B.S.W. Field Education Handbook
2017-2018 Academic Year
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The University of Arkansas at Monticello (UAM) Department of Social Work

The Purpose of the Social Work Profession

Per the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), “the purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person and environment construct, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, social work’s purpose is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons” (CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards [EPAS], 2008, p. 1).

The Practice of Social Work in Arkansas

In Arkansas, the "practice of social work means a professional service which effects change in social conditions, human behavior, and emotional responses of individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations. Social work practice can only be performed with specialized knowledge and skills related to human development, the potential for human growth, the availability of social resources, and the knowledge of social systems. The disciplined application of social work knowledge and skills includes, but is not restricted to, the following:

(a) counseling with individuals, couples, families, and groups for purposes of assessment and enhancement of the problem-solving and coping capacities of people.
(b) the application of social work knowledge and skills in social planning, administration and research” (Arkansas Code, Chapter 103, 2009, p. 3).

The UAM Department of Social Work seeks to provide educational opportunities that exemplify the purpose of the social work education and the practice of social work in the State of Arkansas.

The Nature of Social Work Education

Social work education is based in the liberal arts and consists of a structured and integrated curriculum and applied experiences that are designed to train practitioners to competently apply social work values, theories, and methods to the various social problems encountered by individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social work education is academically and personally challenging. The B.S.W. degree program at the University of Arkansas at Monticello is designed to support the mission of the University of Arkansas at Monticello, and reflects the mission and charter of the social work profession by conforming to the standards set forth by the CSWE and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).
The Nature of Generalist Social Work Practice

UAM social work department chose to define generalist practices as follows:

*Generalist social work practice is built upon a foundation in the liberal arts, and is a process of using critical thinking skills to competently engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate outcomes with diverse multi-level systems using research-informed knowledge and professional values to enhance individual and community well-being. Generalist social workers are life-long learners who engage in promoting human rights, and advancing social and economic justice in an ever-changing global context.*

The B.S.W. degree program at the University of Arkansas at Monticello is designed to prepare generalist social work practitioners and uses the ecological perspective as the theoretical foundation of generalist practice. Generalist social work practice includes the provision of social work services to individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities. Regardless of the population (e.g., children and families, criminal justice, health, mental health, aging, substance abuse, or any other identified population) or level of practice (i.e., micro, mezzo, or macro), social workers seek to promote social and economic justice and to improve the social, psychosocial, or biopsychosocial functioning of individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social work practitioners support individual self-determination and respect the dignity and worth of all people regardless of their age, disability, color, race, ethnicity, family structure, gender, sexual orientation, culture, national origin, religious preference, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Social work practitioners advocate for those who have experienced various social problems that cut across cultural groups such as, but not limited to, poverty; crime and victimization; oppression; discrimination; mental illness; substance abuse; chronic physical illness; physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; and neglect. However, given the breadth of the social work profession, social work practitioners also work with those who may not have experienced such social problems. Regardless of the population served, social workers recognize their legal and ethical responsibilities to clients and only provide those services in which they are competent to provide.

Generalist social work practice may include interviewing, assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, case management, mediation, counseling, direct practice, information and referral, problem solving, supervision, consultation, education, advocacy, community organization, and policy and program development, implementation, and administration.

The B.S.W. Degree Description at UAM

The B.S.W. degree curriculum at the University of Arkansas at Monticello is designed to prepare generalist social work practitioners to work in a variety of areas including, but not limited to: child, adolescent, and family services; health care; mental health care; criminal justice settings; geriatrics; substance abuse services; and in a variety of social service organizations in the community. An emphasis is placed on the ecological perspective, providing students with an understanding of the reciprocal relationship between the person and environment.
The B.S.W. Degree Program’s Mission Statement

The mission of the UAM Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program is to prepare students to be critical thinkers and competent, ethical generalist social work practitioners who work with and empower vulnerable populations within a diverse, global environment; embrace professional values; advocate for social/economic justice and human rights; and are dedicated to lifelong learning.

Values Underlying the B.S.W. Degree Program

The UAM Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program supports and accepts the core values of the social work profession, reflecting the six values of the National Association of Social Workers’ Code of Ethics that include: service; social justice; the dignity and worth of the person; the importance of human relationships; integrity; and competence. These values provide the foundation for the mission and goals of the B.S.W. degree program and its curriculum (CSWE, 2008).

The B.S.W. Degree Program’s Goals

The UAM Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program provides a rigorous curriculum grounded in the liberal arts, using sound teaching practices, to promote: 1) the knowledge, values, and skills used in social work that can be applied across settings and diverse populations; 2) critical thinking skills; and 3) ethical and competent social work practice consistent with the mission and objectives of the social work profession. To this end, the goals of the B.S.W. degree program include:

1. To prepare students for ethical generalist social work practice to include an awareness of the profession’s global reach.
2. To build upon a student’s liberal arts foundation that emphasizes critical thinking.
3. To graduate students who are grounded in the profession’s values and ethics.
4. To instill in students a commitment to serve vulnerable populations and to promote social and economic justice.
5. To prepare students for graduate education and to encourage lifelong learning.

The Core Competencies of the B.S.W. Degree Program at UAM

The core competencies (as taken directly from the CSWE’s 2008 EPAS) of the B.S.W. degree program at UAM:

EP 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession’s history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession’s enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers:

- Advocate for client access to the services of social work.
- Practice professional reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
• Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
• Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
• Engage in career-long learning.
• Use supervision and consultation.

**EP 2.1.2** Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:

• Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
• Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.
• Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts.
• Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

**EP 2.1.3** Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:

• Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
• Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.
• Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

**EP 2.1.4** Engage diversity and difference in practice. Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers:

• Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
• Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
• Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.
• View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.
EP 2.1.5  Advance human rights and social and economic justice. Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers:

- Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
- Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.
- Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

EP 2.1.6  Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers:

- Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.
- Use research evidence to inform practice.

EP 2.1.7  Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers:

- Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
- Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

EP 2.1.8  Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services. Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers:

- Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being.
- Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

EP 2.1.9  Respond to contexts that shape practice. Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers:
• Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.
• Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.

