Criteria for Social Work Field Placement Agencies

Criteria for MSW Student Placement Agencies

Criteria for selection of an agency as a setting for student placement include the following:

1. The availability of necessary learning experiences;

2. The willingness of the agency executive and staff to support the educational goals of the UTA SSW;

3. The clear understanding that placements are learning experiences for students and not intended to provide extra support to the staff for the sole purpose of conducting agency business;

4. The availability of appropriate, educational and instructive supervision, at least one hour of supervision per week from the approved Field Instructor;

5. The mission of the organization, or the identified program or department within an organization, must address human needs. This can include the areas of social policy formulation, administration, evaluation, research, direct service delivery, etc;

6. The agency/organization cannot engage in discriminatory practices in the hiring of personnel, the acceptance of students or clientele;

7. The agency/organization supports Field Instructors’ participation in the Office of Field Education’s Field Instructor Academy (either in person or online) and other additional or ongoing training as needed;

8. An agency must provide a Field Instructor with a Master’s in Social Work from a CSWE- accredited university. For supervision of Master’s level students, a minimum of two years of postgraduate social work experience is also required;

9. The agency/organization must have necessary administrative capacity to sustain student activities (space, phones, privacy when needed, administrative support, etc.);

10. The agency/organization must take necessary precautions to protect students’ safety. This may minimally include training in policies and procedures for conducting home visits; interacting with potentially difficult clients; and handling emergencies, as well as appropriate screening of student assignments by the Field Instructor(s);

11. The agency must communicate changes in MSW supervision to the Office of Field Education as soon as possible in order to make the necessary arrangements for student supervision;

12. The agency will provide a practice setting that will expand, enhance and/or introduce new elements into students’ previous work and educational experiences;

13. When possible, agencies are encouraged to consider offering stipends to support students during the placement.
Meeting these requirements evinces the agency’s commitment to using its physical and personnel resources to educate new professionals.

As mentioned earlier, field agencies have distinct goals for first-year and second-year students. **First-year MSW field placements** are selected for affiliation based on their ability to meet the following goals:

1. The placement will promote students’ identification with the values and ethics of the profession;
2. The agency will develop students’ ability to apply ethical work principles to guide professional practice;
3. The agency will develop students’ ability to apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments;
4. The agency will make available a generalist perspective to social work practice with client systems of different sizes;
5. The agency will develop students’ ability to engage diversity and difference in practice;
6. The agency will cultivate students’ capacity to advance human rights and social and economic justice;
7. The agency supports the students’ learning to apply knowledge of human behavior in the social environment;
8. The agency will provide students with experiences to engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services;
9. The agency will develop students’ ability to respond to contexts that shape practice.
10. The agency will provide experiences to develop students’ abilities to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate progress with clients.

The MSW **second-year field placements** are selected for affiliation based on their ability to meet the following goals:

1. The agency will insist that students demonstrate the ability to function responsibly and effectively in an agency setting;
2. The agency will provide the opportunity for students to deliver appropriate services to client systems as defined by their area of specialization;
3. The agency will allow students to implement a range of interventions based on comprehensive client assessments and evidence-based knowledge;
4. The agency will develop students’ ability to apply social work knowledge and theory to practice using critical thinking in practice approaches and decisions;
5. The agency will ensure that students demonstrate advanced knowledge and skill in their area of specialization;

6. The agency will sharpen the students’ ability to engage in social work practice that is sensitive to issues of culture, ethnicity, religion, race, class, sexual orientation, age, gender, and physical and mental abilities;

7. The agency will instill in students appropriate and effective communication skills;

8. The agency will provide experiences that encourage students’ ability to reflect upon and resolve ethical dilemmas in practice;

9. The agency will ensure that students demonstrate a disciplined use of self;

10. The agency will equip students with the ability to evaluate their level of effectiveness as a social work practitioner;

11. The agency will strengthen the students’ commitment to and responsibility for ongoing professional development.

(Policy and Procedures Manual for the Office of Field Education: MSW Program, pp. 7-9)

**Criteria for BSW Student Placement Agencies**

Criteria for selection of an agency as a setting for student placement include the following:

1. The availability of necessary learning experiences;

2. The willingness of the agency executive and staff to support the educational goals of the UTA SSW;

3. The clear understanding that placements are learning experiences for students and not intended to provide extra support to the staff for the sole purpose of conducting agency business;

4. The availability of appropriate, educational and instructive supervision, at least one hour of supervision per week from the approved Field Instructor;

5. The mission of the organization, or the identified program or department within an organization, must address human needs. This can include the areas of social policy formulation, administration, evaluation, research, direct service delivery, etc;

6. The agency/organization cannot engage in discriminatory practices in the hiring of personnel, the acceptance of students or clientele;

7. The agency/organization supports Field Instructors’ participation in the Office of Field Education’s Field Instructor Academy (either in person or online) and other
additional or ongoing training as needed;

8. An agency must provide a Field Instructor with a BSW or an MSW from a CSWE-accredited university. For supervision of BSW students, a minimum of two years of postgraduate social work experience is also required;

9. The agency/organization must have necessary administrative capacity to sustain student activities (space, phones, privacy when needed, administrative support, etc.);

10. The agency/organization must take necessary precautions to protect students’ safety. This may include training in policies and procedures for conducting home visits; interacting with potentially difficult clients; and handling emergencies, as well as appropriate screening of student assignments by the Field Instructor(s);

11. The agency must communicate changes in BSW supervision to the Office of Field Education as soon as possible in order to make the necessary arrangements for student supervision;

12. The agency will provide a practice setting that will expand, enhance and/or introduce new elements into students’ educational experiences;

13. The agency will offer tasks that will promote mastery of the Core Competencies as specified by CSWE;

14. When possible, agencies are encouraged to consider offering stipends to support students during the placement.

Meeting these requirements evinces the agency’s commitment to using its physical and personnel resources to educate new professionals.

BSW placements are selected for affiliation based on their ability to meet the following goals:

1. The placement will promote students’ identification with the values and ethics of the profession;

2. The agency will develop students’ ability to apply ethical work principles to guide professional practice;

3. The agency will develop students’ ability to apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments;

4. The agency will make available a generalist perspective to social work practice with client systems of different sizes;

5. The agency will develop students’ ability to engage diversity and difference in practice;

6. The agency will cultivate students’ capacity to advance human rights and social and economic justice;

7. The agency supports the students’ learning to apply knowledge of human
behavior in the social environment;

8. The agency will provide students with experiences to engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services;

9. The agency will develop students’ ability to respond to contexts that shape practice.

10. The agency will provide experiences to develop students’ abilities to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate progress with clients.

(Policy and Procedures Manual for the Office of Field Education: BSW PROGRAM, pp. 7-9)