



INFORMATION ON MSW FIELD EDUCATION

<https://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/msw-field-education-and-forms-124.htm>

The information below provides some of the basic guidelines governing the relationship between Grand Valley State University and a Field Site for the purpose of providing a MSW placement at your organization.

1. **Regular Status and Advanced Standing MSW students:**
 - a. GVSU School of Social Work has two cohorts of MSW students: Regular Status and Advanced Standing. The difference between the two groups is that Advanced Standing MSW students have a prior BSW degree.

2. **Beginning and Ending Dates:**
 - a. GVSU MSW Regular Status students begin Field Education Placement according to the University's calendar year in the Spring/Summer semester which begins in May. Students complete three (3) consecutive semesters (Spring/Summer, fall and Winter Semester) at a Field Site.

 - b. If a Regular Status MSW student wishes to have a Field Education Placement in a school setting, that student would begin Field Placement in winter semester, in January. Regular Status MSW students with a Field Education placement in a school setting complete three non-consecutive semester of Field Education (winter, fall, and winter semester).

 - c. Advanced Standing MSW students begin their Field Education Placement in the fall semester which begins in late August. Advanced-standing MSW students complete two consecutive semesters in their Field Placement (fall and winter semester).

 - d. Advanced Standing students in the Weekend/Hybrid program enter field education in the fourth semester of a six-semester program.

3. **Field Education Hours:**
 - a. GVSU MSW students must complete a total of 300 hours of Field Education at a Field Site each semester (averages out to approximately 20 hours during the fall and winter semesters and 25 hours during the spring/summer semester). A

Learning Contract guides students' learning at the Field Site. A new Learning Contract is generated for each semester of Field Education. By the end of each semester, students must fulfill their professional responsibilities as detailed in their Learning Contract.

- b. Students in the Weekend/Hybrid program complete 600 hours of field education over three semesters, 200 hours per semester, for an average of 13 hours per week.
- c. An online Time Sheet is used to keep track of student hours at the Field Site. The field supervisor electronically approves the student's reporting of hours.

4. Field Education Days:

- a. The days an MSW student interns at a Field Site is negotiated between the student and the Field Supervisor. It is expected that the student will be at the Field Site during hours when they can be involved in tasks relevant to their learning needs, as well as, when supervision is readily available.

5. Supervision/Evaluation:

- a. The Field Site is expected to provide professional supervision for a GVSU MSW student during Field Education. Our accrediting body prefers supervision be provided by a masters-level graduate of an accredited social work program with 2 years post graduate experience. The expectation is that a student will receive at least one hour of direct face-to-face supervision from the Field Supervisor each week.
- b. Each semester the Field Supervisor will evaluate the student's performance in Field Education based upon the mutually agreed upon Learning Contract. The evaluated Learning Contract will be provided to the Faculty Field Liaison who assigns the student's grade.

6. Orientation for Field Supervisors:

- a. A Field Education Orientation will be provided to both Field Supervisors and Students. The Orientation will provide information on Field Education Guidelines, as well as information on Field Education roles and responsibilities for both the MSW Students and Field Supervisors.

7. Faculty Field Liaison:

- a. Each MSW Student will be assigned a Faculty Field Liaison who provides support to the Student and Field Supervisor during Field Education. The Faculty Field Liaison meets with the students for three (3) hours every three weeks of the semester, for a total of 15 hours each semester. The Faculty Field Liaison also makes contact with the Field Supervisor via Field Site visits (at least two each semester, one of which is face to face).

8. Student Conduct:

- a. Students are expected to adhere to a Field Site's policy regarding dress codes and professional conduct.

9. Pre-placement Interviews:

- a. A pre-placement interview between agency personnel (agency director and/or supervisor) and the MSW student is used to determine whether there is mutual agreement as to the "goodness of fit" of the placement for both parties.
- b. An agency is not obligated to accept the student if there is concern that this "match" is not appropriate.

10. Timeline for Designating Student Placement:

- a. The GVSU Field Education placement process (matching and interviewing with a potential Field Site) for Regular Status MSW students extends from November through April, with Field Education at the Field Site beginning in early May.
- b. The GVSU Field Education placement process (matching and interviewing with a potential Field Site) for Regular Status MSW students seeking a placement in a school setting extends from October through December, with Field Education at the Field Site beginning in early January.
- c. The GVSU Field Education placement process (matching and interviewing with a potential Field Site) for Advanced Standing students extends from May through August, with Field Education at the Field Site beginning at the end of August.
- d. The placement process for students in the Weekend/Hybrid program will occur each semester as there is rolling admissions into the program.

11. Curriculum Integration:

- a. A primary role of Field Education is to teach advanced generalist social work skills to MSW students through day to day social work activities. As generalist practitioners, students need to be challenged to engage in practice at multiple levels of intervention (individual, family, group, organization, community).

12. Affiliation Agreement:

- a. It is required that there is an Affiliation Agreement between the field education site and Grand Valley State University.