EP 2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

a. Engagement. Social workers:

• Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
• Use empathy and other interpersonal skills.
• Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

b. Assessment. Social workers:

• Collect, organize, and interpret client data.
• Assess client strengths and limitations.
• Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives.
• Select appropriate intervention strategies.

c. Intervention. Social workers:

• Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals.
• Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities.
• Help clients resolve problems.
• Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients.
• Facilitate transitions and endings.

d. Evaluation. Social workers:

• Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions
The Philosophy of the UAM Field Education Program: Our Signature Pedagogy

According to CSWE, field education is the signature pedagogy of the social work profession. The CSWE EPAS states, “Signature pedagogy represents the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner. Professionals have pedagogical norms with which they connect and integrate theory and practice." In social work, the signature pedagogy is field education. The intent of field education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum -- classroom and field -- are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program competencies” (CSWE, 2008, p. 8).

Social Work Field Education Program Goals

The primary goal of field education is to provide students with opportunities to apply generalist social work knowledge and develop skills which reflect the profession’s values and ethics with clients at all system levels (micro, mezzo, and macro). The following are the goals of the UAM field education program:

1. To help students apply social work knowledge, skills, values, and ethics to enhance the well-being of people through supervised generalist practice experiences.

2. To help students utilize social work knowledge, skills, values, and ethics in a supervised generalist practice experience in order to improve the environmental conditions that negatively impact the client and the client’s ecology.

3. To enable students to utilize appropriate research methodologies in order to evaluate the effectiveness of their own intervention, agency, and programs within ethical guidelines, and to use practice knowledge to inform research.

4. To enable students to work effectively with diverse client groups, especially populations vulnerable to discrimination and oppression.

5. To facilitate the professional socialization process by encouraging the demonstration of professional behavior and the application of social work values and ethics.

6. To help students assess their potential for graduate education in social work, and allied fields, and advanced social work practice through feedback from social work field instructors and faculty.

7. To help students develop self-awareness through the process of intervention at all levels (micro, mezzo, and macro) of practice.

8. To enable students to utilize professional oral and written communication skills appropriate to their field setting.

9. To enable students to use professional supervision to enhance learning and practice skill.

The Field Practicum Organizational Structure

The Purpose of the UAM Social Work Field Practicum

The purpose of the field practicum in social work education is to provide opportunities for students to apply social work knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom to real-life situations with clients “in the field”. Students are able to observe the benefits and challenges of working within various organizational settings with diverse client populations. Students are supervised by a professional social worker or related degreed/licensed individual (the Field Instructor or Task Supervisor) in a field agency and by field faculty (Field Education Director) at the university. This dual perspective is intended to facilitate the integration of classroom learning with agency-based practice, and to provide support to students as they engage in this dynamic process. Additionally, field agencies often benefit from the presence of a social work intern (the student in the field practicum); however, the primary focus of the internship is on the learning process for the student.

The Philosophy of the UAM Social Work Field Practicum

The UAM Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program utilizes the ecological perspective as the theoretical foundation of generalist practice. UAM social work department chose to define generalist practices as follows: Generalist social work practice is built upon a foundation in the liberal arts, and is a process of using critical thinking skills to competently engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate outcomes with diverse multi-level systems using research-informed knowledge and professional values to enhance individual and community well-being. Generalist social workers are life-long learners who engage in promoting human rights, and advancing social and economic justice in an ever-changing global context.

Generalist social work practice includes the provision of social work services with individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This perspective is reinforced through the knowledge, skills, and values content taught in UAM’s social work courses.

The Generalist Intervention Model*, which may be employed with all clients across system levels (individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities) is defined below.


1. Engagement
2. Assessment
3. Planning
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation
6. Termination
7. Follow-up

Students are encouraged to further develop their critical thinking skills which enable them to apply this model regardless of the setting or context of practice.

**The Structure and Design of the UAM Social Work Field Practicum**

The field practicum component of the UAM Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program requires two semesters of practicum experience (SWK 4674 Social Work Field Practicum I and SWK 4704 Social Work Field Practicum II), consisting of a total of 480 hours. Students must complete 240 clock hours of supervised social work practice experience during SWK 4674 Social Work Field Practicum I and 240 clock hours of supervised social work practice experience during SWK 4704 Social Work Field Practicum II at the same agency, or at a different agency if necessary in the judgment of the Social Work Field Education Director.

During the social work field practicum students are not required to complete practicum hours during university approved holidays, or when the university is closed for business. However, students may choose to work during these times if approval has been received from the UAM Social Work Field Education Director as well as their Agency Field Instructor.

Additionally, students are required to complete 2 semester credit hours per week of class instruction (SWK 4252 Field Practicum Seminar I and SWK 4302 Field Practicum Seminar II) in conjunction with the aforementioned Field Practicum Courses. Each Field Practicum Course is worth 4 academic credits and each Field Practicum Seminar is worth 2 academic credits. Therefore, students will earn a total of 6 academic credits per semester regarding their Field Education experience.

The class instruction portion of the field practicum is designed to assist the student in transitioning into their placement, integrating classroom learning with the practice setting, developing/revising their learning contract, and providing an opportunity to process weekly placement experiences. In addition to other classroom assignments, students will submit weekly journal entries summarizing their internship experience from the prior week to share during the classroom time. This will allow students an opportunity to share and process any successes or difficulties they have experienced at their practicum placement, and serves to further integrate classroom-based knowledge with their field practicum experience. In summary, the two components of the total field practicum experience consist of a total of 480 clock hours in the field and the 10 semester credit hours in the classroom across two semesters (fall and spring).

**Administration of the UAM Social Work Field Practicum Program**

The UAM Social Work Field Education Director has the overall responsibility for directing the Field Education Program. The UAM Social Work Field Education Director is responsible for: the development, utilization, and evaluation of field placement agencies; screening and placement of potential practicum students; development, implementation, and evaluation of internship field policies, development of databases and reporting systems related to field education at UAM; evaluation of practicum program activities; development and evaluation
of field instructor training; monitoring students’ progress in the field, and the coordination of faculty which interface with various aspects of the field education program in collaboration with UAM Department of Social Work’s Program Director.

