

Faculty of Graduate Studies

# **MSW Practicum Manual**

## **Two Year MSW Program**

### **2022-2023**

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GS/SOWK 5310 6.0 and GS/SOWK 5350 6.0

**A Reference Guide for Students, Faculty and Field Instructors**

<http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/>



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## YORK UNIVERSITY'S MISSION STATEMENT

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The mission of York University is the pursuit, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge. We promise excellence in research and teaching in pure, applied and professional fields. We test the boundaries and structures of knowledge. We cultivate the critical intellect.

York University is part of Toronto: we are dynamic, metropolitan and multi-cultural. York University is part of Canada: we encourage bilingual study, we value diversity. York University is open to the world: we explore global concerns.

A community of faculty, students, staff, alumni and volunteers committed to academic freedom, social justice, accessible education, and collegial self-governance, York University makes innovation its tradition.

***Tentanda Via: The way must be tried.***

[www.yorku.ca](http://www.yorku.ca)

## THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION STATEMENT

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The School of Social Work, York University, is committed to social work education which develops practice strategies for human rights and social justice and thus affirms that personal experiences are embedded in social structures.

Through research, curriculum and critical pedagogy the School will:

- address oppression and subordination as experienced and mediated through class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual identity, age and ability;
- develop a critical appreciation of the social construction of reality;
- promote an understanding of how values and ideologies construct social problems and how they construct responses;
- prepare students to be critical practitioners and agents of change.

[www.yorku.ca/laps/sowk/](http://www.yorku.ca/laps/sowk/)

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# **SECTION A:**

# **INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

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## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

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The School of Social Work at York University evolved in 1968 with the establishment of the ***Social Welfare Program***. Professor Wilson Head was the first Chair of the department. He came from the Metro Social Planning Council and identified himself as a sociologist. In 1972, the first students of the program graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work (Honours).

In 1973, the department's name was changed from the ***Social Welfare Program*** to the ***Department of Social Work***. Dorothy Herberg, who held a Social Work degree, became the new Chair of the department in the same year. In 1974, the Social Work Program was further developed with Professor Saul Joel. The School's mandate at that time was to provide students with the opportunity to get their first professional degree on a part time basis.

In 1992, the School of Social Work required that students who wanted to pursue a degree in Social Work must complete a Bachelor of Arts degree prior to applying to the program. Previous to this requirement, students were able to take social work courses concurrently with their Bachelor of Arts degree.

The Graduate program came into fruition in 1985 as a result of the persistence of BSW graduates who lobbied the administration to begin a part time graduate program. The program was designed as a second professional degree for students who had graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work degree. Students admitted to the part-time program were expected to complete a thesis in an area of specialization. The thesis could be empirical or theoretical in nature but was expected to have policy and practice implications.

In 1997, the part-time program, as designed in 1984, was replaced by a program with a new curriculum. The new program has been designed so that there are two streams of study, a part-time program and a full-time program. Please refer to the MSW Advanced Standing Practicum Manual for further details on this program. The thesis requirement of the program has been replaced with a Practice Research Seminar and a major research paper.

In 2007, the School of Social Work launched a Two Year MSW Program. Students with an honours degree in a discipline other than social work (non-BSW) are now able to complete a two-year, full-time graduate program designed to prepare them with advanced-level skills in the field. The graduate degree programs involve a combination of course work, a practicum, and a practice-based research paper (PRP). In 2008 the School of Social Work introduced a PhD program.

The curriculum is individualized and specialized in content and there is a significant component of independent study involved. Students gain an overview of their interests within the field of social work through the core courses and explore their interests more in depth through their elective courses and their Practice-based Research Paper. The Practicum is intended to support the integration of theory and practice through experiential education.



## THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY

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Historically, the philosophical basis of the School was pluralistic for many years and courses were taught according to the theoretical orientation of individual Faculty members. York University School of Social Work differed because of the student body. Since many of the students enrolled in the School of Social Work were immigrants or children of immigrants, a mix of traditional or conservative and progressive thinking prevailed, which led to courses that reflected oppositional thinking as well as courses reflecting dominant social work discourse.

The current curriculum of the York University MSW program is based on critical social work which meets the challenge of the profession of social work at a complex time. Rapid globalization is being achieved at the cost of diminished commitments to health, education and welfare, resulting in a growing threat to the social safety net. It is within the context of these threats that urban social work seeks to provide service to the disadvantaged.

One of the premises of the social work profession is the belief that personal problems arise and are maintained within particular social contexts. From this view, social work practice takes place across a spectrum of professional responsibilities. At one end, social work responds to the immediate concerns of individuals, families or groups as they take the form of personal distress. Moving across the spectrum, social work shifts its attention to the features of social contexts that support distress. Such practices include work in communities, organizations and policy development.

The MSW program at York seeks to provide professional education that assists students in recognizing the interdependence of micro and macro social work processes and conceptualizing practice at both immediate, specialized and proactive levels. The foundation of this ideology of practice is the belief that social inequality undermines personal and social well-being. Within the urban context of the School of Social Work at York University, social inequality is particularly configured within the interplay of race and ethnicity, class, age, ability, sexual orientation and gender.

From this conceptual foundation, the MSW program endeavours to educate students to be flexible practitioners who practice from multiple stances that reflect concern for immediate distress, as well as attention to the social context that produces distress. Thus, the program seeks to foster consideration of complexity in practice to enable students to engage in such diverse practices, such as sensitive listening or active opposition.

## THE FIELD EDUCATION OFFICE

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The School of Social Work's Field Education Team consists of a Field Education Manager, two Field Education Coordinators, and a Field Education Program Assistant.

1. The **Field Education Manager** plans, develops, implements and maintains the field education program that is responsive to the needs of a diverse student population and meets internal and external accreditation standards. They ensure the field program is a fully integrated component of both the undergraduate and graduate programs of the School by working collaboratively with the staff and directors of these programs. This includes developing policies and procedures for the field education program and revising these when events or changes at the School require; ensuring the field education program has sufficient resources to operate effectively and efficiently; developing and delivering presentations about the School to potential community partners and other academic programs, building new partnerships in the community and with other academic institutions; reporting regularly to the faculty and the executive committee of the School about the field education program; chairing the practicum committee of the School; working collaboratively with faculty and the community to promote research in the area of field education and develop opportunities for publication; overseeing the development of information sessions, workshops and seminars to support students and field instructors as they move through the field education program; and overseeing the online practicum database, including development and input.

2. The **Field Education Coordinator** is responsible for working with and supporting students in the MSW program during the placement process by assisting and advising students throughout the placement process. They arrange and maintain appropriate placement sites, which involves researching, developing and identifying placement sites on a regular basis; communicating with prospective field education sites to ensure placement sites meet criteria set by the School of Social Work in compliance with the accreditation requirements of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education and University regulations; ensuring formal contracts related to placements, including legal and WSIB contracts or other necessary documents are prepared prior to the start of the placement; facilitates the Applying For and Beginning Placement orientation sessions for MSW students; and coordinates, in conjunction with the Field Education Manager, workshops to help prepare students for placement and social work practice.

3. The **Field Education Program Assistant** sends the practicum confirmation package to students, Field Instructors and Faculty Advisors, updates the Field Education Program database and provides technical support to students, Field Instructors, and Faculty Advisors with regards to the placement application and the on-line evaluation system.

The **Field Education Practicum Committee** is responsible for developing and recommending policies and procedures relating to the placement (see Appendix K, Practicum Committee Terms of Reference, for more information).

