

Field Instructor FAQ

1. Q. What is the purpose of the field instruction experience?

- A.** The field instruction experience is an integral part of the total curriculum and is designed to provide opportunities for students to apply the concepts and theories taught in the classroom to actual practice situations, thus incorporating the knowledge, values, and skills studied in class into work with clients and client systems, at micro, mezzo and macro levels.

2. Q. What experience is required to be a field instructor?

- A.** The Council on Social Work Education requires either a BSW or MSW from a CSWE-accredited social work program and two years of post-social work degree experience in social work to serve as a Field Instructor for BSW students, and an MSW from a CSWE-accredited social work program and two years of post-social work degree experience in social work to serve as a Field Instructor MSW students (See EPAS B2.2.9 and M2.2.9). Individuals meeting the minimum CSWE requirements for BSW and/or MSW supervision are considered for Field Instructor roles with the SSW.

3. Q. What is an external field instructor?

- A.** An external BSW Field Instructor is a person with BSW credentials and two years of post BSW experience that are located outside of where the student(s) is placed. An external MSW Field Instructor is a person with MSW credentials and two years of post BSW experience that are located outside of where the student(s) is placed. This person provides weekly supervision with the student to ensure the values of social work, as well as the core CSWE competencies are being incorporated into the student's practicum. External field instruction can focus more broadly on social work concepts and less on day-to-day functioning of the internship.

4. What is a site supervisor?

- A.** Site Supervisors are person(s) within the student's placement location that work closely with students throughout their experiences but bring different educational backgrounds and skill sets. This person may provide day to day supervision and oversight with the student, but does not have the BSW/MSW qualifications to provide social work supervision of the student.

5. Q. What training is required to be a field instructor?

- A.** To best support field supervisors, the SSW provides online education modules through the Tevera online field management system, as part of their onboarding. Completion of the online series of training modules is strongly encouraged. The training modules cover the following content areas: Placement process and overview of field education; agency orientation components, supervision expectations; ethical issues; learning contract development and evaluation completion, and technology standards in Social Work.

6. Q. Will I be compensated for being a field instructor?

- A.** Unfortunately, at this time WVU School of Social Work does not have the ability to financially compensate field instructors. The SSW works to offer no cost continuing education opportunities to Field Instructors as a gesture of appreciation for the important service they are providing to students, the SSW, and the greater social work community.

7. Q. What are the requirements of supervision with the student?

- A.** The student is expected to prepare for and participate in regular conferences with the Field Instructor, focusing on the student's learning and application of social work concepts. Students should have supervision for one hour a week with their field instructor.

8. Q. I have an employee who would like to complete their field placement at their place of employment. Is this permitted?

- A. If the student is proposing an employer-based placement, they will indicate this preference as part of their application. The Field Office will discuss the employer-based plan with the student to determine if it meets the SSW's policy and consider how it will impact student's learning and educational goals. Student consults with the SSW Field Office and agency administrators are highly encouraged, at an early stage, to collect input for shaping a viable plan.

9. Q. How many hours is a student required to be at placement?

- A. **BSW:** Students complete their placement utilizing a block placement model for 14-15 weeks in their final spring semester, students are in their agency 3-4 days a week for 28-30 hours, plus weekly seminar attendance. 400 required hours.

MSW Generalist:

Fulltime: Placement occurs across Fall and Spring semesters, typically beginning in October, students are in agencies 12-16 hours per week and attend professional seminars. 300 required hours.

Part Time : Placement occurs across Summer and fall semesters, typically beginning late June , students are in agencies 12-16 hours per week and attend professional seminars. 300 required hours.

MSW Specialized:

Fulltime: Placement begins in August and continues across fall and spring semester, ending in late April. Students are in agencies 16-20 hours per week and attend professional seminars. 600 required hours.

Part-time: Placement begins in August and continues across fall, spring, and summer semesters, ending by July. Students are in agencies 14-16 hours per week and attend professional seminars. 600 required hours.

10. I am a field instructor at another University, can I still be a field instructor at WVU?

- A. Yes. The Field Office sees field instruction as an opportunity for social workers to gain supervisory experience and assist with their professional growth. We request that field instructors maintain the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) regarding confidentiality and boundaries when completing supervision.

11. Do all of the student's hours need to be direct client contact?

- A. No. We encourage for the students to have as much direct contact with clients as possible during their placement, but understand that there are times this is not possible. The goal of a student's field placement is to give them a well rounded social work experience that provides them an opportunity of working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, research opportunities, and explore policies. Incorporating all of these activities will assist the student in meeting the core [CSWE competencies](#).

12. Can a student do a remote field placement?

- A. Yes. A student can do a remote placement if needed, as long as the remote placement provides an opportunity for the student to complete activities that meet the core CSWE competencies. We have found many placements can work through a blend of onsite activities and more self-directed activities that students can complete remotely. As long as the student is able to practice and engage in all of the competencies, is integrated into the placement site, and has regular communication with their supervisors, there is a lot of flexibility regarding how much time is spent in person vs. remote.

13. Are there any special tools/software that I need to be a field instructor?

A. The best tool in working with students in Field placement is your real world knowledge and social work experience. WVU Field Education does use a web-based system, Tevera, for many of our documents. Students submit their time sheets, field learning plan and other field documents via this system. Field instructors will be required to register for a Tevera login and access the system.

14. How do I apply to be a field instructor?

A. Individuals interested in supervising students, as either a Field Instructor or Site Supervisor, and providing supervision to social work students during field education experiences will first complete a Field Instructor Interest Application. Following their application submission, and often occurring during the site visit, the individual will be interviewed to determine their substantive areas of 21 expertise and discuss their interest in becoming a Field Instructor and supervising students; additionally, they will be oriented to the SSW field practices. For more information contact Lindsey Rinehart at lindsey.rinehart@mail.wvu.edu.

15. What documentation are field instructors required to complete?

A. Field instructors will sign off on student timesheets which are submitted on the 5th of each month. Field instructors will provide guidance as the student develops a learning contract, outlining what activities they will engage in and how these will connect to the CSWE competencies and ultimately sign off on this document. Field instructors will complete a midterm and final field assessment about the student's progress towards competency development.

16. What support does the school provide to field instructors?

A. Field instructors will initially have the opportunity to meet with someone from our field office to get orientated to the program and discuss the plans for an upcoming student placement. During the placement period, the student will have a designated Field Faculty Liaison (FFL) who will be the instructor of a seminar course the student is enrolled in. The FFL will send an introductory email to supervisors and will share contact information and important dates. The FFL is a good first point of contact for any challenges experienced during the placement. The FFL will schedule site visits with the student, field instructor and site supervisor if applicable, once or twice during the year depending on length of placement and additional meetings can be scheduled as needed.