**Specific responsibilities of the UAM Social Work Field Education Director**

The UAM Social Work Field Education Director functions as a link between the university, the student, and the field agency. The UAM Social Work Field Education Director monitors and evaluates students’ progress and performance in the field and assumes primary responsibility for assigning students’ grades for the semester in SWK 4675 Social Work Field Practicum I and SWK 4705 Social Work Field Practicum II. The specific responsibilities of the UAM Social Work Field Education Director include:

1. Serve as the instructor of record of a five semester credit hour Social Work Field Practicum I class and a five semester credit hour Social Work Field Practicum II class integrating social work knowledge, values, and classroom learned practice skills with the supervised social work practice experience across system levels that students gain, fostering the implementation of evidence-based practice.

2. Visit field placement sites a minimum of three times during the academic semester, including, but not limited to: initial visit to confirm the learning contract; a mid-term evaluation visit; and a final evaluation visit prior to the end of the academic semester.

3. Serve as the student’s primary advocate during their field practicum experience;

4. Monitor and evaluate practicum students through weekly assessments reflected in written student journals and time sheets, the appropriateness of student job descriptions and learning contracts, and overall review of student performance in the field as reflected in the verbal and written evaluation processes.

5. Provide support and training to Agency Field Instructors and agency leaders in the effective use of supervision with field practicum students, through a four hour annual orientation held just prior to the fall semester.

6. Participate in faculty meetings related to curriculum development and assessment, screening and reviewing field students, and other program planning issues.

7. Communicate with the UAM Department of Social Work’s Program Director on student progress in the field, including any problems, issues, or concerns which need to be addressed by the field education program.

8. Investigate, in consultation with the UAM Department of Social Work’s Program Director, any student or agency complaints and grievances.
The Social Work Community Advisory Committee

The Social Work Community Advisory Committee works in concert with the Department of Social Work in evaluating the policies and procedures for the field practicum experience as well as the overall B.S.W. degree program. The committee also provides an additional link and a valuable resource between the Department of Social Work’s Field Education Program and the community. Based on the members’ expertise, it may also provide input into the development of new practicum sites and the review of existing sites. The committee may also provide input on training needs or other appropriate issues related to the UAM social work field education program.

Agency-Based Field Education: Field Agencies and Field Instructors

Selection of Participating Agencies

Agency-based field education provides students the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real problems of client systems on all levels. Students, in turn, provide agencies the opportunity to bring new ideas and challenges to service delivery. To become affiliated with the University of Arkansas at Monticello Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program, agencies must meet the following criteria:

1. The agency’s philosophy of service should be compatible with the philosophy, values, and ethics of the social work profession; the primary purpose of the organization (or program) must be to address human needs.

2. Services provided by the agency must be appropriate for undergraduate, generalist social work practice and there must be a sufficient caseload of clients (and work) for students to gain “hands on” experience.

3. There must be availability of appropriate supervision, namely at least one staff member with a B.S.W. or M.S.W., to serve as the Field Instructor for the student. If a B.S.W. or M.S.W. is not available, a staff member with a related degree or related role can serve as the Task Supervisor with the Social Work Field Education Director or other University of Arkansas at Monticello social work faculty member providing Field Instruction supervision when necessity dictates.

4. Agencies must support the field education process by providing release time for Field Instructors to carry out field instruction responsibilities and to attend field-related meetings such as field site visits made by the Social Work Field Education Director.

5. Agencies must provide students with adequate work space, office supplies, access to a telephone, transportation or travel reimbursement for travel required by the agency and information regarding transportation policies and liabilities, and access to client and agency records appropriate for the learning experience.
6. Agencies should not engage in discriminatory practices in the hiring of personnel, the acceptance of students, or the provision of services to clientele regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation or any other characteristic.

7. Agencies must agree to participate in various processes of the field education program, including field instructor training, periodic agency updates, interviews with prospective field students, and communication with the social work field faculty.

8. Provide students with an initial orientation to the agency at the beginning of the field placement.

Contact regarding a student intern may be initiated by the UAM Department of Social Work or the agency. The affiliation process begins with one or more conversations between the agency and the Social Work Field Education Director to determine that the agency meets the above stated criteria. If the agency is deemed appropriate as a practicum site, an agency application form, a data sheet for the field instructor(s) and/or task supervisors, and Memorandum of Agreement specifying the relationship between the agency and the university are sent to the agency. The Social Work Field Education Director reviews the completed forms, and upon approval of the agency as a field practicum placement site, a Memorandum of Agreement is signed by authorized representatives of both the agency and the university.

Because University of Arkansas at Monticello students come from such a dispersed geographic base, the university continuously works to have contracts with a large number of field agencies in order to best meet the needs of the social work field practicum students. Depending upon the number of students in field practicum and their geographic preferences, some agencies may not have students placed with them every semester. However, all active field agencies will receive an Agency Field Practicum Application to be updated every two years in order to provide the Social Work Field Education Director with current information.

**Responsibilities of Field Agencies**

As an approved field agency, affiliates are committed to the educational process of social work students. Through agency experiences and supervision, students have the opportunity to learn and become socialized into the profession of social work. Agencies are expected to provide designated field instructors and other resources stated in the criteria for agency selection above. Field agencies are asked to work cooperatively with the Department of Social Work (and the Social Work Field Education Director) in creative problem-solving and efforts to enhance the learning experience for field practicum students. As an approved affiliate with the UAM Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program, agencies agree to:

1. Participate in the pre-placement process, which includes completing an interview with the prospective field practicum student and providing an assessment of the appropriateness of a respective student for that agency.
2. Provide opportunities for students to participate in agency programs and activities which will enhance the students’ learning experience.

3. Appoint appropriate personnel to serve as Field Instructors/Task Supervisors and provide the necessary agency support for Field Instructors/Task Supervisors to provide necessary supervision and attend field orientation and training provided by the UAM Department of Social Work as well as participate in all other field-related functions (supervision, evaluation, conferences, and so forth).

4. Provide students the use of facilities necessary to successfully complete required field assignments, including office space, office supplies, access to a telephone, and access to client and agency records appropriate to the learning experience.

5. Inform the Social Work Field Education Director as soon as possible regarding staff or organizational changes which affect the field practicum placement.

6. Work in partnership with the Social Work Field Education program to maximize the field education of social work students.

Selection of Field Instructors

The Field Instructor plays one of the most critical roles in the educational process of the field practicum. In order to be approved by the UAM Department of Social Work as a Field Instructor, an agency employee should meet the criteria listed below. Exceptions to any of the following criteria must be granted by the Social Work Field Education Director.