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**SECTION B:**

**THE PRACTICUM**

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## THE MSW 2 YEAR PRACTICUM

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Placements are shaped by the mission of the School of Social Work, the policies and procedures of the School as well as regulations and procedures of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the expectations of ethical and professional behaviour that are specified in the School's Professional Behaviour Policy. Ethical breaches of conduct in practicum or violations of academic integrity in class may result in disciplinary action outlined in the Professional Behaviour Policy and/or FGS regulation. Such actions may include failure in the placement or, depending on the severity of the breach, expulsion from the program. Please see the following links for further information:

<http://oscr.students.yorku.ca/student-conduct>

<http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/regulations/academic-honesty/>

This Practicum Manual was developed for the Practicum Courses GS/SOWK 5310 6.0 and GS/SOWK 5350 6.0 for the MSW 2–Year program and should be read and adopted throughout the placement. This manual is revised annually.

As an accredited program of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), the School operates according to the standards and requirements set out by the association and the board of accreditation. These standards are foundational to our School's field education program. A basic requirement of the *standards* is a field education component that is incorporated into the curriculum for all students.

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### STANDARDS<sup>1</sup> :

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- 3.2.1 The curriculum is consistent with the program's mission and goals and reflects the values of the relevant Social Work Codes of Ethics.
- 3.2.2 A one-year MSW program provides a minimum of 450 practicum hours and/or a thesis or memoire. A two year MSW program provides a minimum of 450 practicum hours plus an additional 450 practicum hours and/or a thesis or memoire.
- 3.2.3 The field education curriculum provides opportunities for students to acquire, apply, and demonstrate knowledge and skills congruent with social work values and with the core learning objectives for students as defined in this document (Preamble 3.1).
  - i) The program provides activities for the integration of field and classroom education.
  - ii) While stimulations and labs may form an acceptable part of direct practice teaching, they

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted with permission from the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) Board of Accreditation Manual. Revised and approved by the General Assembly on June 5, 1987 and May 30, 1992, June 1, 1998 and June 7, 1999 with revisions.

Note: These Standards are subject to change. Visit the CASWE web site at <http://caswe-acfts.ca/>

are not substitutes for direct responsibilities in real practice situations.

- iii) The academic unit has a written policy on field placements within a student's workplace. In the case of field placements in the student's workplace, there is an educational focus with a clear differentiation between work duties and student learning assignments.
- iv) Appropriate resources are made available to the field education component of the program to ensure that the educational purpose is achieved.

In the Two Year MSW Program, students complete two placements:

GS/SOWK 5310 6.00 Practicum

GS/SOWK 5350 6.00 Advanced Practicum

The practicum is a **core** course requirement for the Master of Social Work degree. All students registered in the two-year MSW degree program must complete and **PASS** GS/SOWK 5310 6.0 and GS/SOWK 5350 6.0 to complete the degree.

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## GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE MSW PRACTICUM

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The MSW practicum offers students educational opportunities in social work practice settings to integrate theoretical knowledge, work and life experiences in developing advanced social work practice skills. Placements can range from direct practice, program development and evaluation, community development, policy or research. The MSW practicum will facilitate opportunities to implement critical social work practice.

MSW students are in their second University level of study, and as such, are required to gain skills for advanced social work practice. It is expected that students in the first year of the program will be able to demonstrate competence at the BSW level of practice, which emphasizes a more generalist approach to social work. Students in the second year of the program will further advance their critical and professional skills and systematic approaches to inquiry around social issues. They will also examine the ethical responsibilities of a professional practitioner.

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## KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OBJECTIVES OF THE MSW PRACTICUM

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- A. Ability to assess and understand the impact of psychosocial, political, cultural, racial and economic systems on the lives of people.
- B. Ability to understand and apply theory into practice.
- C. Demonstrate the ability to engage in a process of self-reflection.

- D. Knowledge of various strategies of social work intervention with community and institutional systems, small groups, families and individuals and the theoretical bases of these strategies.
- E. Ability to conduct identity sensitive interviews, give and receive information and communicate clearly, both verbally and in writing.
- F. Knowledge and understanding of the human resource and service network to facilitate appropriate referrals and understand policy and practice implications.
- G. Understand policy and practice implications in human service organizations and the impact on the lives of clients.

## STRUCTURE OF THE 2-YEAR FULL-TIME PROGRAM (TABLE)

YEAR 1		
Fall Term	Winter Term	Summer Term
September – December	January – April	May - August
SOWK 5010 3.0 Social Work Theories and Critical Practice (Part 1)	SOWK 5011 3.0 Social Work Theories and Critical Practice (Part 2)	No required courses but students can take electives and are required to register and pay tuition.
SOWK 5020 3.0 History of Social Welfare and Social Work from Critical Perspectives	SOWK 5050 3.0 Understanding Organizations for Social Work Practice	
SOWK 5030 3.0 Oppression & Intersectionality	<b>5310 6.0 Practicum 550 hours, Wed., Thurs., Fri. during regular business hours Completed by mid-July</b>	
SOWK 5040 3.0 Social Welfare & Social Policy		
YEAR 2		
Fall Term	Winter Term	
September - December	January - April	
SOWK 5150 3.0 Critical Perspectives in Social Work	SOWK 5450 3.0 Practice-based Research Paper Seminar (PRS)	
SOWK 5250 3.0 Graduate Research Seminar (GRS)		
	SOWK 5550 3.0 Indigenous Worldviews and Implications to Social Work	
<b>SOWK 5350 6.0 Advanced Practicum 450 hours, Two or Three days Wed., Thurs., Fri. during regular business hours.</b>		
<b>Plus 4 elective courses are required during the 5 terms</b>		
<b>Convocation would occur in June for those eligible to graduate</b>		

## STRUCTURE OF THE 2-YEAR MSW FULL-TIME PROGRAM (FULL TEXT)

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Students will need to complete the following ten core courses along with a total of four elective courses over five terms.

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### REQUIRED COURSES FOR YEAR ONE

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#### Fall Term

##### September – December

SOWK 5010 3.0 - Social Work Theories and Critical Practice (Part 1)  
SOWK 5020 3.0 - History of Social Welfare and Social Work from Critical Perspectives  
SOWK 5030 3.0 - Oppression & Intersectionality  
SOWK 5040 3.0 - Social Welfare & Social Policy

#### Winter Term

##### January – April

SOWK 5011 3.0 - Social Work Theories and Critical Practice (Part 2)  
SOWK 5050 3.0 - Understanding Organizations for Social Work Practice  
5310 6.0 – Practicum. Students are to complete 550 hours on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday during regular business hours. **Placement is completed by mid-July**

#### Summer Term

##### May – August

No required courses but students can take electives and are required to register and pay tuition.

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### REQUIRED COURSES FOR YEAR TWO

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#### Fall Term

##### September – December

SOWK 5150 3.0 - Critical Perspectives in Social Work  
SOWK 5250 3.0 - Graduate Research Seminar (GRS)  
SOWK 5350 6.0 - Advanced Practicum. Students are to complete 450 hours during Two or Three days Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, during regular business hours.

#### Winter Term

##### January – April

SOWK 5450 3.0 - Practice-based Research Paper Seminar (PRS)  
SOWK 5550 3.0 - Indigenous Worldviews and Implications to Social Work

**Convocation would occur in June for those eligible to graduate**

## TIME REQUIREMENTS OF THE PRACTICUM

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The MSW 2-year program consists of **1000 practicum hours over the two years of study** which is consistent with the accreditation standards established by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE).

### First Year Students – 550 Hours

Students begin the planning process for their first-year practicum upon entry into the MSW program. The first-year practicum will begin in the second term (winter) of the first year of the program.

Students are required to complete a total of **550 hours** of supervised practice in their first year. Placement hours are the actual hours spent completing placement related activities.

Students will spend three (3) days per week at the placement. The expected start date for the first-year placement is in the first academic week in January and the placement will end by mid-July.

### Second Year Students – 450 Hours

Second year students begin the planning process for their second practicum in the winter term of the first year. The second-year practicum will begin in the fall term (September) of the second year in the program.

