice evaluation strategies to assess the effectiveness of clinical practice.

OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FIELD EXPERIENCE

Field education is a central component of the MSW curriculum. Field education provides an opportunity for students to apply and integrate classroom knowledge with hands-on experience. Students will receive professional supervision by an individual who has an MSW degree from an accredited university. The A-STATE MSW Program offers a 420-hour generalist field experience and a 504-hour advanced clinical field experience.

Field site agencies are approved based on their ability to provide students with the educational experience needed to meet CSWE requirements, appropriate supervision of an LMSW or LCSW, completion of the university's affiliate agreement, and willingness to participate in needed orientations and meetings with faculty throughout the student's internship. Field agencies can represent a wide variety of services such as mental health, child welfare, the juvenile and adult justice system, substance abuse programs, public schools, medical settings, hospice programs, and many more. Students have the opportunity to serve a broad range of populations, including children and adolescents, older adults, individuals with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, veterans, and the mentally ill, to name a few. The Foundation internship must provide the student with a generalist social work experience that focuses on the many roles of a social worker and the skills used in case management and advocacy. The advanced internship must provide the student with the opportunity to observe and participate in therapeutic evidenced based interventions and diagnostic assessment utilizing the current edition of the DSM-5.

Both the foundation and advanced internships, should begin with the student in an observational role with independent work being assigned as the Field Supervisors, student and faculty feel it is appropriate. The Field Supervisor and student will develop a learning agreement that guides the internship assignments and activities utilizing a template in our field software program that follows CSWE competencies.

Throughout the field placement, the student is required to receive a minimum of one-hour weekly supervision by the Field Supervisor. The student will also participate in online weekly discussion boards and other weekly assignments in which they will have the opportunity to process their experiences with other students, and identify how they can apply theory and skills in their practice. The online field course is led by a faculty liaison that is available for ongoing consultation to the field agency, and will make at least one virtual site visit during each semester to meet with the student and the Field Supervisor to evaluate and monitor the student's progress in demonstrating the social work competencies.

Key Terms – Roles and responsibilities of each are described in detail on page 15.

Field Supervisor - The agency professional who supervises an A-STATE student directly. Field Supervisors must have an LCSW or LMSW and two years of practice experience. The field director may waive the requirement of licensure for an experienced MSW field supervisor with a foundation level student. However, all advanced level internships must be supervised by an LCSW or LMSW.

Student - Social work students enrolled in field course.

Faculty Liaison - The A-STATE faculty member assigned to work with the Field Supervisor and student in planning and evaluating the students learning experience.

Director of Field Education - The A-STATE faculty member administratively responsible for the supervision of the field program to include developing placements and management of field policies.

MSW Field Coordinator – An A-STATE faculty member that assists the Director of Field Education in the overall placement process and management of the Field Program.

Task Instructor - An agency staff member who is assigned to supervise the social work student in specific learning experiences when the Field Supervisor is not available for day to day direct supervision. Task Instructors may be of a different discipline such as an LPC, however, the student must also have a Field Supervisor as described above. Please refer to policy regarding agencies that do not have an MSW on site.

PREPARATION AND ELIGIBILITY FOR FIELD

Prior to being admitted to the MSW program, students are required to complete certain prerequisites. Please refer to the individual degree plans for specific prerequisites and co-requisites. While completing field, students take co-requisites courses based on their foundation or advanced plans of study. To enter the field, students must meet several criteria to include:

1. Admission to the MSW Program with a minimum overall G.P.A of 3.0 for the Standard Program and 3.2 G.P.A. for the advanced program.
2. The student must complete the specified prerequisite courses as outlined in their plan of study with a "C" or better and maintain an overall G.P.A of 3.0.

3. The student must be enrolled in the appropriate co-requisite courses as outlined in their course of study. (Note: Students must complete SW 66003, SW 66033 and SW 66043 before beginning Advanced Field I)
4. The student must be making progress as outlined in their plan of study toward graduation.

The Director of Field Education will provide all newly admitted students with an online Field Orientation that discusses the field placement process, expectations of professional behaviors and tips for a positive internship. Students must be prepared to adjust their schedules for internship hours. The majority of agencies only offer internships during the normal working hours of Monday-Friday. If the student is enrolled in one of the Full-Time programs, the Department strongly recommends that students do not work more than 20 hours a week or preferably is not employed. Students maintaining part or full-time employment must have schedules to allow internship hours to occur during the normal workday of 8:00am-5:00pm.

THE INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT PROCESS

Matching the student with their site placement is a team effort involving the student, Field Coordinator and/or the Director of Field Education and the potential agencies. After being admitted to the MSW program, the Director of Field Education will provide the student with detailed instructions in applying for their field placement that will include the steps below.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CLOUD (formerly known as Tevera)

The software program, Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC), is needed before students can begin any step towards securing their internship, and the availability of field sites can be limited and competitive, so students are urged to begin this process as soon as they are admitted. Students having graduated from Arkansas State University's BSW program, will not need to purchase ELC (formerly Tevera), again as it is a one-time purchase. After students are admitted, they will receive an invite to purchase and/or create their MSW student account on ELC. This software program can be purchased from the bookstore or from the company directly. Students will find the field application on ELC with detailed instructions on other items they must complete to be approved for the internship placement process. This software program will be used throughout the student's internship to complete course assignments and document internship hours.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

Students must maintain professional liability insurance for the duration of their internship. Coverage for students typically costs approximately \$40-\$50 per calendar year. Two approved sources include:

- HPSO (Healthcare Providers Service Organization) <http://www.hpso.com>
- Preferra Insurance Company <https://preferrainsurance.com>

Other insurance options may be accepted provided the policy includes a minimum of \$1,000,000 per claim and up to \$3,000,000 aggregate in professional liability coverage.

Students must upload a copy of their policy into ELC along with the field application.

