

**Field Education Office**

Frequently Asked Questions

**1. How do I become a placement agency for GVSU Social Work students?**

If interested in hosting a MSW student intern, please contact Deborah Ronk at [ronkd@gvsu.edu](mailto:ronkd@gvsu.edu) or 616-331-6563.

If interested in hosting a BSW student intern, please contact Katie Scheuerle at [scheuerk@gvsu.edu](mailto:scheuerk@gvsu.edu) or 616-331-6589.

**2. What are the supervision requirements?**

The expectation is that a student will receive at least one hour of direct face-to-face supervision from the Field Instructor each week.

1. For BSW Students: Our accrediting body prefers supervision is provided by a graduate of an accredited social work program (BSW or MSW); however, arrangements can be made for supervisors who have unique skills and/or opportunities, or who have an advanced degree in a related human service area.
2. For MSW Students: Our accrediting body prefers supervision be provided by a masters-level graduate of an accredited social work program.

**3. When do students begin their field placement?**

BSW and Advanced-standing MSW students begin field placement during the first week of the fall semester (late August) and finish mid-April of the winter semester. Regular-status MSW students begin field placement during the first week of the Spring/Summer semester (May) and finish mid-April of the winter semester. Regular-status MSW students placed in a school setting begin in the winter semester (January) and intern the following fall and winter semesters. It is the student’s responsibility to contact their field instructor to arrange a start date.

**4. How many internship hours are required?**

BSW students are required to complete two semesters of field education for a total of 420 hours (210 hours each semester or 14 hours per week). Students also receive 30 hours by attending field seminar.

Regular-status MSW students are required to complete three semesters of field education for a total of 990 hours (315 hours each semester or 21-26 hours per week). Students also receive 45 hours by attending field seminar.

Advanced-standing MSW students are required to complete two semester of field education for a total of 660 hours (315 hours each semester or 21 hours per week). Students also receive 30 hours by attending field seminar.

**5. What happens during University breaks?**

Social work students are not expected to be present at their internship during school breaks. However, many students wish to continue attending their internship, and depending on the type of internship, a student may or may not be able to be away for an extended period of time. Students must negotiate with their field instructor what is expected of them during school breaks.

**6. Vacation, sick and personal time?**

You should have the same expectations of your student that you have of your other supervisees. The student is responsible for making prior arrangements or calling in if they need to take time off from their internship for any reason. The student and field instructor are responsible for tracking internship hours and having a plan to make up any time missed due to vacation, sick or personal time.

**7. Can students bank internship hours?**

No. Students are required to be in their internship all semester. If a student exceeds the minimum number of hours per semester, the additional hours simply enhance the student’s experience.

**8. How do I track the internship hours?**

BSW and MSW students have access to a time sheet and should use it to track hours. The time sheet is accessible by clicking [here](http://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4C26ED2F-EDCC-C778-A32EC772CB89C2EC/time_sheet.pdf).

**9. Do students have malpractice insurance?**

Grand Valley State University provides liability insurance for all social work students completing their field education. The liability insurance does not cover auto or medical needs.

**10. What is the difference between a faculty field liaison and a field instructor?**

The faculty field liaison is employed by Grand Valley State University to be the contact person for students and field instructors during the internship period. The field instructor is the internship site supervisor for the student. Field liaisons, in cooperation with field instructors, are responsible for ensuring an educationally sound experience.

**11. What kind of supervisory records should I maintain?**

Field instructors are encouraged to maintain documentation of supervisory sessions. Documentation may include date, time spent, matters discussed, student’s perception, feedback provided, and any next steps.

**12. What should I do if I am having concerns about the student’s performance?**

Field instructors should consistently document any concerns (see above). Give constructive feedback or direction and allow for a specified time period for adjustment or corrective action to occur. If concerns persist, contact the assigned field liaison for consultation, or to determine if intervention is necessary. Concerns that need to be brought to the attention of the liaison are: student does not show up for scheduled hours, student is significantly behind in their hours, student is consistently resistant to feedback, any concerns related to malpractice or ethics, and repeated concerns regarding the student’s professionalism.

**13. What should happen in supervision?**

Field instructors are required to provide one hour of weekly face-to-face supervision for students. Supervision is expected to be a blend of administrative, support, and teaching activities. Collaborating on a weekly agenda outline is recommended. Topics may include student progress on learning activities, tasks, and projects; challenges students are confronting in their work; making meaning of organizational culture; discussions surrounding policy; and linking classroom learning to field. Students are expected to bring questions and observations to supervision and to receive timely feedback from their field instructor. We encourage you to utilize the lens of social work competencies as you engage in supervision with your student. Naming social work skills, unpacking thought and processes, and socializing your student to the profession are some of the more pertinent components of field instruction.

**14. How are BSW and MSW students referred to a placement agency?**

BSW and MSW students are matched to a placement agency by the Field Office and then referred for an interview. Students are not to develop their own field placement with an agency.