1. B.S.W. or M.S.W. degree from a CSWE accredited social work program, and/or a license in social work from any state or a degree in a related field such as psychology, nursing, or marriage and family counseling.

2. At least one year’s experience related to their professional degree, including at least six months of employment at the field agency.

3. The ability to supervise and instruct undergraduate social work students.

4. Acceptance of the generalist social work model and the educational philosophy of the UAM Department of Social Work’s B.S.W. degree program.

5. Commitment to work cooperatively with the Social Work Field Education Program.

6. Demonstrated professional values, knowledge, skills, and behaviors in relation to clients, agency co-workers, and with social work practicum students that are compatible with the social work profession.

Due to the limited number of BSWs and MSWs in our region, not all field practicum agencies have a professional social worker to directly provide field supervision. However, they do have qualified professionals with a related degree as well as the interest, expertise, and ability...
to provide supervision of social work tasks. In cases where no professional social worker is available to fill the field instructor role, such individuals will be identified as “Task Supervisors,” and will be eligible to provide direct oversight of the daily educational activities of the social work field practicum student.

Task Supervisors must be approved by the B.S.W. degree program’s Social Work Field Education Director based upon their educational background, values and ethics compatible with the social work profession, supervisory ability, and understanding of social work education and practice principles, and work experience. Students working under a Task Supervisor will be provided with social work supervision through an assigned B.S.W. Field Instructor from another program within the assigned agency, or from the UAM Department of Social Work’s Faculty. The Task Supervisor and Social Work Field Education Director will work collaboratively in designing student assignments, guiding student activities, and evaluating student performance.

Responsibilities of Field Instructors

Field Instructors engage in the dual role of agency practitioner and social work educator. Since the primary goal of social work field instruction is social work education rather than agency service, the teaching role of the Field Instructor is critical. Conversely, the primary task of the field student is that of learning rather than serving.

The specific responsibilities and duties of the Field Instructor include:

1. Pre-placement interviews and assessment of prospective students. Field Instructors are asked to meet with a prospective student to discuss what a practicum at their agency would entail and to assess the student’s appropriateness for that setting. Field Instructors are expected to complete a post-interview evaluation form, which provides feedback for placement decisions.

2. Orientation of practicum students. Field Instructors are responsible for orienting the assigned field student to their agency. For example, students need to learn about the agency’s mission, policies and procedures, expectations regarding work rules, dress codes, and supervision. The most effective form of orientation is participatory; therefore, rather than relying on manuals to orient the student, Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss relevant policies and allow the student to observe first-hand the way in which business is conducted by the agency.

3. Establishing a learning contract and job description. Field Instructors are expected to work with the assigned field student in the development of a learning contract and job description for their practicum. Input from the Field Instructor is critical to the identification of realistic and appropriate expectations for the placement. Ongoing communication with the student about roles, responsibilities, duties, and accountability during the practicum can be facilitated by these instruments.

4. Supervision of practicum student. Field Instructors shall provide at least one hour per week of direct supervision. While most field instructors spend much more time than this each week working directly with students, there is a need for a designated time strictly
set-aside for discussing and processing the student’s learning needs, identifying strengths and areas for work, updating learning goals, and giving feedback on the student’s performance.

5. Serve as a professional role model. Field Instructors should reflect and model professional social work values, skills, and behavior. Students are keenly aware of how their field instructor interacts with clients, co-workers, and other community contacts. Field Instructors should be open to discussing questions the students may have regarding different communication styles and contexts, agency politics, and balancing “real life” dynamics compared to textbook ideals.

6. Provide appropriate learning experiences. Field Instructors should structure the student’s learning experience in such a way that s/he is exposed to a wide range and variety of opportunities, including but not limited to direct client contract, agency staffing and staff meetings, board meetings, community meetings, and court hearings. Students should be increasingly challenged in their role and involvement as the semester progresses, beginning with observational roles and working towards direct responsibility for specific experiences intake, intervention, and group facilitation. In addition, the Field Instructor is responsible for coordinating the student’s involvement with other agency staff that function in various roles.

7. Evaluation of the student. Field Instructors should provide the students with ongoing feedback regarding his or her work and progress. The evaluation process includes completion of the evaluation form at mid-semester and the end of the semester. The Field Instructor is responsible for completing the form and discussing it with the student in conjunction with the Social Work Field Education Director’s field visits during the semester. The Field Instructor may elect to have the student complete a self-evaluation as well in order to compare perceptions. Regardless of the format chosen, the Field Instructor should regard the evaluation as an integral part of the field instruction process and critical component to the student’s learning experience.

8. Participation in the internship experience. Field instructors are expected to attend field instructor training provided at the beginning of each fall semester. In addition, input and participation from field instructors is appreciated in order to continue to upgrade and enhance the practicum experience, the curriculum and the UAM Department of Social Work’s entire social work B.S.W. degree program.

9. Communication with Social Work Field Education Director. Field Instructors should contact the Social Work Field Education Director as soon as possible should problems arise in the field setting. In addition, field instructors are asked to communicate with the Social Work Field Education Director regarding any agency changes that may impact the placement.
Expectations for the Social Work Field Practicum as a Learning Experience

The social work field practicum experience is the highlight of the student’s social work education, and is considered the “signature pedagogy” in social work education by the CSWE (CSWE, 2008). The UAM Department of Social Work is dependent upon community agencies to carry out this component of the learning process. Because social work is a practice-based profession, the student learns by doing, not from being told how to do it. By working under the supervision and instruction of a competent professional social worker or allied professional, students can initially observe the skills and processes and then begin to demonstrate their own ability to provide professional social work services.

The social work field practicum provides opportunities for students to integrate classroom learning and skill development through closely supervised social work practice in a variety of situations. Rather than teaching a specialized approach to working with a given population, emphasis is on generalist social work practice implemented in a specific setting. Therefore, students are able to transfer their knowledge and abilities gained in one agency to any other setting.

The practicum allows the student to engage in both short-term and long-term client contact (broadly defined), a range of client situations, varied practice approaches, and diverse agency activities. While there are many contemporary social contexts that influence the service delivery system (such as managed care systems, increased specialization, professional liability, and accreditation standards), the social work field practicum continues to offer a somewhat insulated experience where the emphasis and priority is on maximizing the student’s learning opportunities. Field Instructors need to become increasingly creative and flexible in structuring the placement for their assigned student in order to ensure the student is able to receive the fullest range of experiences; perhaps even allowing the student to become involved with other agencies or programs in order to fulfill this need.