FIELD APPLICATION

Students in the online MSW program are responsible for locating a field placement within their geographic location that meets the field agency criteria, and provide this contact information to their Field Coordinator or the Director of Field Education through the field application process. Upon acceptance into the MSW online program option, students will receive detailed instructions from the Director of Field Education on how to secure an internship. These instructions will include the following:

1. Read the MSW Field Manual on the A-STATE website.
2. Register their account with the field tracking software program, ELC (formerly Tevera).
3. Contact their Field Coordinator or the Field Director to discuss their internship area of interests, identify various agencies that could serve as their possible internship and identify any special conditions that could impact their internship.
4. Complete the MSW Field Application through ELC that includes:
 - a. Identifying a minimum of two field placement agencies that have already expressed a potential willingness to accept the student for internship.
 - b. Providing the field agencies legal name, mailing address, and phone number.
 - c. Providing the name of the potential field supervisor, their credentials, email address and phone number and/or another agency representative's contact information in charge of internship recruitment.
 - d. Verifying professional liability insurance
 - e. Providing a resume that reflects any related volunteer or service work.
5. Director of Field Education or Field Coordinator will contact the agency representative to determine if the agency is eligible to serve as a field site.
6. After a potential agency is identified, the student will be advised to contact the agency representative for an official interview.
7. The Field Department will initiate the development of the University Affiliation Agreement.
8. An online link for a Field Supervisor's Orientation along with the Field Manual, specific internship details and instructions in creating their accounts in ELC will be forwarded to the identified field supervisor.

STUDENT/FIELD SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW

The student is responsible for scheduling this interview through the site placement process to determine if all parties agree that the site will be a good fit for the student and agency. These interviews are typically conducted three to six months before the student begins their field

placement experience, so if a second interview is needed, one can be arranged before the internship begins.

The student should treat this interview as a professional interview in dress, behavior, and overall preparation. The student should research the agency by visiting their website before this interview to have a clear understanding of services provided and the populations served. The student should provide a copy of their resume and be prepared to discuss why they want to intern at this agency as well as their overall professional goals. Students should be aware that agencies often use the internship process to screen and prepare their future employees. The Field Supervisor and student will agree upon a weekly internship schedule that will allow the student to pace their required hours out appropriately.

PLACEMENT CONFIRMATION

If the Field Supervisor and student agree that the match is a good one, the Director of Field Education or Field Coordinator will send the Field Supervisor and the student a confirmation letter. The field agency is also sent the College of Nursing and Health Professions Affiliation Agreement to be signed by the designated agency administrator. A copy of this agreement is kept on file in the College of Nursing and Health Profession.

The Field Supervisor/agency will inform the student of any pre-placement requirements that must occur before the student can begin the internship. Some agencies require these steps to be completed before the semester begins. These requirements may include a new worker orientation, a drug test, driving record, central registry child maltreatment application or a criminal background check. Some agencies may require the student to pay for their personal background checks. Interviews and orientation hours will not count towards the required number of field hours the student will complete when the field course begins. If any of these steps or requirements presents a problem for the student, it is the student's responsibility to contact the Director of Field Education at once.

ENROLLMENT IN FIELD COURSE

Students will not be able to enroll in the field course until their field application and other required documents are completed in ELC and the internship has been confirmed by one of the faculty members of the Field Department. Students will not be able to register for their field course until they have received their official placement letter in ELC which will also include the CRN for the specific section and faculty liaison that the student has been assigned to. Students will typically maintain the same faculty liaison throughout the three-semester field sequence to promote continuity and support of the student's growth throughout their practice.

The course syllabi will detail specific requirements and expectations. The field courses serve as the primary mechanism to demonstrate the student's ability to integrate classroom knowledge with their work in the field. The online structure will provide a supportive environment in which students can process their experiences in becoming professional social workers through discussion boards, and/or other activities. The Field course serves as a professional model of future treatment teams as students provide emotional support and share knowledge and resources they have obtained. Because the primary focus is a peer learning model, students are expected to participate fully and follow the weekly schedule.

FIELD ORIENTATION

Students will complete field orientation modules through their canvas field course. The orientation will typically include reviewing the features of ELC, course syllabus, learning agreement, time sheets, field evaluation process, expectations of professional behavior, a review of social work values and ethics, an introduction to basic social work skills and safety precautions.

STANDARD/FOUNDATION FIELD EXPECTATIONS

Foundation Field Experience is guided and evaluated by the exposure to learning activities within the agency setting that will allow the student the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the competencies and practice behaviors set forth by the Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Students in the Standard/Foundation program will complete three-seven-week semesters as reflected in their degree plan at the same agency internship. Students will complete 20 hours a week/140 hours per semester which will total 420 hours for the Foundation year.

During the Foundation Field placement, students will have opportunities to observe social work professionals and work directly under their supervision taking an active role in all phases of generalist practice with them. Students will begin their internship in a shadowing/observational role with independent tasks being assigned as the field supervisor, student and faculty liaison determine appropriate. Students must be able to demonstrate competency of all 20 practice behaviors before the conclusion of the third semester. Although the focus of learning activities is on establishing relationships and working with individuals and families; work with groups, organizations, and communities is also expected. Students should learn about the agency and the system of community resources of which it is a part. To do this, students should become familiar with services the agency frequently makes and receives referrals. The student should learn how to link agency clients with needed community resources. Student awareness of the impact of policies on practice is important to develop during the Foundation Field placement. The agency can contribute by helping the student identify specific national or state policies (legislative, judicial, or administrative) that affect practice in their agency.

The students also learn to use supervision and work cooperatively with other professionals, volunteers and para-professionals as appropriate to the agency setting. This requires developing the ability to communicate clearly both verbally and in writing. Foundation Field experiences help students develop professional behaviors needed to work with professionals in agencies. These behaviors include complying with agency policies and procedures, dressing appropriately, and behaving in a manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

ADVANCED FIELD EXPECTATIONS

Advanced field education is designed to prepare graduates for clinical practice with an emphasis in trauma informed care. Advanced field education meets the mission of the MSW Program by providing an avenue for students to master the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for rural-based clinical practice, apply therapeutic evidence-based interventions and diagnostic assessments utilizing the current edition of the DSM-5 consistent with social work values and ethics, promote social justice in their practice, apply critical thinking skills to diverse client populations, and to use communication skills differentially across client populations. Through field education, graduates also learn the value of identifying with professional social work and the importance of lifelong learning. Students in the Advanced program will complete three-

seven-week semesters as reflected in their degree plan. Students will complete 24 hours a week/168 hours per semester which will total 504 hours for the Advanced year.