Students are required to complete a total of **450 hours** of supervised practice in their second year. Placement hours are the actual hours spent completing placement related activities.

Students will spend two (2) or three (3) full days per week at the placement site. The placement will end approximately by middle of February (at 3 days per week) or by the end of April (at 2 days per week).

## INTEGRATIVE SEMINARS

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Part of the practicum requirement for the Year 1 and Year 2 placement includes attendance and participation in integrative seminars convened by a Faculty Advisor. Attendance at **all** Integrative Seminars is **mandatory**.

The purpose of the MSW Integrative Seminar is to support MSW students during their placement through:

- Reflecting on their practicum experience within the context of a faculty facilitated discussion group, linking critical theory to practice;
- Debriefing both the challenges and growth students are experiencing within their placement setting;
- Encouraging MSW students to link critical theory to practice;
- Encouraging students who are having difficulties with their placement to share these difficulties with the group, their Faculty Advisor and/or the Field Education Manager.

*Policy for missed seminars:*

- 1 missed seminar - reflective practicum-based assignment 2-3 pages
- 2 missed seminars – reflective practicum-based assignment 5-6 pages
- 3 or more missed seminars can result in having to repeat the integrative seminar series.



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# **SECTION C:**

# **THE PLACEMENT PROCESS**

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## PLACEMENT PROCESS

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Successfully negotiating a placement is not only important to placement students, it is also important to the Field Education Office. The Field Education Office puts a lot of thought, time and effort in this process and works closely with hundreds of community partners to secure the best possible opportunities for over 200 students each academic year.

It is important to note that students are expected to demonstrate readiness in the process of securing a placement. This requires that students:

- Remain in good financial standing with the University and are registered for the appropriate academic term during the placement process.
- Participate and follow the School's placement processes and protocols, including **NOT** reaching out to an agency on their own without prior discussion with the Field Education Coordinator.
- Complete the on-line placement application by the specified deadline.
- Complete practicum course pre-requisites and co-requisites. Should Students not be able to do this or cannot start their placement at the expected time for any reason, students are responsible for informing the Field Education Office right away.
- Check phone and e-mail messages regularly (for example, every other day). **Please note that if students do not respond to the Field Education Coordinator about an opportunity by the specified deadline, they will not be considered for the potential placement.** Professional prompt communication with the field office and agencies is crucial. If something is happening in your life that is impeding you from promptly responding to the Field Office or agencies please let us know – no need to give details it helps to be aware that you are currently not available.
- Keep the Field Education Coordinator updated with any changes to their contact information.
- Inform the Field Education Office of absences that might affect your availability for an interview.
- Prepare for and successfully interview with the agency. If a student has had 2 unsuccessful interviews, the student is expected to meet with Field Office staff to discuss the next steps
- Respect an agency's time and efforts in the process. If a student accepts an interview with an agency and the agency subsequently offers a placement to the student, the student must accept the placement offer and their placement search is complete.
- Enroll in the correct practicum course before the placement starts to ensure that credit is received.

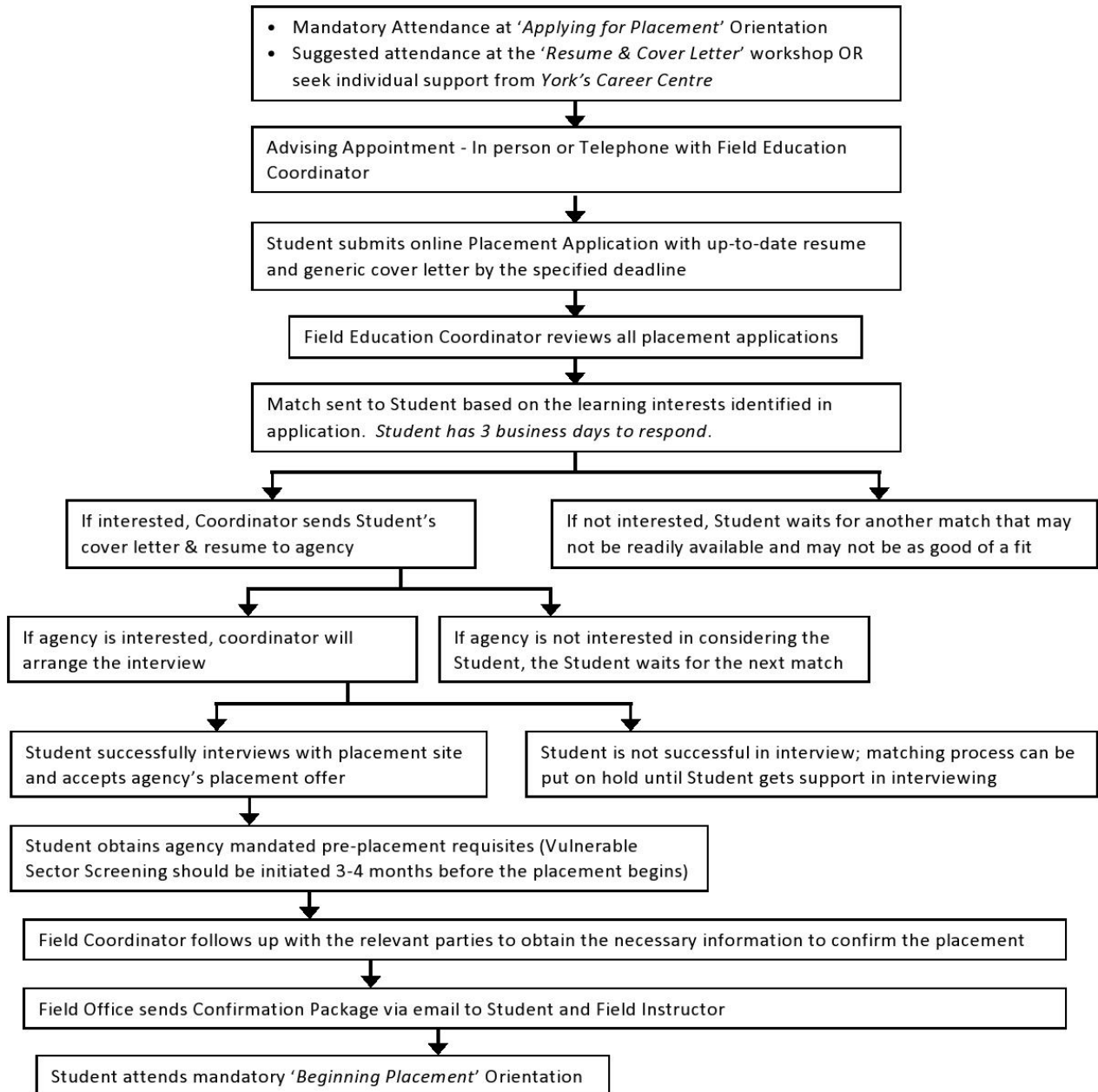
The Field Education Office recognizes that students will have other demands and responsibilities while undergoing the placement. Students are encouraged to spend some time planning for the placement and are asked to consider the following before starting the process:

- How they can successfully incorporate the practicum into their lifestyle:
  - Will they need to work while completing the practicum?
  - Are they currently a primary caregiver for family member(s)?
  - Will they be taking courses while completing the practicum?
  - How many placement days per week can they complete?
  - What are the geographical regions they can complete their placement in?
  - Do they have access to a vehicle, the necessary car insurance and are they able to travel for placement purposes?
  - When do they hope to complete the program?
- Their area(s) of interest in social work practice that they would like to learn more about. Please note, some agency sites will require a certain level of previous experience.
- Their learning preference and "style".

## MSW PRACTICUM ROAD MAP

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This is a brief overview of the placement process. Please read it in conjunction with the information contained in this manual.