As stated previously, the social work field practicum is a mechanism for students to become socialized to the social work profession. Social work field practicum students can indeed be a wonderful resource to community agencies and bring a wealth of energy, enthusiasm, and commitment with them to the internship experience. However, the primary focus should always be on the student’s learning.

Teaching Methods Used in the Social Work Field Practicum

Since Field Instructors are typically agency practitioners, each may have an approach to field instruction based on their individual educational background and experience. Field Instructors should be sensitive to the diversity of learning styles and characteristics of field students and should utilize the most appropriate approach for the particular student. The following methods are listed as suggested tools for field instructors to utilize to meet the educational needs of their field students:

1. Assign, evaluate, and discuss process recordings.
2. Review and discuss case documentation.
3. Allow the student to observe the field instructor’s client interaction and discuss such interactions.
4. Directly observe the student’s client interactions and discuss such interactions.
5. Videotape client interactions (individual, couple, family, group, and so forth).
6. Conduct role plays with the student.
7. Allow the student to observe and participate in agency staff meetings.
8. Ask the student to visit other agencies to gather information.
9. Arrange for the student to participate in various staff roles (receptionist, intake worker, therapist, direct-care staff, and administration).
10. Assign films and readings and discuss their relevance with the student.

The above are just a few suggested teaching methods. Field Instructors should feel free to utilize other approaches that they have found to be effective.

The Social Work Field Practicum: Integrating Theory with Practice

Requirements for Student Admission to the Social Work Field Practicum

Students entering the social work field practicum must be fully admitted to the social work program and have completed all prerequisites with a grade of “C” or higher in all social work classes; they must have a GPA of 2.5 in the social work major and a 2.0 overall GPA, and must have completed the application process for the social work field practicum experience. Students are required to become B.S.W. student members of NASW or any other nationally recognized social work association (upon their formal admission to the program), obtain a criminal background check, and provide those results to the UAM Department of Social Work, obtain malpractice insurance (1 million/5 million level of policy coverage) and have reliable transportation. Please note that all social work field practicum students are responsible for the cost of the background check as well as the purchase of their own malpractice insurance and provide evidence of the aforementioned requirements to the Social Work Field Education director prior to beginning their social work field practicum experience.

Students who have successfully completed their university required core education requirements and prerequisite social work courses must attend a social work field practicum general interest/orientation meeting, and submit an application for the social work field practicum by the designated deadline.

Summary of Procedures for Student Placement into a Social Work Field Practicum

The following steps describe the sequence of events for placement in the social work field practicum:

1. Eligible students attend a general interest/orientation meeting for the social work field practicum.
2. Students complete and submit a social work field practicum application by the specified deadline, which will include a ranking of desired placement opportunities with requests for specific agencies.
3. The Social Work Field Education Director reviews the applications for eligibility and completeness.
4. The Social Work Field Education Director conducts a formal interview with each application to discuss the application and any concerns which need to be addressed.
5. The Social Work Field Education Director determines prospective social work field practicum assignments for all students who are approved for placement and notifies students and agency Field Instructors in writing.
6. Students schedule and complete interviews with prospective Field Instructors.
7. Students and Field Instructors submit interview evaluations to the Social Work Field Education Director.
8. The Social Work Field Education Director confirms and finalizes assigned placements and notifies students and the field practicum agencies.
9. If, after completion of the initial interviews, a student has not been matched with an agency, additional interviews with prospective agencies will be arranged as needed.
10. Prior to the beginning of social work field practicum experience, a training seminar is provided to all Field Instructors and a mandatory orientation is held for all field practicum students.

Sequence of the Field Practicum Experience

The following describes a general overview of experiences, which are appropriate for most social work field practicum students.

Orientation of agency. As specified under responsibilities of the Field Agency and Field Instructor, students should receive adequate orientation to the agency and its services. This phase should include tours of the facility, introductions to staff, overview of the agency (particularly for large agencies with multiple programs), overview of the relevant agency procedures and services to clients, and specific expectations of the agency (such as parking, dress code, and work schedules). This information is best transmitted in a personal or interactional process rather than simply reading agency policy and procedure manuals. Please note that this orientation may take place prior to the actual practicum if necessary. This is especially true for agencies that require extensive training and/or orientation before students can begin their practicum.

Orientation/Observation of client services. By the third week of the social work field practicum, students should be involved in opportunities with clients. This may include sitting in on intakes, conduct intakes directly, observe agency staff as they conduct social assessments or social histories, observing group sessions, or sitting in on staffing or treatment team meetings. As the student completes the orientation phase, they should have developed a good understanding of the agency’s procedures for working with clients, documentation, and the organizational structure.

Provision of services to clients. Because undergraduate students are being prepared for professional generalist social work practice, there should be opportunities for extensive client contact, a range of client situations, varied practice approaches, and diverse agency activities/assignments. It is expected that the placement should include the following: working one-on-one with clients to assess their needs and determine resources to meet these needs;
working with people in families and groups; participation in staffing; documentation for and maintenance of case records; research, assessment, or intervention within an agency setting and community or committee work. Students should be given as much direct responsibility as they are capable of.

Conclusion of placement. Students should address the conclusion of their placement with clients, co-workers, and the field instructor. The termination process should include evaluation of clients’ progress and accomplishments, providing for follow-up or aftercare, summarizing and evaluating their own leaning and performance, and addressing feelings regarding termination. Because the end of the semester typically comes “so quickly,” this phase is often overlooked as a part of the social work field practicum process. Attention to this time should be given by both the student and the Field Instructor.

General Expectations, Responsibilities, and Requirements for Social Work Field Practicum Students

Social work field practicum students are expected to assume responsibility for their own learning, for self-evaluation, communication with co-workers and supervisors, providing critical feedback regarding the field placement, completing the required hours, adhering to their job description, and fulfilling their learning contract. Part of the learning experience during the social work field practicum is experiencing the frustration which may occur when working within an organization’s structure, working with different personalities, or working under a supervisor (the Field Instructor) who may not be what the student thinks he or she should be. Students, therefore, are expected to demonstrate maturity and use good communication and problem-solving skills when encountering challenges in the placement. Please note that the most difficult situations in the social work field practicum do not usually involve clients; they involve agency staff. Consequently, learning to effectively operate within an agency is an important part of the social work field practicum experience.