Advanced field experience is guided and evaluated by the exposure to learning activities within the agency setting that will allow the student the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the eighteen advanced level practice behaviors that represent competent clinical practice. Advanced Field students will begin their internship roles in an observational role of clinical practice. Independent clinical tasks will be assigned as the Field Supervisor, Faculty Liaison and student feel appropriate. By the conclusion of the final semester of advanced field, students will be expected to demonstrate the ability to practice with increasing autonomy under appropriate clinical supervision.

LIFE EXPERIENCE AND TRANSFER WORK

No credit is given for life experiences in the field or other areas of the curriculum.

FIELD PRACTICE SETTINGS

The MSW Program, specifically the Director of Field Education with the assistance of other field faculty, are responsible for developing and maintaining a variety of generalist and clinical field practice settings. The Director of Field Education consults with the agency staff and receives feedback from the faculty and agency staff regarding the suitability of the agency as a field placement. Agencies must demonstrate an environment of service and mentoring that is compatible with the values and ethics of the social work profession. Agencies must be able to offer learning experiences that will allow the student to demonstrate the required practice behaviors stipulated by CSWE and outlined earlier in this manual. Field practice settings are continuously re-evaluated as new information appears from faculty, agency staff, and/or students.

CRITERIA FOR FIELD PLACEMENT AGENCIES

Agencies are selected as field placement sites based on the following criteria.

1. The agency views participation in the education of graduate social work students as a worthwhile activity and agrees to support the goals and objectives of the A-STATE Social Work program.
2. The agency demonstrates competence and stability in providing professional social work services and offers a climate conducive to learning and professional development.
3. The agency can provide generalist practice learning opportunities compatible with the requirements of the A-STATE Social Work program.
4. To be approved for the advanced field internship, an agency must be able to provide clinical learning opportunities compatible for the requirements of the advanced MSW program and specialized practice behaviors of clinical mental health.
5. The agency agrees to provide a field supervisor with a minimum of licensed MSW with two years post graduate work and ensure that field supervisor will be able to provide regular supervision including weekly meetings with the student to plan and monitor progress, to participate in evaluation conferences with faculty, and to participate in orientation and training sessions. The Field Supervisor is required to provide a minimum

of one hour of supervision per week. However, if the Field Supervisor is not available for ongoing supervision throughout the day, a Task Instructor must be assigned to ensure sufficient structure and support.

6. The agency agrees to provide suitable workspace for the student.
7. The agency provides the student with an onsite internship with onsite staff supervision. Remote and virtual internships will not be approved.
8. The agency agrees to reimburse the student for work related travel in accordance with agency policy.
9. The agency agrees to appraise the student of any and all health and safety risks associated with practice in the setting, and to instruct the student in measures to minimize these risks.
10. The agency agrees to notify the program in a timely manner when the student's performance may be at risk for successful completion of the placement.

AFFILIATE AGREEMENTS

Formal affiliate agreements are used with all field placement agencies to delineate the roles and responsibilities of the program, the field agency and the student. Essentially, the agreement indicates the program, the agency and the student are expected to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the field practice manual. These agreements are kept on file in the College of Nursing and Health Professions. An active affiliate agreement must be in place or the student will not be able to proceed with the internship. If the affiliate agreement is not fully executed at the time the field course starts, the student will be dropped from the class and moved to the next cohort/semester.

SELECTING FIELD SUPERVISORS

To be a Field Supervisor with the A-STATE MSW Program, agency professionals must meet the following criteria:

1. The individual must hold a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree, possess a minimum of two years post-graduate experience and be licensed in their state of residence. They should be capable of serving as a professional role model, particularly in demonstrating genuineness, warmth, empathy and adherence to social work ethics and values.
2. The individual sees educating social work students as both a professional and a meaningful activity.
3. The individual is willing to invest time in development and implementation of the students learning plan, minimum one hour weekly supervisory sessions, virtual site visit evaluations with the Faculty Liaison and of the student. Participation in these conferences requires a high level of professional skill including the ability to give and receive feedback in a constructive manner.
4. The individual agrees to orient the student to the agency and community of practitioners in the agency's referral network.
5. The individual agrees to follow the problem-solving process as outlined in this manual.
6. The individual completes the field orientation process online.

AGENCIES THAT DO NOT HAVE AN MSW ON STAFF

The MSW Program requires that the Field Supervisors hold a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from a CSWE-accredited MSW program, have a minimum of two years post-MSW experience, and be licensed as required by their state of residence. When an agency does not employ an MSW practitioner who can supervise the student, a Task Instructor who does not hold an MSW may be approved to provide day-to-day, on-site supervision. However, an MSW from another site must still be assigned as the Field Supervisor of record and meet the same requirements as listed above. The Field Supervisor must provide a minimum of one - hour weekly field supervision and be available to meet with the task instructor and faculty liaison as needed. The use of an off-site Field Supervisor will only be approved if the agency and field faculty determine that it is in the student's best interest and that all criteria for the student's level of internship will be fully met.

FIELD SUPERVISOR ORIENTATION

Field Supervisor Orientation is designed to enhance the quality of student supervision as field supervisors identify with their roles as educators. The Field Supervisor will be provided with a link to complete the orientation online, prior to the student starting their internship. Educational contact hours are offered for the program to help support our field supervisor licensing obligations. Orientation topics will typically include key field experience terms; overall field process and time sheets; competency-based field instruction; CSWE EPAS, developing learning activities; student evaluation; and the role of process recordings and field journals. Field Supervisors are also provided a copy of their student's syllabus on ELC to better enable them to assist in the integration of theory. The Director of Field Education is available throughout the year for any consultation needs of the Field Supervisor.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FIELD PROGRAM

In order to achieve high quality in the field, it is imperative that all involved understand their roles and responsibilities.

DIRECTOR OF FIELD EDUCATION

The Director of Field Education is administratively responsible for the oversight of the field practice and manages the field program. The Director of Field Education provides overall leadership and direction for the field program, ensuring alignment with the MSW program's mission and CSWE accreditation standards. The Director of Field Education, with the assistance of the Faculty Field Coordinators, screens agency placements and field supervisors to ensure that they meet the program's standards, coordinates the placement process, and monitors the field program. The Director of Field Education is available throughout the year to solve problems or address issues of concern to the Field Supervisors, Faculty Liaisons, and students. The Director of Field Education's responsibilities include:

1. Approve, develop and maintain field placements in accordance with program standards and accreditation requirements.
2. Assign students to field placements and provide student orientation.

