

Employment Based Internships

Overview:

Traditionally, Social Work field placements are educationally focused, unpaid training experiences in Social Work settings, which are selected on the basis of the student's level and/or preference in their program of studies. There are some situations, however, in which paid employment can meet the standards for field placements, and which can be accepted by the Office of Field Education as a field placement for SOW 4510, SOW 5532, SOW 5535, or SOW 5537.

The guiding principle for these exceptional decisions is that the field placement experience must constitute new learning, appropriate MSW supervision, and an opportunity to apply theories and knowledge from the classroom in a practice setting. Our program organizes course requirements and field education in a particular sequence, which is structured in that way for educational reasons. Therefore, this **new learning opportunity** must fall at a certain point in the program of studies, and additionally must meet our established guidelines for field placements.

There are a number of potential problems that may arise when students attempt to combine jobs with field placement:

- The agency may emphasize productivity of the student employee, rather than the student's own learning.
- If job duties change, the position may no longer meet our criteria for social work activities for that student's level of learning.
- Both the student and the agency may be less willing to disclose problems that arise during the field placement, such as inadequate supervision, activities which are incongruent with placement expectations, situations that threaten their employment status, etc. This could lead to a delayed intervention by the Office of Field Education, sometimes resulting in an "Unsatisfactory" or "Incomplete" grade for the field placement. In our experience, paid employment can present many complicating factors that limit students' full utilization of this educational opportunity and should be weighed carefully by the student and the employer.

Therefore, the Office of Field Education cautions students about the potential problems of these placement situations and reserves the right to approve paid employment sites as field placements based on the following guidelines. These would apply to new jobs as well as to existing employment.

REQUIREMENTS:

All of the required field hours must take place under the supervision of a **new** (to the student) MSW field educator. This field instructor must meet the standards of our program.

The activities must be congruent with the student's learning at their undergraduate / graduate level in the program. Some jobs, which are assigned the title of "Social Worker", do not meet our expectations of the practice activities for a particular field experience. Students are responsible for the understanding and adherence to the course objectives for field education.

The activities themselves must constitute **new** learning for the student: i.e., a new population, utilizing new treatment methodology, and/or in a new field of practice.

There must be caseload control (if applicable) in this position in order to ensure that the student's educational goals are the primary focus, not simply the needs of the agency.

There must be a signed Affiliation Agreement between the agency and the UWF School of Justice Studies & Social Work.

The employment date or date of reassignment within the agency **must** be no more than **30 days from the first day of the semester** in which the student is registered to start the placement, in order to ensure that the field education experience falls in sequence with academic course work as structured by our program of studies, and according to the Council on Social Work Education (CWSE). The student must have demonstrated clear understanding and endorsement of the educational principles involved.

The decision to approve an employment based internship will incorporate faculty experience and judgment in evaluating the appropriateness of the exception request. According to the School of Justice Studies & Social Work's student policy, the Office of Field Education has the authority and responsibility to carefully select and assign field placements. **Students should not assume that these placements will be automatically approved.**

PROPOSAL FOR EMPLOYMENT-BASED INTERNSHIP

Present this proposal for an employment-based internship. We understand that the paramount objective of this proposal is to provide the UWF Social Work Field Office with evidence that the proposed internship will include sufficient educational objectives and experiences to satisfy school expectations, and will be in compliance with the criteria provided. In order to be considered for this placement request, the student is responsible for the completion of the Proposal for Employment Based Internship and must submit it to the Office of Field Education at least **one month (30 days)** prior to the beginning of the placement. The decision will be made by the Director of Field Education. The decision will be communicated directly to the student as soon as possible.

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Semester / Year: _____

Check all that apply:

- Undergraduate, SOW 4510
- Foundation Year Graduate, SOW 5532
- Clinical Year Graduate, SOW 5535
- Full-Time Program
- Part-Time Program
- Advanced Standing

Name of agency for proposed student internship:

Agency Address: _____

Agency Phone: _____ Agency Fax: _____

Agency Website (if applicable): _____

Unit/Program/Department:

Starting date of employment:

Proposed start date of internship:

****Note:** start date **MUST** correspond to the start of a semester. Students cannot count **ANY** hours towards an internship prior to approval of this application **and** the start date for the semester for which the student is registered**

MSW Field Supervisor name: _____

MSW Field Supervisor e-mail address: _____

MSW Field Supervisor phone number: _____

Task Supervisor Name (if applicable): _____

Task Supervisor e-mail address: _____

Section to be Completed by Proposed MSW Field Supervisor:

Title of Proposed Student Field Placement Position: _____

Number of hours student is employed at the agency per week: _____

Number of hours per week that apply to field placement: _____

List the student's current job responsibilities. If this is a new employment position, list the job responsibilities which the student will assume when he/she begins the position:

If this is a current job, list the tasks that will be **different** from those that the student has previously been responsible for and will apply to his/her internship hours. (If this is a new position, write N/A).

Please list any special educational assignments that will be given to the student that are not normally required of employees. (Written assignments, readings, videos, field trips, analyses, process recordings, training, special project, etc.).

This section is to be completed by the intern applicant:

Are there any learning objectives that cannot be met by the responsibilities of the employment? (Refer to the field objectives in the MSW Field Manual). If so, what are they and how do you plan to meet these objectives in your employment?

Describe what you will do to acquaint your field educator with your classroom learning, so that it can be integrated with your practice experiences.

Signature of MSW Field Educator:

Signature of Task Supervisor (if applicable):

Signature of Agency Director: _____

Signature of intern/employee applicant: _____

Applicant Address:

Phone: (cell): _____

Work: _____

E-mail: _____

You must include:

- **A copy of the job description for the agency position into which the student is being hired.**
- **A copy of the job description the student is currently employed in.**

Proposal: Approved / Disapproved:

Date : _____

Date student notified: _____