Hours. Social Work Field Practicum I and Social Work Field Practicum II each consist of 240 clock hours at the agency. This averages to be approximately 16 clock hours per week at the agency. Both placements typically are completed at the same agency; a change in agency placement may be necessary under special circumstances. Students are required to record completed hours on official time sheets, which much be validated with the original signature of the Field Instructor (or their designee) each week. Students work out a schedule of days and times they will be in field at the agency with their Field Instructor.

Students are to work during regular agency office hours and only when the Field Instructor/Task Supervisor is available. To be clear, the social work field practicum student should generally work during the same schedule or shift as the Field Instructor/Task Supervisor. If a Field Instructor typically works weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., then the social work student should not regularly work evenings or weekends. If, on occasion, when working a weekend is important to the student’s learning plan and the field instructor is not working at that time, an alternative supervisor or other designee (Task Supervisor) on duty who can supervise the student must be assigned during these times. If there are opportunities outside regular working hours such as health fairs, agency events, continuing education conferences, which the field instructor feels may also benefit the student’s field practicum experience, these
opportunities may be accepted as social work filed practicum hours with approval from the Social Work Field Education Director.

If the Field Instructor will be absent from the agency for an extended period of time due to a family emergency, or illness, he/she is required to designate a qualified individual within the agency to serve as the Field Instructor until he/she returns, and to notify the student and Field Education Director of this as soon as possible.

Students should not complete their social work field practicum hours any earlier than two weeks prior to the end of the semester. If a student does complete their practicum hours two weeks before the end of the semester, he or she is expected to continue to attend required minimum hours at the agency for the remaining time period in the academic semester.

**Learning plan and job descriptions.** All field students are expected to develop learning plan and job descriptions as a part of their social work filed practicum experience. This assignment is to be done by the student with input and guidance from the Field Instructor. The learning plan should reflect mutually-agreed upon learning goals for the semester. The job description should realistically reflect the duties and responsibilities of the field student at the agency. Both of these documents will be utilized as a part of the evaluation process with the Social Work Field Education Director.

**Weekly summaries or journals.** Students are expected to maintain documentation regarding their weekly field practicum experiences. The student is responsible for completing a written description and assessment of their work at the agency every week as outlined in the course syllabus.

**The Social Work Field Practicum Evaluation Process**

**By the student.** The student is expected to assume responsibility for this evaluation process as a part of his or her professional reflection, development and growth. The three tools, which are utilized to guide the student in developing reflection and evaluation skills include the learning plan, the field practicum mid-term and final evaluations, and the student evaluation of the practicum placement. The learning plan allows the student to establish measurable goals and use this format to facilitate supervisory conferences and self-evaluation. The student completes a self-evaluation by completing the same mid-term and final evaluation form as the Field Instructor. This evaluation is used as a self-reflection and correction tool. The student should critically assess his or her performance and discuss self-perceptions along with those expressed by the Field Instructor. Students are full participants in their evaluation and growth during the practicum, this evaluation is not a process that is “done to” the student, but is done with the student. The student is also asked to complete an evaluation of the practicum placement at the end of the semester. This provides feedback to the Social Work Field Education Director and the field agency regarding the field practicum site and allows the student to have input into improving the quality of future placements at this agency.

**By the Field Instructor.** Field Instructors are encouraged to regard the evaluation forms and process as a tool for supervision as well as a measurement of progress. The Field Instructor and student should complete the field practicum student evaluation form at mid-semester and at the
end of each semester. Many Field Instructors find it helpful to complete the evaluation with the student or by asking the student to rate themselves and compare it with the Field Instructor’s ratings. Attention should also be given to evaluating how well the student has performed according to his or her job description and the learning contract in particular. The evaluation form consists of measurements that address the ten core competencies and forty-one practice behaviors as outlined by CSWE.

Field Instructors are asked to use the evaluation form to rate students on their performance as objectively as possible. Often, field instructors who have a good relationship with the student are reluctant to give critical feedback or to give anything but the highest of ratings. However, it is essential that even students who perform exceptionally well in the field are challenged to grow in new areas. Field Instructors are also asked to provide a recommended grade at the end of the semester. While the recommended grade may affect the grade assigned by the Social Work Field Education Director, other factors such as participation and performance in classroom portion of the practicum course are also taken into consideration before the final grade is determined.

**By the Social Work Field Education Director.** The Social Work Field Education Director will visit each student at his or her agency at least three times during the semester, usually at the initial placement, mid-term in the semester and at the end of the semester. This will provide an opportunity for the Social Work Field Education Director to visit with the Field Instructor and student to address particular concerns which need to be addressed.

The Social Work Field Education Director is continually assessing and evaluating students based on information from the students’ journals, assignments, participation in classroom portion of the practicum course, and feedback from Field Instructors. The Social Work Field Education Director is responsible for determining the final grade for the semester in the social work field practicum course based on performance both in the field and in the classroom. However, the assigned grade is not as significant as the learning and growth, which takes place for the student during the social work field practicum experience.

**General Social Work Field Practicum Policies**

**Completion of Hours and Attendance**

Students are expected to complete a total of 480 hours to satisfy the requirements for both Social Work Field Practicum I and Social Work Field Practicum II courses. This is about 16 clock hours per week on average during both field practicum courses. Specific work schedules are to be developed and agreed upon by the student and the Field Instructor. If the agency requires training or in-service hours, up to 40 clock hours may be counted towards the required social work field practicum hours. If training occurs before the semester begins, permission from the Social Work Field Education Director should be granted in advance. Travel time to and from the field agency *may not* be counted towards the students’ field practicum hours, but travel which is incurred during the placement is appropriate to be included such as home visits and/or travel to other offices of agencies.
Students are responsible for accurately documenting their field practicum hours with signed verification from their Field Instructor (or their designee) on the proper form. Students are expected to demonstrate professional work habits, such as being punctual and consistent in work attendance. If a student must be late or absent from their regularly scheduled field practicum hours, he or she should call their Field Instructor. Excessive tardiness or absences are considered a serious problem and may necessitate a conference with the Social Work Field Education Director, or even dismissal from the field practicum.