3. Provide initial orientation to field supervisors regarding the field program, and offer ongoing consultation and support throughout the internship period.
4. Oversee the implementation and maintenance of the field education software, including the assessment of student learning and documentation of field activities.
5. Provide guidance and support to field faculty as needed to promote a cohesive educational experience throughout the field program.
6. Respond to and initiate feedback from faculty, students, and agency partners to support the continuous upgrading of the field program.
7. Provide ongoing oversight and development of field curriculum, ensuring effective integration of classroom knowledge with field experiences.
8. Offer leadership in addressing any concerns related to field placements to assist in early problem solving for individual students and/or agencies.
9. Conduct systematic evaluations of field practice methodologies and outcomes, implementing changes as appropriate.
10. Revise field syllabi as needed, based on assessment of student learning outcomes, and in accordance with CSWE accreditation guidance.
11. Maintain and update the MSW Field Manual, ensuring it reflects current policies, procedures, and best practices.

MSW FIELD COORDINATOR

The MSW Field Coordinator assists the Director of Field Education in the overall placement process and management of the MSW Field Program. Each student is assigned a Field Coordinator by Field Director based on their cohort and program level. In addition to placement responsibilities, the MSW Field Coordinator serves as a faculty liaison and teaches one field course per semester. Primary responsibilities include:

1. Support students during the Field Application process, offering guidance and answering questions to ensure timely and complete submissions.
2. Assist students in developing their internship plan, including understanding the requirements and criteria for agency field site approval.
3. Approve, develop and assist in maintaining field placements to include coordinating and securing affiliate agreements between the agency and university.
4. Communicate placement confirmations and internship details to students and agency staff.
5. Provide field supervisors with initial orientation to the field program and offer ongoing consultation as needed throughout the internship.

6. Serve as a faculty liaison, facilitating communication between students and field supervisors, supporting problem-solving, and promoting the overall educational experience.
7. Assist in the overall management of the field software program to include monitoring the field application process, completion of student assignments, and internship hours.

FACULTY LIAISON

The Faculty Liaison serves as the student's field course instructor and assigned to work with the Field Supervisor and student to support, plan and evaluate the student's learning experience throughout the internship. Representing A-State, the Faculty Liaison has the following responsibilities:

1. Provide guidance to the Field Supervisor and student in developing the Learning Agreement, ensuring alignment with program competencies.
2. Maintain contact with the Field Supervisor and student to monitor progress and offer support. The Faculty Liaison is available for telephone or virtual support throughout the semester at the request of the Field Supervisor or student.
3. Conduct at least one virtual site visit per 7-week semester to meet with the student and the Field Supervisor.
4. Collaborate with the Field Supervisor and student in the learning experience to proactively address any issues of concern that could jeopardize the student's internship.
5. Monitor student progress as well as potential barriers to learning through swift and thorough assessment of assignments. (process recordings, journals, discussion boards)
6. Report to the Director of Field Education and/or Field Coordinator any issues that could disrupt the placement, or serve as a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
7. Be available for immediate consultation when needed or involve the Director of Field Education, MSW Field Coordinator, or MSW Director for urgent matters.
8. Complete the Faculty Liaison Evaluation of Field Supervisor/Agency at the conclusion of the third semester.

FIELD SUPERVISOR

The agency professional who supervises an A-STATE student directly. Field Supervisors must have an LCSW or LMSW and two years of practice experience. Field Supervisors are expected to:

1. Provide the program with a current resume, licensure confirmation and assistance in obtaining the university/agency affiliation agreement.
2. Provide student with agency orientation either through formal new worker orientation or an informal one on one orientation that includes not only details on agency services, but also requirements that could delay the internship if not completed (background checks, immunization requirements, online trainings) and any safety risks that the student should be aware of.
3. Assist the student in developing a learning agreement.
4. Meet at least one hour each week with the student to provide supervision.
5. Assess the student's progress on a regular basis and complete all evaluation instruments.
6. Monitor student's record of field hours and attendance.
7. Complete the Field Supervisor Orientation
8. Be available to meet with the student and Faculty Liaison for a virtual site visit at least one time per 7-week semester.
9. Inform the Faculty Liaison or the Director of Field Education of any problems or concerns promptly. (Examples include absenteeism, tardiness, agency related changes, concerns related to student competency, and/or student performance)
10. Complete the Field Supervisor Evaluation of Field Program at the conclusion of the student's final semester.

TASK INSTRUCTOR

The term "Task Instructor" is used to indicate an agency staff member who assumes certain responsibilities for the student's field education as delegated and monitored by the field supervisor. While the Task Instructor does not replace the field supervisor, they play an important role in the student's daily learning experience. Task Instructors should be well informed of the program's educational objectives and understand their role in the student's learning. The field supervisor retains responsibility for all formal evaluations and overall supervision. Both the Field Supervisor and the Social Work program will provide the Task Instructor with the necessary resources to accomplish the educational task including an invitation to complete the Field Supervisors Orientation. The Field Supervisor helps the student integrate the Task Instructor's contribution into the overall educational experience. The Task Instructor's responsibilities include:

1. Collaborate as a team member in supporting the student's educational experience as related to the activities outlined in the Learning Agreement.
2. Daily supervision and task assignment in support of the students learning objectives as described by the Learning Agreement.

3. Ongoing consultation with the Field Supervisor as appropriate to include student progress and/or any issues of concern.
4. Monitor student internship hours and timesheets if agreed upon with the team.
5. Participate in the assessment of student learning, offering feedback to inform the Field Supervisors evaluation.