## MSW PRACTICUM ROAD MAP (FULL TEXT)

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**Step 1:** Mandatory Attendance at 'Applying for Placement' Orientation. Suggested attendance at the 'Resume & Cover Letter' workshop OR seek individual support from York's Career Centre

**Step 2:** Advising Appointment - In person or Telephone with Field Education Coordinator

**Step 3:** Student submits online Placement Application with up-to-date resume and generic cover letter by the specified deadline.

**Step 4:** Field Education Coordinator reviews all placement applications.

**Step 5:** Match sent to Student based on the learning interests identified in application. Student has 3 business days to respond.

**Step 6:** Scenario A. If student is not interested, Student waits for another match that may not be readily available and may not be as good of a fit. Scenario B. If student is interested, the Coordinator sends Student's cover letter & resume to agency.

**Step 7:** Scenario A. If agency is not interested in considering the Student, the Student waits for the next match. Scenario B. If agency is interested, coordinator will arrange the interview

**Step 8:** Agency will review and consider student's resume. Scenario A. If the agency is not interested in considering the Student, the Student waits for the next match. Scenario B. If agency is interested, coordinator will arrange the interview.

**Step 9:** Student will interview with the agency. Scenario A. Student is not successful in interview; matching process can be put on hold until Student gets support in interviewing. Scenario B. Student successfully interviews with placement site and accepts agency's placement offer. Once student accepts the offer, no other placements will be explored and the placement search is complete.

**Step 10:** The agency offers student the placement opportunity then student needs to obtain agency mandated pre-placement requisites (Vulnerable Sector Screening should be initiated 3-4 months before the placement begins)

**Step 11:** Field Coordinator follows up with the relevant parties to obtain the necessary information to confirm the placement

**Step 12:** Field Office sends Confirmation Package via email to Student and Field Instructor

**Step 13:** Student attends mandatory 'Beginning Placement' Orientation

## OVERVIEW OF THE PLACEMENT PROCESS

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Given the complexity of securing placements for many students, the School has a structured placement process. As previously mentioned, students are not permitted to call, send their resume, or coordinate an interview with an agency without prior permission from the Field Education Office. Please bear in mind hospitals, school boards and child welfare agencies, such as CAS, ONLY want to be contacted by the Field Education Office. The Field Education Office will support each student to have an interview for a placement, however, it is the student's responsibility to be open-minded to the opportunities they are matched with and to successfully interview with agencies.

If a student hears of a potential placement through networks, volunteering, employment, an agency approaches the student, and so on, please connect with the Field Education Coordinator to discuss this further. There is no guarantee that this placement will be possible as all placements must be approved. If it is determined that the student isn't following the placement process, they will be asked to meet with the Field Education Manager and the placement process will be put on hold until this meeting has taken place.

Field Education Office expects students to interview with their Field Instructor.

Through the interview, students will have the opportunity to learn more about the agency's:

- Regulatory bodies
- Structure
- Mission statements
- Philosophy/theories of practice
- Existing policies, including health and safety policies related to working with clients in the community and in their residences, for example, bed-bug policies
- Current practices
- Programs they can be exposed to
- Supervision style of the Field Instructor and other team members they can work with
- Agency-mandated pre-placement requirements the student has to obtain

The Field Instructor will have the opportunity to learn about the student's:

- Previous volunteer, work or practicum experience
- Social work skills and skill level
- Writing capabilities
- Previous training/workshops
- Educational background
- Areas of interests
- Desired learning goals
- Learning style and supervision that is needed

Students should prepare for this interview by:

- Conducting research on the agency, including reviewing the agency's website
- Considering what they wish to learn or accomplish by completing a practicum in the setting
- Considering what supervision they will require for their learning needs
- Being able to express their learning goals clearly and concretely
- Attending the Interview Workshop or contacting the Career Center: 416-736-5351, [www.yorku.ca/careers](http://www.yorku.ca/careers) for help with interviewing skills

Please see below for a list of possible interview questions that a Field instructor may ask students.

<http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/files/2018/07/Questions-That-a-Field-Instructor-May-Ask-Student.pdf>

Please see below for a list of possible interview questions students may prepare for Field Instructors or agency representatives:

<http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/files/2018/07/Questions-Students-Can-Ask-During-The-Placement-Interview.pdf>

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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The Field Education Manager gives final approval for all placements and will assess conflicts of interest if any, especially in circumstances where student is completing a work. Conflicts of interest can include, a student has a relative in the placement site who can influence the evaluation process, certain instances where the student has been a client of the Field Instructor or other staff at the placement site, or where the student has been working in the field and has had previous or current experience with the agency. In these circumstances, the Field Education Coordinator and the Field Education Manager will talk to all the parties involved. A plan will be put in place to ensure the student is comfortable to proceed. Students who fail to disclose possible conflicts of interest may be removed from their placement and may face disciplinary action for failing to adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics.

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## TIMELINE FOR SECURING A PLACEMENT

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For students looking to start their placement in the **Fall Term**, students must have a placement secured no later than by the **end of September**.

For students starting their placement in the **Winter Term**, students must have a placement secured no later than by the **end of January**.

**Note:** If a placement is not secured by the deadline, the student may have to defer their placement to the next placement term. Please note that a placement deferral may have financial implications for additional tuition fees and may delay convocation.

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## ENROLLMENT FOR PLACEMENT COURSE

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As this is a permission-based course, students will be sent their practicum course section by the Field Education Program Assistant or the Graduate Program Administrator the month before placement is to begin. Students are then required to enroll in the specified practicum course section before they start their practicum.

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## ACCOMMODATION NEEDS

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Our experience strongly suggests that there is an increased likelihood of success in practicum settings when students with health-related accessibility needs disclose their need for accommodation at the earliest possible stage. Furthermore, we believe that a collaborative approach in determining appropriate accommodation involves open dialogue with the student, Student Accessibility Services Counsellor at York, the Field Education Coordinator and Field Instructor.

If you are a student with a health-related accommodation, we want to ensure that we arrange any necessary accommodations for you in the practicum/field placement setting. Please note that practicum/field placement accommodations may differ from classroom accommodations due to the particular demands of the learning environment. We urge you to discuss your accommodation needs early in the placement search process with the Field Education Coordinator and your counsellor from

Student Accessibility Services. PLEASE NOTE: You will be required to submit a placement accommodation letter if you are requesting placement accommodations.

Please contact:

Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

416-736-5755

E-mail: [sasinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:sasinfo@yorku.ca)

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

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## VULNERABLE SECTOR SCREENING

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Bill C7 requires that anyone, including students, who work with children\* or vulnerable persons<sup>†</sup> obtain an in-depth vulnerable sector screening (VSS) through the head police station in their residential region. Most agencies require a vulnerable sector screening prior to the start of placement.

Definitions as outlined in Bill C7:

- \* Children - means persons who are less than 18 years of age
- † Vulnerable Persons - means persons who, because of their age, a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent,
  - a) are in a position of dependence on others; or
  - b) are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by persons in a position of authority or trust relative to them

If you live in Toronto, the Vulnerable Sector Screening form can be obtained from the Field Education Office. If you live in a region outside of Toronto, you may require a letter from the Field Education office in order to obtain a reduced rate. Please refer to your local police department's website for more information. A fee is required to process the Vulnerable Sector Screen. It is suggested that you start the process to obtain this document three (3) months prior to the start date of your placement if you reside in Toronto as their process takes 2-3 months, other regions are much faster – please check with your local police department.

Please note that if you know of any reason why a clean vulnerable sector screen will not be issued for yourself, you must apply through the Government of Canada's **National Parole Board** to obtain a pardon before you can begin a placement. The National Parole Board can be contacted by telephone at 1-800-874-2652 or via fax at 1-613-941-4981.