If students must miss their regular social work field practicum hours, they may schedule “make-up” hours with the approval of their Field Instructor. If a student gets seriously behind on their field practicum hours due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g., illness, personal emergency, death in the family), they should discuss this with the Social Work Field Education Director in order to develop an outcome that is in the best interest of the client, the student, the agency, and the UAM Department of Social Work. Students may not, typically, receive an incomplete for a social work field practicum course. If the required hours or assignments are not completed by the end of the semester, students will receive an “F” for the social work field practicum course and will be expected to repeat the social work field practicum experience (usually at another agency). Exceptions to this policy are made for only the most extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Social Work Field Education Director. If a student is not satisfied with the action taken by the Social Work Field Education Director, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the UAM Department of Social Work’s Program Director.

Changing Social Work Field Practicum Placement

The Social Work Field Education Director should be contacted if problems arise in the placement. Most concerns can be resolved through a conference with the Social Work Field Education Director, the field practicum student, and Field Instructor. Changes in the social work field placement are only made when agency changes dictate the termination of the field placement (e.g., programs closing, field instructors leaving the agency), or when problems between the field practicum student and an aspect of the placement are determined to be irreconcilable by the Social Work Field Education Director. If circumstances necessitate a change in a student’s field placement, the Social Work Field Education Director should be contacted as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for the student’s field practicum placement. Hours may be transferred from the initial social work field practicum placement to the new social work field practicum placement, with the approval of the Social Work Field Education Director.

Removal of a Student from a Social Work Field Practicum Placement

A student may be removed from the field practicum agency at any time by request from the Field Instructor and/or agency for unprofessional conduct or for significant lack of progress in achieving practicum learning objectives. If a student’s performance is deemed unsatisfactory, the Field Instructor should contact the Social Work Field Education Director immediately. This contact is needed in order that a conference can be arranged between the student, the Social Work Field Education Director, and the Field Instructor. The Social Work Field Education Director also may remove a student from a social work field practicum placement for unprofessional conduct or lack of progress or participation.

Revised 6.26.2017
The grounds for removal of a student from field may include, but are not limited to: failure to abide by the *NASW Code of Ethics*; attempts to harm oneself or someone else; repeated tardiness or absences at the agency; repeated changes in scheduled field hours without approval; violations of Federal or Arkansas state laws or regulations; and/or other behavior that is incompatible with accepted professional conduct. The final decision to remove a student from their social work field practicum will be made, after consultation with the social work faculty, by the Social Work Field Education Director, and/or with documentation from the Field Instructor or agency, and may be based on objective and/or subjective professional judgments. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Social Work Field Education Director, the student may appeal the decision to the Department of Social Work’s Program Director.

**Supervision of Student Activities and Work**

Students shall not be left alone in the agency without professional staff supervision. Leaving students without supervision or in charge is not an appropriate situation for social work field practicum students. Social work field practicum students, no matter how competent or skilled, do not yet have the required credentials for assuming staff responsibilities. It is also inappropriate for students to make home visits without some measure of supervision.

**Safety Issues**

Social work field practicum agencies should be aware of safety issues related to the activities of the social work field practicum student. Students should not be expected to engage in any activity where there are safety concerns. Students should be thoroughly oriented to the agency’s policies and procedures to ensure their health and safety during their social work field practicum experience.

**Malpractice/Liability Insurance**

Students are required to have coverage for malpractice liability purchased through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) or other reputable agency with comparable coverage. The student must provide proof of such malpractice insurance, at the 1 million/5 million coverage level prior to beginning their social work field practicum experience.

**The Provision of Credit for Life Experience, Work Experience, and Prior Practicums**

The UAM Department of Social Work does not award any academic credit, including credit towards the Social Work Field Practicum experience, for prior work or life experiences, as stipulated by the CSWE. All social work field practicum experiences must be taken in residence at UAM.
Social Work Field Practicums at One’s Place of Employment

As a general rule, social work field practicum students shall not be placed in agencies where they are currently employed. It is the student’s responsibility to disclose such information to the Social Work Field Education Director during the application process. Experience has shown that when a student is doing a social work field practicum and employed at the same agency, the educational focus for the student is severely limited. Any exceptions to the policy must be approved by the Social Work Field Education Director in consultation with the UAM Department of Social Work’s Program Director. The stated criteria, which must be met for a possible exception to this policy are: 1) the student must have a different supervisor for the social work field practicum than employment supervisor; 2) the student must engage in social work field practicum hours at different times and/or days than employment hours; and 3) the student must be assigned to a different department/position for the social work field practicum than for their employment.

Paid Internships/Stipends

Historically, agencies that have provided practicum placements for UAM have not offered paid internships and/or stipends for practicum students. The one exception to this has been the Arkansas Department of Human Services, which partners with the Title IV-E program to offer one $5000 stipend each year. This stipend includes an application process and is contingent on the student signing a contract which commits the student to one year of employment immediately following their graduation. This stipend is open to any student within the Social Work, Criminal Justice or Psychology Departments.

Recently there have been conversations between the Field Education Director and some Field Instructors regarding the possibility of a paid internship or stipend if those agencies were able to provide funds for this purpose. While there have been no such placements in the past, (with the exception of the Title IV-E Stipend Program) the B.S.W. Program is open to and encourages such opportunities. If such an opportunity occurs the agency must stipulate that the student is NOT a full time employee, is not expected or required to fulfill the same responsibilities and/or duties of a full time employee, and is not subject to the same sanctions and/or liabilities associated with a full time employee.

Night and Weekend Social Work Field Practicum Placements

Most traditional social service agencies do not have qualified supervisory staff available during non-traditional hours. While the UAM Department of Social Work is sensitive to students’ scheduling needs, students should be aware that no evening or weekend hours will be approved that compromise the programs’ educational objectives or the quality of the student’s field practicum experience. If, however, an agency provides adequate and appropriate supervision during non-traditional hours, a student may schedule practicum hours with approval from his/her designated Field Instructor and the Social Work Field Education Director.
Travel and Mileage Reimbursement

It is the student’s responsibility to secure reliable transportation to and from the social work field practicum placement. It is also their responsibility to provide their own automobile liability insurance coverage for agency-related travel. Reimbursement for agency-related expenses, such as travel compensation should be the responsibility of the agency and should be congruent with the agency reimbursement policies and rates for regular staff at that agency. The agency policies and procedures for the travel compensation should be discussed with social work field practicum students as a part of their orientation. It is the responsibility of the Field Instructor and agency to verify that the student’s vehicle insurance coverage is adequate for the job required before allowing the student to engage in agency activities involving transportation.