STUDENT INTERN

As part of a learning team, the student as an adult learner is expected to:

1. Take the initiative in examining the educational objectives and the learning assignments in the field practice.
2. The student will comply with the intern work schedule developed between the student and field supervisor.
3. Present professional behavior in all settings to include:
 - a. arriving and leaving according to schedule or notifying the field supervisor of unforeseen circumstances,
 - b. following agency policies and procedures,
 - c. completing required agency forms and course assignments fully and on time,
 - d. dress in accordance with agency standards and professional attire.
4. Seek and request supervision as appropriate and take action as needed.
5. Inform the field supervisor, faculty liaison, and Director of Field Education and/or Field Coordinator when matters that might jeopardize the learning experience are present.
6. Refrain from behavior that interferes with the learning and performance of other students and professionals and to behave in a manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.
7. Use supervision well, (e.g., seek feedback on performance and prepare agenda items for meetings with the faculty liaison).
8. Engage actively in the evaluation process, seeking ongoing feedback from the field supervisor and participating in the formal evaluation.
9. Prepare for weekly conferences with the field supervisor and bring any problems or dissatisfaction with the field experience and engage constructively

in finding solutions, if possible. If the problems cannot be resolved, the student should contact the faculty liaison.

10. Keep track of field hours in the time tracking software program, ELC, and seek Field Supervisor's approval of hours.
11. Participate actively in all field discussion forums and complete weekly assignments.
12. Complete the Student Evaluation of Field Supervisor and Agency at the conclusion of the third field semester

THE LEARNING AGREEMENT & ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

STUDENT LEARNING AGREEMENT

The student will develop the Learning Agreement in ELC within the first few weeks of the internship through consultation with their Field Supervisor. The learning agreement provides a plan for internship activities that will support competency attainment set forth by the Council on Social Work Education and serves as a guide to assess the student's academic, and professional performance throughout the internship process. The Learning Agreement will guide weekly supervision between the student and their field supervisor. This document will also be reviewed at the virtual site visit between the field supervisor, faculty liaison and student. Tips in preparing the Learning Agreement include:

- Learning activities should be identified that will provide the opportunity for the student to demonstrate the CSWE competencies.
- Learning activities should reflect practice behaviors of the specified level (Foundation or Advanced) and should be individualized to meet the needs of the student.
- Learning activities should be specific, measurable and relevant to the competencies.

FINAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The student's learning agreement serves as the final assessment instrument as it was designed to correlate directly with CSWE's core competencies, which are operationally defined through the practice behaviors for both the foundation and advanced programs. Prior to the final assessment, the Field Supervisor will complete the Final Assessment of Student Competencies/Practice Behaviors by assigning a ranking for each practice behavior. The Field Supervisor, Faculty Liaison and student will meet virtually to review this assessment, provide feedback that will enable the student's further professional development and celebrate the student's accomplishments.

FIELD PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a critical component of the overall field process at the program level. In order for the Field Department to best respond to student needs and strengthen program outcomes, the Department relies on feedback from Field Supervisors, students and Faculty Liaisons through formal surveys that are described below.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF FIELD SUPERVISOR AND AGENCY

Prior to the conclusion of the foundation and/or advanced field sequence, the student will complete the Student Evaluation of Field Supervisor and Agency through ELC. Although the Field Supervisor will not have direct access to this evaluation, the student will be encouraged to provide feedback of their experience to the field supervisor at the final evaluation. This information can be very helpful to the Field Supervisor in providing supervision to future students.

FIELD SUPERVISOR EVALUATION OF FIELD PROGRAM

Prior to the conclusion of foundation and/or advanced field sequence, the Field Supervisor will be asked to complete the Field Supervisor Evaluation of Field Program through ELC.

FACULTY LIAISON EVALUATION OF FIELD SUPERVISOR AND AGENCY

Prior to the conclusion of the foundation and/or advanced field sequence, the Faculty Liaison will complete an Evaluation of the Field Supervisor and Agency through ELC.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Social Work Department has established formal review procedures to identify, evaluate, and address situations in which a student fails to meet the program's academic and professional performance standards. These procedures include developing a corrective action plan and, when necessary, suspending or dismissing a student from the field placement. Within the field program, this policy serves as a proactive approach to problem solving, and supporting students in successfully completing their field experience through structured guidance. Performance concerns most often involve failure to demonstrate the required competencies of the field program, unethical conduct, attendance issues, lack of skill progression, or inability to secure and maintain an approved internship as outlined in this manual. Additional concerns may include any barriers that prevent successful completion of the field practicum. There are three levels of performance review.

A Level I Performance Review involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student not meeting any of the professional or academic standards required of field experience, that faculty member will:

- Discuss the concerns directly with the student via virtual meeting, phone, email or feedback on graded assignments in order to raise the student's awareness and work collaboratively to resolve the difficulties.

- Inform the Field Director, MSW Field Coordinator and/or MSW Program Director of the concerns to help identify potential patterns or issues related in this student's behavior.
- Document dates, content, and outcome of meetings in the student file.

In many instances, an early meetings or conversations between faculty and students result in a resolution of concerns and do not lead to further review under this section. However, if the concerns are not resolved to the satisfaction of either the student or faculty, or if additional incidents occur, a Level II Performance Review will be initiated.

A Level II Performance Review is convened by the Director of Field Education or MSW Field Coordinator, and typically occurs when performance concerns identified at Level I have not been satisfactorily resolved. However, certain concerns may warrant a level II without a prior level I review.

A level II involves the student, Field Director and/or MSW Field Coordinator, MSW Director and depending on the nature of the concern the Field Supervisor or Faculty Liaison. The Director of Field Education may request that another member of the administration team participate if needed. In this information gathering process, the Director of Field Education or MSW Field Coordinator will seek to determine the nature of the concerns and collect sufficient information to develop a plan to address them, if necessary. Conflict resolution and mediation strategies will be used whenever possible.

Following the review, no further action may be required, or the student may be formerly directed to modify their behavior and/or seek appropriate support. This process is intended to assist students in addressing concerns that negatively impact their performance. The Director of Field Education and/or Field Coordinator will evaluate the concerns in consultation with appropriate faculty, the Department Chair and/or MSW Director, and maintain documentation. The Level II Performance Review Committee may decide to:

1. Retain the student in the current internship and Social Work Program on probationary status.
2. Specify requirements and conditions for remaining in the internship and Social Work Program.
3. Suspending the student from the internship and Social Work Program (can reapply in one year).
4. Request a Level III review be convened by the Chair of the Department.

The Performance Review Committee will document the discussion and their decision and inform the student in writing. The student may appeal the decision to the Departmental Chair.