If the Police require fingerprints from the Student, it will take longer to obtain the vulnerable sector screen back. Students are responsible for any costs associated with obtaining a vulnerable sector screen and for obtaining this before the placement starts.

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## USE OF CAR OR PUBLIC TRANSIT FOR PLACEMENT PURPOSES

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Students do not receive compensation from York University if using their own vehicles or public transit for placement purposes. We advise you not to transport clients in your own car unless directly required to by the placement site. If you are required to do so, please ensure you obtain the necessary car insurance to cover such activities. Please also note that some agencies do not cover mileage expenses. Students are encouraged to ask about any potential placement expenses at the interview stage in order to make an informed decision about the placement offer (if one is made).

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## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

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If required by the Agency, students are expected to have the following shots, or any other shots deemed necessary completed, e.g.:

- Hepatitis B immunization
- TB skin test (this is usually a 2-step TB test that will take approximately 2 weeks to complete)
- Flu shot
- Varicella (chicken pox) immunization or proof of immunity
- Measles Mumps Rubella immunizations
- Tetanus Diphtheria Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine
- COVID-19 testing or immunization (if required)

A blood test showing your immunity levels for these items may be required. This may take up to 3 weeks to obtain. Student will be informed of the immunizations required and the verification process. Students are responsible for paying any fees associated with obtaining the above-mentioned items and for obtaining these items in a timely manner before placement begins.

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## MASK FIT TEST

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A mask fit test may be required for students completing placements in health care related settings. Some agency sites provide this service to students. In cases where the site does not provide this service, students can obtain a mask fit test at **St. Michaels Hospital, 416-864-6060 ext. 6944; or Synergy for a cost of approximately \$30.00.** Students are responsible for paying any fees associated with obtaining a mask fit test and for obtaining this in a timely manner.

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## WORK PLACEMENT CONSIDERATION

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The School of Social Work recognizes that the Practicum may present some problems for many students who are employed full time, and who may not be able to obtain or take a leave of absence due to tenuous work situations and economic need. It is for these reasons that the following guidelines were created to maintain accreditation standards and to ensure an equitable process. We are committed to recognizing these unique circumstances and expect students to consider and follow proper procedures. In such instances, it may be possible for students to participate in **work placements**. Work placements are



placements that take place at a student's place of employment. The two basic criteria which a proposed work placement must meet are:

The roles and responsibilities the student fulfills during placement hours must be different from that of the student's regular work position. **Your present job will NOT be recognized as a practicum opportunity.** You must commit **FULL** days to placement separate from your regular work hours/duties.

The student's Field Instructor must be someone other than the student's supervisor in their work position and who meets the School's requirements for Field Instruction.

**Work placements may be paid or unpaid, this is an Agency decision.**

Work placements are unique and require special planning. In order for a work placement to be considered by the Field Education Manager for approval, students must be able to demonstrate that their situation warrants a work placement. Students must also provide proof that a work placement will offer a *significantly different* learning opportunity and that it will satisfy the criteria established by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education.

Students who are interested in a work placement will be asked to fill out a work placement proposal form. If a student has completed a previous placement in an agency, volunteered or is currently volunteering with an agency or has worked with an agency in the past and they would like to complete one of their MSW placements with that agency, the Student may be asked to complete a work placement proposal form.

**Please Note: Workplace practicums are not automatically guaranteed or accepted. Certain criteria must be met, and workplace practicum proposals are subject to approval by the Field Education Manager.** Please see Appendix J and speak to the Field Education Coordinator for further information.

## INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENT POLICY

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The School is committed to developing meaningful relationships with organizations outside of Canada for the purposes of exchanging knowledge and pedagogy. The School looks to develop long-lasting partnerships with organizations that will be able to offer safe and supportive learning environments to our students. Undertaking an international placement offers students the opportunity to:

- Enhance appreciation of and ability to apply anti-imperial concepts in practice
- Learn more diverse theory and practice and integrate these in fieldwork
- Learn about social work in other countries
- Recognize the challenges in this field and apply this new learning to Canada's diverse society and globalized world.

### Availability

If you are interested in completing an international placement, please know that the School does not have a list of available international placements around the world; international placements are very student-driven. Students may put forward suggestions and contacts for international placements and

the School may then negotiate on the student's behalf. Placements may also be tied to faculty international/national/local projects and these will also follow the criteria/guidelines set out by the School as outlined below. The School of Social Work will follow strict guidelines for approval and there must also be open consultation with the host University/agency abroad. The Field Education Manager retains the right to refuse requests for international placements in consideration of the above requirements. Although students may be approved at the local level, when the documents are sent abroad, the host institution/agency could decide to accept, reject or seek further information.

### **International Placement Considerations**

Students are required to follow the guidelines below to be approved to undertake an international placement.

- The student must have a strong academic standing of B+ upon entry into the graduate program and a demonstrated interest in international social work.
- Prior educational experience and exchanges abroad are assets to the application.
- Students should try to enroll in an international social work course. Alternatively, if these courses are not available, the student may take a directed reading course, studying international social work practice.
- Safety must be ensured in the planning of the placement prior to approval. Wherever possible, it is well advised that two or more students organize placements in the same country.
- Students will be responsible for gaining knowledge about the host country, understanding language barriers, health, climatic conditions and differing customs/practices prior to approval of placement.
- The student will make necessary arrangements relating to visa, health care, travel, accommodations, and other relevant commitments.
- The School of Social Work will not be responsible for any travel, associated costs or any fees incurred for supervision by the international placement setting.
- Expenses incurred by the student on placement are the responsibility of the student.
- It is suggested that the placement be connected with a host University that is either recognized by York University and the International Association of Schools of Social Work; accredited by the appropriate regulatory body in the home country; or is among one of the Universities with which York University already has a Memorandum of Understanding in place.
- It is also suggested that the host University be willing to provide a liaison and augment supervision in the host agency. If possible, the University liaison in the host country should conduct a site visit of the agency where the student is placed.
- The host Field Instructor's educational qualifications and experience must meet the accreditation standards as set out by the Canadian Association for Schools of Social Work Education.
- The host Field Instructor must be willing to provide the necessary supervision for the student and provide a formalized and structured evaluation process through the School's learning contract, mid-point progress review, and final evaluation for the practicum course.
- The student, Field Instructor and host agency must agree to follow procedures and guidelines as outlined in the Field Education Manual, except where not applicable.
- Student must attend the integrative seminars via video call.

## **Timelines for MSW Students**

For MSW 2-Year Program students, international placements may be completed in the spring/summer of the student's final year of the program (full time, 4-5 days a week). This would mean students need to add a semester of study to go abroad for placement. Student must complete the PRP and other coursework prior to leaving for the placement. Please also bear in mind that when abroad, students often spend longer hours/days at their placement sites.

## **Application Process**

The Field Office has found that it takes at least one (1) year to develop a meaningful international placement. The student must approach the Field Office at least six (6) months prior to the start of the practicum and be willing to spend additional time in planning and coordinating the placement. Students must submit an on-line placement application with an updated resume of work, volunteer, educational experiences and achievements to date. Students must also complete a written proposal which must be submitted to the MSW Field Education Coordinator and approved by the Field Education Manager. The proposal should outline the following:

- Rationale for the placement including knowledge of international social work, globalization, imperialism and the political context.
- The student's learning goals relating to international social work practice.
- The student's willingness to study relevant material prior to going to placement.
- The student's ability to handle differing customs/practices and ability to deal with language barriers, if any.
- Geographical location and relevant contacts.
- Ability of the student to fund their travel, accommodation and living expenses while on the international placement.
- Any other relevant information that would support the international placement application.

The written proposal should be submitted with a list of completed courses and grades and reference letters from two faculty members in the social work department.