Holidays

Students are entitled to observe holidays as designated by the University of Arkansas at Monticello and their placement agency. However, if a student’s regularly scheduled hours occur on a holiday, they are still responsible for completing those hours on another day. In addition, students may choose to work on said holidays in order to earn additional practicum hours, or to make up for other absences. If a student wishes to do this he/she must gain prior approval from both the Field Instructor and the Field Education Director. Students should communicate the University’s holiday schedule to their Field Instructor and make plans accordingly.

Sick Days

If students are unable to attend their social work field practicum due to personal illness or the illness of a dependent family member, they should contact their Field Instructor and assume responsibility for rescheduling any appointments or work requirements. The student shall make up any missed hours at a time agreed upon by the student and the Field Instructor. *If the student’s absences exceed 24 hours or three full field practicum days, the student should notify the Social Work Field Education Director and propose a plan to remediate the time missed.*

Conflicts of Interest

Students, Field Instructors, field agencies, and social work faculty should all be aware of potential conflicts of interests. Social work field practicum students and Field Instructors, particularly, should make known to the Social Work Field Education Director any potential conflicts of interest. For example, social work field practicum students shall not be placed at agencies where relatives or family members are employed or serve on the board of directors without the approval of the Social Work Field Education Director.

Requests for Documentation

The UAM Department of Social Work or field agencies may request that potential social work field practicum students applying for a social work field practicum or participating in the social work field practicum experience provide documentation regarding their physical or mental health, drug or alcohol use, or provide information for a criminal background check. Such
information may be requested if required by the agency, or when it is deemed necessary to ensure the well-being of the social work student and/or clients at the field practicum site. Decisions related to the information obtained will be made on an individual basis.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

The University of Arkansas at Monticello is committed to the principle that no qualified person shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from the participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, as required by the *Americans with Disability Act of 1990*. However, the University of Arkansas at Monticello does not waive the published degree requirements for students. To the extent practical, the faculty and administration will make reasonable accommodations to assist qualified individuals with disabilities to meet their degree requirements, consistent with the applicable provisions of Arkansas statutes. The UAM Department of Social Work will work with students and other support services to enable a student to work towards a successful social work field practicum experience. It is recognized that students may choose not to disclose a disability. In such cases, the student shall not receive special accommodation in class or for field work if the disability is not known to the University or its faculty.

**Nondiscrimination Policy**

The University of Arkansas at Monticello is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by the University of Arkansas at Monticello, on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability.

Students have a right to study and work in a non-discriminatory environment. The UAM Department of Social Work affirms and respects diversity and difference among students, faculty, field instructors, and staff. The social work department does not discriminate on the basis of nationality, immigration status, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, age, gender or any other characteristic.

**Grievance Procedures**

The UAM Department of Social Work’s *Student Handbook* details students’ rights and explains complaint and grievance procedures. Social work students have the right to appeal course grades and adverse decisions relating to the Social Work Field Education Program according to the appeal process outlined in the Social Work Program’s *Student Manual.*
Forms

Agency Forms and Descriptions

Agency Field Practicum Application. This form provides a brief description of the agency setting, services, and learning opportunities. This form is completed by an agency representative and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director as part of the application for becoming a social work field practicum site.

Field Instructor/Task Supervisor Data Sheet. This form provides a brief summary of background information on the designated Field Instructor(s) and/or Task Supervisor(s) including education, employment, licensing history, and so forth. This form is completed by individuals within the agency who are interested in becoming Field Instructors or Task Supervisors.

Agency Interview Response Form. This form provides feedback from the agency regarding the prospective social work field practicum students’ initial interviews. This form is completed by the Field Instructor and/or agency administrator who conducted the initial interview and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director following the interview.

Field Practicum Student Evaluation. This form provides the Field Instructor’s mid-term and final evaluation of the social work field practicum student. This form is completed by the Field Instructor, discussed with the student and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director. In addition, each student will use this form to rate their own performance and progress in order to facilitate their self-awareness, self-reflection and self-correction during the field practicum.

Field Instructor’s Program Evaluation. This form provides the UAM Department of Social Work with feedback and input regarding the Social Work Field Education Program. This form is completed by the Field Instructor and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director at the end of each student’s field practicum experience.

Field Education Director’s Evaluation of Field Agency. This form provides feedback and input to the agency regarding placement. This form is completed by the Social Work Field Education Director and submitted to the agency at the end of each student’s field practicum experience.

Student Forms and Descriptions

Student Field Practicum Application. This form provides background information on prospective social work field practicum students including biographical information, education and work history, areas of interest regarding preferred practice setting, and so forth. This form is completed by the student and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director.

Student Interview Response Form. This form provides feedback from the student regarding their initial interview with their prospective social work field practicum placement site.
This form is completed by the student and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director following the interview.

**Field Practicum Learning Plan.** This form provides the required learning competencies, goals, and objectives students will be expected to meet during the social work field practicum. This form is completed by the student with assistance from the Field Instructor and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director during the second week of each field practicum course.

**Field Practicum Time Sheet and Analysis.** This form provides an account of social work field practicum hours worked as well as how those hours were spent. This form is completed by the student, reviewed and signed by the Field Instructor, and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director on a weekly basis.

**Field Practicum Student Self-Evaluation.** This form provides the student with a tool to evaluate his/her own performance during the field education experience. This form is completed by the Field Practicum Student, discussed with the field instructor and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director. Each student will use this form to rate their own performance and progress in order to facilitate their self-awareness, self-reflection and self-correction during the field practicum.

**Student Evaluation of Practicum Placement.** This form provides the UAM Department of Social Work with feedback and input regarding the student’s experience in the social work field practicum site. This form is completed by the student and submitted to the Social Work Field Education Director at the end of each student’s field practicum experience. In addition, the Field Education Director uses aggregate data from the evaluations to identify issues/topic that need to be addressed during the following year’s Field Instructor Training.