A Level III review is convened and facilitated by the Department Chair and generally includes the student, MSW Program Director, Field Director, MSW Field Coordinator, and possibly the field supervisor and/or faculty liaison if indicated. In the Department Chair's absence, the meeting will be convened and facilitated by either the MSW Program Director or the Director

of Field Education. This level of review is indicated when problematic patterns are identified with students, particularly involving unprofessional, illegal, unethical or incompetent behaviors. A level III Review may be initiated when lower review levels have not achieved satisfactory results. It must also be noted that a Level III review may occur without previous reviews if the student's behavior causes the immediate consideration of dismissal from the program.

The Department Chair will meet with appropriate faculty and the student to gather information, determine the nature of the problem (if one is confirmed to exist) and identify alternatives for its remediation. Appropriate faculty to be involved in a review will include but are not limited to those who have direct knowledge of and experience with the student. The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting. The student may invite a faculty member of their choice or an advisor to participate in the proceedings.

After the review meeting has concluded, the Department Chair will consult with the Professional Review Committee members to reach a decision. The student will be informed in writing of the committee's decision within three working days. The student may be instructed to refrain from attending field or social work classes until notified of the decision. Options available to the committee include but are not limited to the following:

1. Continue the student in the program and/or internship with no conditions.
2. Establish formal conditions for the student to continue in the program and/or internship.
3. Consult with the University's Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
4. Counsel the student to change majors/degree programs.
5. Suspend the student with conditions for return.
6. Dismiss the student from the Social Work Program.

In any Level III Review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that these have been discussed with the student, that a corrective action plan has been developed with the student and that the student has been given the opportunity to complete the plan with the support of the Social Work Department, unless the precipitating behavior is of such a grievous nature that corrective action is not indicated. The student must be notified of the decision in writing within ten business days of the review meeting. It is the responsibility of the Department Chair to communicate the decision to the student. At this time, the student must be informed of their right to appeal under university policy.

FIELD EXPERIENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE STUDENT

The A-State Social Work Department is committed to making student safety a priority. Students are required to attend a zoom field orientation at which time safety precautions in the field will be addressed. This information includes safety with clients and overall self-care. Field agencies

are required to appraise the students of any and all health and safety risks, and to ensure that students receive appropriate training to minimize these risks. Students are advised to review the MSW Field Manual and the MSW Student Handbook. In the event that an incident of safety or potential threat occurs, the student should discuss the incident with their faculty liaison and complete an Incident Report in ELC. Other additional resources that are provided to student include the following links.

Link to NASW Social Work Safety Guide:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/linkClick.aspx?fileticket=6OEdoMjcNC0%3D&portalid=0>

Link to A-State office of Institutional Integrity and Title IX:

<https://www.astate.edu/about/campus-offices/office-of-title-ix/index.html>

INCIDENT REPORT

In the event that an incident occurs in the student's field placement, the student should complete the incident report form on ELC and submit to their Faculty Liaison who will in turn advise the Director of Field Education of the situation. Examples of an incident include but are not limited to client striking the student worker, any hostile or threatening incidents experienced by intern, and unprofessional behavior on the part of the supervisor towards the student or clients. If the student is unsure about a particular event, the student needs to discuss the event with their Faculty Liaison.

USE OF PERSONAL AUTOMOBILES BY STUDENTS

Students are expected to arrange their own transportation to and from their field placement site. Agencies which expect students to use their personal automobiles for agency business should make this expectation clear to the student during the pre-placement interview. If students use their own automobiles for agency purposes, they should be reimbursed for mileage. Students who use their own automobiles to transport clients are liable in case of an accident. Students will sign the Statement of Understanding that is included with the Field Application. Please refer to your personal insurance policy for coverage information.

PLACEMENT IN EMPLOYMENT SETTINGS - ADVANCED AND FOUNDATION FIELD

It is important to recognize that NO paid internships will be approved for the MSW Advanced or the Foundation internship. Neither Advanced nor Foundation practice students are allowed to be paid for any internship hours. MSW interns in the Advanced or Foundation program will not be allowed to complete internship hours as paid employees at the agency. Advanced and Foundation level students must complete all internship hours completely separate from employment hours.

However, there are times when a student may intern at their place of employment as an unpaid intern with completely separate hours, responsibilities and clientele. To maintain the integrity of the program, and to ensure that students receive a high-quality education, the following guidelines must be followed for consideration of an internship in an employment setting.

1. The field supervisor and agency must meet the same qualifications as other field supervisors and agencies where students are placed as outlined in this Field Manual.

2. The field supervisor for the educational experience must be someone other than the student's work supervisor.
3. Precautionary steps must be taken to assure the student intern will not be serving the same client group in two different roles. For example, a student cannot be in the role of an advanced or foundation MSW intern for a client while also working as the client's case manager or other role through their employer.
 - a. Steps that may be approved, if all other guidelines are met could include but are not limited to:
 - i. Intern may be placed in a different department of the agency to complete unpaid internship hours working with different clientele outside of employment hours, roles, and responsibilities.
 - ii. Intern may be placed in a different building working with a different population (ex. Age group, middle school, high school, elementary) than their employment position with no overlap of employee or intern roles, clientele, responsibilities, or hours.
 - iii. Intern may be placed at a different clinic location owned by the agency with no overlap of employee or intern roles, including responsibilities, clientele, or hours.
4. The student's activities in the agency must provide new learning related to their FOU or ADV practice needs, and not merely a continuation of their current tasks at the agency of employment.
 - a. Example: An MSW Advanced student must have the opportunity to expand on clinical mental health skills, diagnostic awareness, clinical insights, treatment planning, etc.
 - a. Example: An MSW Foundation student that has been a case manager for several years at the agency cannot utilize their same position for a foundation internship because this would not be a new learning experience for the student.
 - b. Precautionary steps outlined above must be taken; and the intern and agency representative must provide a specific plan that identifies how the intern will expand their knowledge and skills without overlapping employment duties, hours, or clientele.
5. No employer paid internships will be approved at the MSW advanced or foundation level.
 - a. Example: Students employed in a case management or bachelor level position cannot use any of their employment hours, clientele, or responsibilities toward their internship hours.
 - b. Example: Advanced clinical field placement interns cannot elevate an employment position in an attempt to meet the clinical needs of the advanced internship as this presents an ethical violation of working within one's competency and would be considered employment.
6. Student stipends and scholarships may be approved as academic assistance opposed to employment. Information and details regarding any student stipends and/or scholarships must be discussed with the Director of Field Education before an internship is approved.
7. The faculty liaison will monitor adherence to these guidelines throughout the internship.
8. If at any time the student becomes unemployed with the agency where their internship has co-occurred, the student is required to immediately contact the Director of Field Education or MSW Field Coordinator. If the student expresses a desire to stay at the same agency in the internship role and the agency representative/Field Supervisor agrees, the

Director of Field Education will verify that all criteria described in this manual to approve an internship will continue to be met at this site. However, in many cases the student will need a different internship site at which time the policy described in this manual titled “Transferring a Student to a New Agency or Field Supervisor” will be followed.

ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who need adjustments or accommodations in the field must first register with A-STATE Access and Accommodations at (870) 972-3964. AAS will notify each instructor, including the Director of Field Education, of the student’s specific needs. More information can be found on their website: <https://www.astate.edu/student-life/student-support/access-and-accommodations/index.html>

REQUIRED INTERNSHIP HOURS

Students graduating from this MSW Program will complete a total of 924 hours between the combination of the foundation and advanced internships. Students that experience difficulties meeting their learning agreement or experience some form of disruption in their field placement such as being terminated or requesting a transfer to another agency may be required to complete additional field hours. These additional hours are often needed in these situations in order for the student to be able to adequately demonstrate the required competencies. The number of additional hours will vary based on the student’s learning needs and the training determined necessary by the field agency. Decisions regarding additional hours will be made through consultation among the Director of Field Education, the field agency, the Field Coordinator, and the student.

Eligible students graduating from A-STATE’s BSW program, and eligible students who graduated from other accredited BSW programs, will be given credit for the 420 hours of field completed prior to entering the advanced standing program at A-STATE. All students entering the advanced standing program will be required to complete 504 internship hours along with their course work for the three semesters of the advanced field experience which will calculate to be 24 hours a week for three seven-week semesters.

Students admitted to the Regular Standing/Foundation Program complete 420 hours of field along with their course work of the foundation year which will calculate to be 20 hours a week for three seven-week semesters. After Regular Standing/Foundation Program students complete their foundation year of study, they will follow the Advanced Standing Program curriculum and will complete the additional 504 hours of advanced field experience.

Students may not begin their internship hours before the official start date of the semester, nor may internship hours be completed during breaks between the semesters. Students are also not permitted to complete their internship requirements prior to the end of the semester. Any hours completed beyond the required semester total will be considered as volunteer time and will not be applied to the following semester.

In the event of an emergency or illness that causes a student to fall behind in required hours, the student should immediately contact both their field supervisor and faculty liaison to discuss a plan for completing the remaining hours.

Any required agency orientation or training should be completed prior to the internship start date, as these hours do not count toward the student's required weekly internship hours.

Remote work (working from home) is not permitted as part of the internship. Supervisors should not assign any projects, research, documentation, or other internship related tasks for completion at home. Students must be physically present in the agency setting to participate in telehealth services and other internship activities.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Students must conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner toward clients, fellow students, agency staff and the faculty. Because membership in the social work profession reflects a commitment to professional values and standards, appropriate professional conduct is expected at all times. The program adheres to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, which is integrated throughout the curriculum. Any act which would constitute unethical practice, violation of the law, whether on-campus or off-campus, is grounds for disciplinary action and may include dismissal from the field.

Students are expected to follow the reasonable instructions of the Field Supervisor. However, a student may decline to follow an instruction if they believe it involves activities that are illegal or conflicts with the NASW Code of Ethics. When possible, the student should explain the reasons for refusing the request and must immediately report the incident to the Faculty Liaison, Director of Field Education or MSW Field Coordinator.

If a student is alleged to have violated the NASW Code of Ethics during the placement experience, the Field Supervisor will make a report to the Faculty Liaison or MSW Field Coordinator, and the Director of Field Education will be informed. A performance review will be scheduled with the appropriate level dependent upon the alleged incident.

PROBLEM-RESOLUTION PROCESS

Problems associated with social work students placed in agency settings occur, and are usually satisfactorily resolved by the student and Field Supervisor. Common problems have included student reliability and performance, student feeling that they are not getting sufficient learning assignments at the agency, or that the Field Supervisor is not accessible for regular supervision. The Faculty Liaison is available to assist in finding solutions to problems that cannot be handled by the Field Supervisor and student. If a problem cannot be resolved by this group, then the MSW Field Coordinator or Director of Field Education may be called for help. This is the normal course of events and usually results in an acceptable solution that enables the student to remain in the placement. Some problems if not resolved may present threat of internship disruption and therefore the Performance Review Process will be followed in hopes to find the best resolution for student success. The Performance Review Process is outlined in this manual and the MSW Student Handbook.

TRANSFERRING A STUDENT TO A NEW AGENCY OR FIELD SUPERVISOR

Students are expected to complete their internships at the same agency for three consecutive semesters within the designated program (Foundation or Advanced) to support competency development and ensure continuity in supervision and assessment by both the field supervisor and the faculty liaison. However, there are instances in which a transfer to a new agency or Field Supervisor becomes necessary. A request for a student transfer may originate from the student, the Field Supervisor, or the Faculty Liaison for the following reasons:

- a. **Student-Initiated Transfer:** A student may request a transfer to another Field Supervisor or agency if either fails to meet the expectations outlined in the Learning Agreement, this manual or the Affiliate Agreement. If a transfer within the same agency is feasible, the student may be permitted to continue the internship without interruption. However, transfers between agencies will only be permitted at the beginning of a new semester.

If the learning environment is deemed unsuitable, the student will be required to withdraw from the current field course. A transfer between agencies will require a minimum one semester delay in student's degree plan to allow sufficient time for the field department and agency to complete all required paperwork and to fulfill the orientation needs of the agency, field supervisor and student.

In addition, agency reassignment may require the student to invest additional time in revising the Learning Agreement, completing agency specific training requirements, and potentially accruing additional internship hours to meet course performance expectations. It is important to note that the Field Supervisor completes the final evaluation of competencies at the conclusion of the third semester. Additional internship hours may be required for any transfer described in this manual to ensure the Field Supervisor can adequately assess the student's ability to demonstrate the competencies as defined by CSWE. The Director of Field Education handles all transfers.