## **York University Faculty Advisor's Role**

While the students are in placement, the Faculty Advisor will schedule telephone or online Integrative Seminars. The Faculty Advisor will also provide informal follow-up through telephone or e-mail exchanges with the student and the Field Instructor throughout the placement to ensure the placement is going well and to address any concerns that may arise as soon as possible.

## **At the Completion of the Placement**

Upon completion of the International Placement, the Faculty Advisor and the Field Education Manager will meet with the student for debriefing. It is encouraged that the student will present their experiences and activities conducted abroad to the School. This can be done by organizing meetings to exchange ideas with the students and the University and share suggestions on how to incorporate their positive learning experiences into the Canadian model of Social Work Practice, for example, community development and other forms of practice observed in the host agency/country. Students may also write articles to be published in School journals or newsletters.

The Field Office will send the appropriate personnel abroad appreciation letters. In this way, the School ensures that there is: moral and educational support for the Student, monitoring of the student's progress, strengthening of the links with the agency and fostering a good image of York University.

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## CONFIRMATION OF PLACEMENT

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Once a placement has been confirmed, the students can review the confirmation through the Experience York platform. Students will also receive a detailed email which outlines next steps including registering for the Practicum course. It is the student's responsibilities to enroll in the practicum course successfully; completion of placement hours without registration in the practicum courses may result in having to re-do your practicum hours.

Students are assigned a Faculty Advisor who will also receive information about the placement particulars. A confirmation email will be sent to the respective Field Instructor at the placement site. Students are responsible for seeking out the assistance and/or advice of their Faculty Advisor for matters and issues pertaining to the placement. If the Faculty Advisor is unavailable, students should contact the Field Education Manager.

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## **SECTION D:**

# **THE PRACTICUM SETTING AND FIELD INSTRUCTION**

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the Practicum Setting The School would like to thank their community partners and field instructors for their support in providing meaningful and challenging opportunities to our students.

The Field Education Manager and the Field Education Coordinator are continuously searching to locate agencies where students can engage in great learning opportunities. Ideally, agencies that are willing to follow the principles of our M.S.W. program are given high consideration. These include the importance of critical perspectives which emphasize the interdisciplinary context of social work knowledge; and the implication of political and economic forces in the context of globalization for social work practice theory and research.

Agencies that are interested or willing to provide supervision to students must complete an application to become a practicum site. The Field Education Coordinator and the Field Education Manager will review and assess the application and determine if the placement can be approved. Students are encouraged to share contacts for placement sites (if they have such connections).

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## CRITERIA FOR FIELD INSTRUCTION SETTINGS

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The School of Social Work strongly believes that there are mutual advantages for the School with community agencies that are willing to collaborate in social work education. The initiatives taken on by a setting may increase, but more importantly, students and Field Instructors provide an opportunity to contribute to the ongoing development of professional, social work practice. In return, students receive time, mentorship and opportunity to learn, which the School gratefully acknowledges.

The following are the principles used to select field settings:

- The School generally looks at non-profit agencies.
- Whether an agency can, and is interested in, participating in social work education and adding to the student's growth and development as a professional social worker.
- The agency can provide an environment that is safe and free from harassment or discrimination and can provide orientation materials, including health and safety information, to the student at the beginning of the placement.
- The agency's philosophy of service should be compatible with the values and ethics of the social work profession and with the educational objectives of the School.
- The agency is willing to provide a learning environment for the student, including accepting them as a member of the placement setting and as a learning professional.
- The setting and organizational structure should be such that students can be allowed a fairly wide range of learning experiences and social work functions.
- Agreement that time allocated to the Field Instructor shall be sufficient for selection of assignments, individual supervision and instruction, completion of evaluations of student performance, and participation in field instructor training and development offered through the School.
- Depending on the learning objectives of the student and the structure of the agency, field instruction responsibilities may be shared between more than one Field Instructor.
- Suitable space and working facilities should be available for students. These can include desk space, privacy for interviewing, phones and any dictating equipment as needed, transportation costs for out-of-office travel to interviews, meetings, and so on, where such compensation is indicated. The School recognizes that agencies may have to be creative and students may have

to share space and sometimes desks because of the lack of space and stringent cutbacks in some settings.

- Recognition of the relevance and importance of the placement supervisory role.

If, during the placement negotiation process, the agency is unable to provide a placement opportunity at the time (for example, the field instructor has been transferred, promoted, let go, becomes ill, the learning activities are unavailable, and so on), it is the agency's responsibility to inform the Field Office at the earliest possible point, so the Field Office can plan accordingly. If the agency is a unionized setting and the agency is in a bargaining year, it is the agency's responsibility to inform the Field Office of this and the potential of a strike during the placement time during placement negotiations and before placement interviews are conducted.

Agencies are required to enter into a legal agreement with York University before the placement begins. The Agreement stipulates the contractual requirements of the Field Instructor(s) and/or placement site and the School. The agreement is legally binding. One Agreement is issued to each placement site regardless of the number of students who may be placed with an agency. An agreement is valid for three (3) years unless otherwise stated. The agreement does not obligate the placement site to accept students in the future if they cannot accommodate in each year.

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## FIELD INSTRUCTION

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Field instruction is a branch of social work education with its own conceptual base, special skills, and unique process. It is more than an apprenticeship or internship. It involves the synthesis of theory with practice specifically to provide the delivery of effective and responsive social work. The role of the Field Instructor is critical to the development of a successful practicum. The relationship between the Field Instructor and student is of utmost importance. Ideally, the relationship will encourage the openness and the freedom of both the student and the Field Instructor to look critically at their work and teach and learn experientially.

### **The following are some advantages of being a Field Instructor with York University:**

- Valuable experience in mentorship and supervision.
- A library card granting on-site access to York University libraries.
- Option to purchase (at a reduced rate) an athletic facility pass, which will permit the use of York University athletic facilities, programs and services.
- Representation on the Practicum Committee. Please contact the Field Education Manager if you are interested in this or interested in attending some meetings as a consultant.
- Invitations to practice workshops such as: Narrative Therapy, Stigma of Mental Health in Children, Race & Racism in Canada, Demystifying Critical Social Work, etc.
- Field Instruction may be used towards the Continuing Competency Program that registered social workers with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers must complete yearly.

- After 3 consecutive years of Field supervision, Field Instructors can apply for Adjunct Faculty status.
- Potential of Faculty Advising Contract for experienced Field Instructors

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### CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF FIELD INSTRUCTORS

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Normally, the Field Instructor will hold a Bachelor of Social Work degree (or equivalent) and a minimum of two (2) years of relevant experience, with sufficient experience in the specific setting to be able to interpret the work of that agency. The Field Instructor must have an interest in mentoring students and social work education.

Although the accreditation standards stipulate that the Field Instructor must have a social work degree, the reality is that there are many experienced social service workers in the field who may have been practicing for several years without the full requirements. The educational qualifications and professional experience of potential Field Instructors will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Field Education Manager. If the Field Instructor does not have a social work degree, the school will play a more active role in supervision and through the assigned Faculty Advisor.

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### FIELD INSTRUCTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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The following are specific responsibilities for Field Instructors in placement:

- Informing the student of the need to obtain a vulnerable sector police reference check and any other agency pre-placement requirements upon offering the placement to the student.
- Providing a learning environment that is safe and free from harassment and discrimination.
- Orienting the student to the agency and the community. This should include the structural organization of the agency, the decision-making process, policies and procedures, funding sources and relevant legislation that pertains to the placement.
- Recommending readings relevant to the student's learning at the placement site, as appropriate and as required.
- Developing with the student, within the first three weeks, a learning contract specifying the days and hours students will be at the agency, the learning objectives of the student, how these objectives are to be pursued, what means are to be employed for evaluation, the nature of the workload and the expectations of the Field Instructor concerning the use of the time set aside for field instruction, usually at least one hour per week. Please see Section F – Student Evaluations, for further details on how to create a learning contract/goal.
- Selecting and making available to the student practice experiences in the agency that reflect the range of activities possible in that setting. With discussion and guidance, assignments should be made within the first week of placement.
- Integrating the student's work with that of other agency personnel where applicable.
- Providing opportunities for the student to observe and shadow the Instructor's work and to engage in follow up discussions based on the observation.
- Facilitating observation of and work experience with other workers.
- Allowing students to leave placement early or start placement later to attend Practicum Integrative Seminars (if integrative seminars fall on placement days). The integrative seminars schedule will be included in the confirmation email.



- Holding regularly scheduled supervision sessions with the student regarding the learning and practice experience based on direct observation of the student's performance or written or taped material. This time should be established at the beginning of the placement and included in the Learning Contract as an ongoing appointment that will only be changed through mutual negotiations between the student and the Field Instructor. For example, supervisory meetings will be held on Wednesdays, from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
- The supervisory sessions are critical to the placement. These meeting times provide consistent opportunities for students and Field Instructors to review experiences, discuss concerns, make observations and reflect on the student's learning.
- Providing continuous feedback to the student around progress and performance in addition to completing formal evaluations provided by the School. Evaluation should always be a joint endeavour between the student and Field Instructor. Field Instructor makes a recommendation to the Faculty Advisor as to whether the student should pass or fail the practicum.
- Reporting to the Faculty Advisor any difficulties that may arise in the student/field instructor relationship or in the placement that impede learning at the earliest possible date so that a mutually agreeable resolution may be found.
- Attending the Field Instructors' Seminars (three sessions occur in each of Fall and Winter terms) that are held at the School of Social Work. See Appendix I for more information about the Seminar series.

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**SECTION E:**

**STUDENT AND FACULTY  
ADVISOR ROLES AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES**

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## STUDENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Field Placement is a contract with the student, the Field Instructor and the School as represented by the Field Education Staff during the placement process and the Faculty Advisor when the placement starts. The following describes the roles and responsibilities of the Student and the Faculty Advisor once the placement begins.

Social work education tends to promote a growth in mindset both professionally and personally. In the practicum, the student carries most of the responsibility for their learning and development.

The following are specific responsibilities for students in placement:

- It is the student's responsibility to enroll in GS/SOWK 5310 6.0 and GS/SOWK 5350 6.0 in order to ensure that they receive credit towards their degree. Completion of placement hours without registration in the practicum courses may result in having to re-do your practicum hours.
- Complete the WSIB Declaration of Understanding online before beginning placement online.
- Report any placement related injury/accident to the School and Field Instructor ASAP.
- Complete the online Safety Orientation Checklist, ideally on the first day of placement, but at least within the first two weeks of placement.
- Complete the MSW Student Agreement for Placement online.

### Commencing Placement and Code of Conduct:

- You may want to ask about the dress code.
- Read material that is relevant to their placement, taking the initiative in requesting reading guidance from both the Field Instructor(s) and the Faculty Advisor. These materials could be comprised of policy manuals of the placement setting, literature on social issues, legislation and regulations related to the placement setting, literature on successfully preparing for and completing a placement, and other relevant readings.
- Learn agency policies and adhere to these very same policies, the ethical code of practice for social workers as outlined in the Code of Ethics.
- Practice ethical social work. Students should consult with their respective Field Instructors or Faculty Advisor if they are in doubt about any decision or action.
- Students should refer to the **Social Work Code of Ethics**, which is available, free of charge, on the CASWE website:  
[http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/files/2016/02/codeofethics\\_e-2.pdf](http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/files/2016/02/codeofethics_e-2.pdf).
- Students should refer to the Guidelines for Ethical Practice (2005), which is available, free of charge, on the CASWE website: [https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/attachements/casw\\_guidelines\\_for\\_ethical\\_practice\\_e.pdf](https://www.casw-acts.ca/files/attachements/casw_guidelines_for_ethical_practice_e.pdf)
- Adherence to Professional Codes of Conduct is of the highest priority. The two most obvious examples of this are:
  - Safeguarding confidentiality

- Clients' right to self determination
- Setting professional boundaries between yourself and your clients
- Students are subject to the School of Social Work **MSW Student Professional Behaviour Policy**.
- Demonstrate the willingness and enthusiasm of a learning and reflective team member while in attendance at the placement setting.
- Undertake all mutually agreed upon tasks and responsibilities as assigned by the Field Instructor.
- Perform the established tasks and responsibilities at a degree of competence that is consistent with their educational level, with York University's guidelines and with the placement setting requirements, as determined by the agency in consultation with the School.
- Students must monitor their own placements and be responsible for ensuring that they are in an optimal learning situation and meeting placement hours and goals.
- Seek out the assistance and/or advice of their respective Field Instructor and Faculty Advisor for matters and issues pertaining to the placement. If students are unsure about addressing concerns to their Field Instructor, they should consult with their respective Faculty Advisor. If the Faculty Advisor is unavailable, students may contact the Field Education Manager. Students must also consult with the Faculty Advisor immediately concerning any issues that may arise during the placement that cannot be resolved with the Field Instructor. Students must also take some responsibility for ensuring that they are in an optimal learning situation.
- To view the practicum as a learning experience and come prepared to be an active participant in this process.
- Students are expected to report any placement-related injury or accident to their Faculty Advisor and Field Instructor as soon as possible (on the day of the injury if possible).

### Placement Hours:

- Comply with agreements relating to time, hours and days of attendance at the agency. A placement day is typically seven (7) hours long [i.e., eight (8) hours with an hour for lunch]. This may vary depending on an agency's requirements. The student is expected to work the same hours as the Field Instructor. Students may count their lunch hour as part of the practicum hours if it is a working lunch. If they take a break, which we encourage as a practice, then it is not to be counted as part of their practicum hours. Some agencies may require students to occasionally stay past the regular placement hours, which means that some days may be longer than seven (7) hours.
- May take relevant religious holidays that fall on placement days and any other holidays unique to the agency; however, Field Instructors must be informed well in advance of these absences and students must make up this time. **Statutory holidays are not to be included when calculating placement hours and any missed time must be made up.**
- Make up any time they are away for personal reasons and/or time missed due to inclement weather.
- Students must notify their Field Instructors if they are ill and unable to be present at the practicum setting. Students must make up this time. If a student is absent for one week or more at any given time, the Faculty Advisor must be informed as soon as possible. Students are required to complete the total required number of placement hours. Absences from field placement will need to be made up during non-class days, following discussion with and approval by the Faculty Advisor.

- If the placement agency has arranged training or workshops for students, every attempt to attend should be made. If a student cannot attend, an explanation should be provided to the Field Instructor. These hours are counted towards the placement. Maximum of 30 hours of training/workshop attendance for the entire placement.
- Log their placement hours online and monitor the days and times they are involved in placement activities.
- Attendance of and participation in the practicum course's integrative seminars convened by the Faculty Advisor (attendance is **mandatory**). See Section B – The Practicum, for more information. A schedule of these seminars will be included in the student's confirmation package. Students are required to make up the time at their placement agency if the integrative seminar conflicts with their placement hours.
- Journaling: it may be a good idea for students to keep a personal journal of their placement experiences as a tool for learning. Keeping a journal not only provides a written log of activities that the student was involved in, it also encourages self-reflection and therefore further learning about oneself. Students who choose to keep a journal, however, should do so while practicing one of social work's cardinal rules - safeguarding confidentiality. For example, names or any type of identifying information (social insurance numbers, and so on) of clients should not be included in journal entries. ***The personal journal is not a requirement for the practicum course and therefore does not need to be submitted to any member of the School of Social Work or to the student's respective Field Instructor(s).***

#### Learning Contract and Evaluations:

- Develop with the Field Instructor, within the first three weeks of placement, a contract specifying the learning objectives for the placement (see Section F – Student Evaluations for more information).
- Participate fully in the student evaluation process by meeting with their Field Instructor in order to complete the **Mid-Point Progress Review** and the **Final Evaluation**
- Complete the online **Student Questionnaire of the Practicum**
- Submit a written **Reflective Paper 1,000-1,200 words in length**. Students are required to write a reflective paper about their field experiences. This paper must be completed and uploaded online for the Faculty Advisor to review at the end of the placement before a grade can be assigned for the placement.
- Complete the placement extension/grade deferral request form once they receive permission from the Field Instructor and Faculty Advisor's to extend their placement. Please see Appendix K for further details.