- b. **Field Supervisor-Initiated Transfer:** A Field Supervisor may request a within-agency transfer of a student if they are no longer willing or able to meet the expectations of the position, or if the supervisor determines that the supervisor-student match is no longer effective. If both parties agree and a suitable replacement is available within the agency, the transfer may proceed without disruption.

If a suitable replacement is not available within the agency, the student will be required to identify an alternative agency that meets the requirements of this manual. As described above a between agency transfer requires a minimum semester break/delay in the student's degree plan to allow time for all required paperwork and orientation needs of the agency, field supervisor and student. The student at this time should drop their current field course to avoid a failing grade.

If approved for reassignment, the student will be allowed enroll in field during a subsequent semester. As outlined in this manual, students must complete all agency orientation and other requirements before the semester begins. The Director of Field Education handles all transfers

- c. **Faculty Liaison-Initiated Transfer:** The Faculty Liaison may initiate the request for a transfer of a student if they conclude that a Field Supervisor or agency is not fulfilling the expectations set forth in this manual. In such case, the student will be responsible for identifying an alternate agency that meets the requirements described in this manual and all reasonable efforts will be

made to support this transfer with as little disruption to the student as possible. However, as described above the transfer to another agency requires the minimum of a one semester break to allow for the completion of administrative steps, legal document and orientation needs

TERMINATION POLICY AND PROCEEDURE

Students are rarely terminated from an internship; however, it does occur. The following procedure addresses termination of a student initiated by his or her field placement agency or by a faculty member in the Master of Social Work Program. The Performance Review Process will be activated by the Field Director in attempts to promote the best outcome for student success.

TERMINATION INITIATED BY AN AGENCY

If problem-solving efforts have been exhausted and the agency determines the placement is not a good fit, or if agency staff determine that the student's behavior poses a risk to the safety or well-being of clients or staff, the agency may terminate the student's placement. The agency will be requested to provide a written explanation for the termination and if at all possible, notify the program prior to the termination. It is then the responsibility of the Director of Field Education through collaboration with the faculty liaison and/or MSW Field Coordinator to prepare a report assessing the behavior of the student in the particular agency setting. Where indicated, the report should include a statement of standards of conduct which have been violated, and describe a course of action which the student must take in order to be reassigned to another agency. These steps may include counseling, training or other remedial actions, with required documentation of completion. Based on these findings, the Director of Field Education in consultation with the Master of Social Work Program Director and/or the Department Chair may pursue one of the following options:

- a. **Continuation at the Current Agency:** The student may be permitted to complete the current semester at the same agency with the understanding that the student will be placed at an alternative agency at the conclusion of the current semester. This continuation could occur only if the student can complete the current course requirements, and if the circumstances surrounding the termination are such that the student and agency agree that continued placement does not compromise the safety or well-being of clients, staff, or the student.
- b. **Immediate Termination with Potential for Reassignment:** If it is determined by the agency staff, faculty or student that continuing the placement is not in the best interest of any party, the termination will take effect immediately.
 - If the university's academic calendar still permits, the student may be supported in withdrawing from the course to avoid receiving a failing grade.
 - If the withdrawal deadline has passed, the student will receive an "F" grade
 - If no remedial action is required, or if required actions have been successfully completed and documented, the student may be eligible to re-enroll in the field course in a future semester, provided they can secure an

approved placement that meets the requirements described in this manual. It is important to note that the reassignment of a new agency will require a semester break/delay to complete needed agency/university protocol described earlier in manual.

- c. **Dismissal from the Program:** If the students conduct is deemed to pose an ongoing threat to the safety and well-being of others, or if the student fails to pursue required corrective action – or if the action taken is insufficient – the student will not be eligible for reassignment. In such cases:
- The student will receive a final grade of “F” in the field course.
 - The student will not be permitted to re-enroll in the course
 - The student will be dismissed from the Master of Social Work Program.

TERMINATION INITIATED BY THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

If after a student has entered field, the Social Work faculty have a valid basis to believe a student’s conduct has the potential to cause harm to clients, the program, or agency workers, the Director of Field Education may remove that student from the field placement. In such cases, a Level III Performance Review will be scheduled with the following possible outcomes:

- a. Dismissal from the program, accompanied by an explanation of the offense and how the behavior fails to meet reasonable standards of conduct;
- b. An opportunity for the student to modify their behavior through corrective action, which may include (but not limited to) counseling, in order to meet the expected standards of conduct; or
- c. If the offense is deemed to be beyond correction, the student may be terminated from the MSW Program.

If a student is dismissed from an agency due to behavior which may include but not limited to insubordination, incompetence, attendance, failure to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, or inappropriate professional conduct, the Director of Field Education may opt for a plan of corrective action or a statement of understanding of the behavioral expectations. Upon successful completion of the corrective action process, the student may be considered for placement in another agency in accordance with the transfer policies outlined earlier in this manual.

If the student is subsequently dismissed from a second agency due to behavioral concerns, the student will be considered to have failed Field and will receive a failing grade for the course. In addition, the student will be dismissed from the Master of Social Work Program.

If the student fails to comply with the corrective action plan, or if the corrective action is unsuccessful, the student may be dismissed from the Master of Social Work Program.

GRADE AND GRADE APPEAL

A grade of “C” or better is required to successfully pass field. A field grade below a “C” results in suspension from the MSW Program. In the event that a grade below a “C” is received, the

student may reapply to the Field Program if they are still in good standing with the MSW Program and complete any required corrective actions that have been specified for the student. Please refer to the MSW Handbook for details regarding program suspensions and/or program dismissals.

A student who wishes to appeal his or her grade must follow the Student Grievance Procedure outlined in the A-STATE Student Handbook. Only one grade appeal is allowed for the total Field experience.

AGENCY SPECIFIC POLICY, STANDARDS AND ACCREDITATION

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with agency specific standards which include but are not limited to JCOHA, HIPAA, FERPA, and CWLOA. Some agencies may require students to be certified in CPR, provide proof of vaccinations, submit to drug screens, complete criminal and/or child welfare background checks.