#### Requesting References:

Students sometimes require reference letters for employment (or other professional reasons). The Field Education Office Staff cannot provide references for the following reasons:

- Field Education Office Staff were not direct supervisors and therefore cannot speak to the work ethics and practices of any student
- Field Education Office Staff are not engaged in teaching students and therefore cannot speak to the academic practices of any student

Any requests for references should be referred to the respective Faculty Advisor and/or the Field Instructor. The student's Final Evaluation may be used by the Faculty Advisor or Field Instructor to formulate a reply.

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## THE FACULTY ADVISOR

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The Faculty Advisor's role is viewed as an integral component of the Practicum and consists of administrative and pedagogical responsibilities. Once a placement has been confirmed by the Field Education Program, the Faculty Advisor will assume the responsibility of representing the School and being the direct liaison with the student and Field Instructor.

The following are specific responsibilities for the Faculty Advisor in placement:

- Initiate contact with the agency and student at the beginning of the placement to:
  - Ensure the Field Instructor has received the confirmation package and this information is understood by both the student and the Field Instructor
  - Verify the start date, days and hours of placement and supervisory time for the student.
  - Provide the Field Instructor with their contact information for inquiry, concerns and information. It is important to remind the student and Field Instructor of procedures related to the practicum should situations arise.
- Continuously oversee the placement and field instruction format and techniques.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that student placements are progressing well.
- Is available to both the student and the field instructor throughout the placement should they have any questions or concerns.
- Support the student and the agency with the development of the learning contract.
- Recommend relevant readings to students.
- Set up a site visit, typically lasting 1 hour, between themselves, the Field Instructor and the student to review the student learning that has taken place and set goals for future learning, as well as to share any questions or concerns. Faculty Advisors normally visit each student at their placement site once during the placement period, usually at the mid-point of the placement hours, unless circumstances arise during the placement which requires further meetings. In some cases, alternate arrangements to a visit can be made, if a student is completing their placement outside the Toronto area.
- Arrange meetings to resolve any difficulties in the placement and advise the Field Education Manager accordingly. These meetings should be held at the earliest signs of difficulty so that necessary changes can be made which may prevent a placement end or failure.
- Convene four (4) 2 hour long integrative seminars for students throughout the academic year.
- Ensure the learning contract, mid-point progress review, final evaluation log of hours and the reflective paper have been received by the deadline and review them. The Faculty Advisor then submits these documents to the Field Education Manager by the deadline provided.
- Determine students' final **pass or fail** grade based on the student's attendance and participation in all four integrative seminars, the mid-point progress review, final evaluation, reflective practice paper, log of hours and any other assignments negotiated during the placement. Faculty Advisors must complete the Faculty Advisor Summary reflecting the practicum grade.

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**SECTION F:**

**STUDENT EVALUATION**

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## THE LEARNING CONTRACT

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First and second year placements will be evaluated based on a set of criteria established for each practicum. Evaluation criteria for the first placement will be similar to that set out for students in the BSW program. Evaluation for second year placements will follow the same evaluation criteria as set out for the practicum in the advanced standing MSW program, which focuses on knowledge base in a professional context, ability to function within organizational and community contexts, self-awareness and human behavioural functions, and social work practice skills and competencies. These areas of evaluation reflect the School's critical approach with a focus on human rights, social justice and anti-oppression.

Students in the proposed program must successfully complete their first placement before they start their second placement. Students must receive a **PASS** grade for both practicums to graduate.

### General

The **Learning Contract** is completed collaboratively by a student and their Field Instructor to define the structure and goals of the placement experience. This document will be unique and specific to each placement.

The **Learning Contract** should contain:

- information about the learning goals established for the placement and arising out a merger of the student's individual learning goals, the objectives of placement for the School and the work of the agency
- the teaching opportunities that the Field Instructor will be able to offer the student
- the activities and/or programs that the Field Instructor will be able to provide the student access to within the agency.

Information provided in the Learning Contract should be specific, measurable, attainable and contain a time frame. Methods of evaluation and procedures for observation of work should also be discussed and included in the Learning Contract. The learning objectives of the practicum will vary with the level of knowledge and skill that students will demonstrate as the practicum progresses.

The Learning Contract should be completed online **by the end of the third week of the placement**. Once completed, the Learning Contract should be approved online by the Field Instructor. The Learning Goals on the Learning Contract can be revised at the midpoint or final evaluation of your placement.

It is incumbent upon Field Instructors and students to develop learning objectives which acknowledge the current level of competence, as well as provide opportunities for new and advanced learning goals. Student learning should include opportunities for discussion around integration of theory and practice. Although many agencies may operate on a micro/clinical orientation with respect to cases, the expectation is that the student will incorporate knowledge and understanding of social, economic and political systems that may affect the client. Further, there is hope that the student completing research or policy placements will also consider the impact of their work at the micro level.



## Components of the Learning Contract

There are two components to the learning contract: the **administrative agreement** and the **educational agreement**.

- I. The Administrative Agreement contains specific information and should be negotiated at the **beginning** of the placement. This agreement concerns the establishment of the following:
  - State how many hours the student and Field Instructor will meet for supervision
  - List any training/workshops that the student will attend

- II. The Educational Agreement

This agreement should evolve out of a collaborative effort between the student and the Field Instructor and be revised accordingly during the placement. Student assignments are included in this agreement and may include direct practice, community work, research, policy and administrative duties. Opportunities for students to attend and participate in educational seminars, meetings and conferences may also be included. Specific tasks and the methods for completing and evaluating the tasks should also be included.

The educational section of the learning contract includes five (5) development areas, and their associated criteria, that reflect the School's Mission Statement.

The learning areas:

1. Social issues addressed by the organization
2. Organizational context
3. Critical social work skills
4. Critical reflexive practice skills
5. Professional context of practice

Students use the learning areas as a guide toward the development of learning goals. Once the learning contract is complete the Field Instructor must approve it. The Faculty Advisor will be sent a notification to log in and review.

Please go to the following website to see a sample of the **MSW Learning Contract** form:

<http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/resources/forms/>

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## MID-POINT PROGRESS REVIEW

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The **Mid-Point Progress Review** is based upon the learning contract developed by the student and the Field Instructor. At the mid-point mark of the placement, students should have a formal meeting with their Field Instructor to review their achievements/strengths to date, based on the goals for placement as identified by the School and in the student's learning contract, as well as areas to focus a more intense application of skills

to be improved in the identified areas to clarify the students' critical path of focus for the remainder of the placement.

At the mid-point, the student is asked to do a self-evaluation to highlight strengths as well as areas to focus on or improve in the final part of the placement. The mid-point is a critical period to assess the student's abilities and competence as a social work professional at the graduate level. The Field Instructor is asked to indicate the level of progress in each area using the following scale and add comments:

EE = Exceeds Expectations

ME = Meets Expectations

NI= Needs Improvement

DNM= Does Not Meet Expectations

NA = Not applicable at this time

The **Mid-Point Progress Review** is to be submitted on-line to the Faculty Advisor by the Field Instructor.

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## THE FINAL EVALUATION

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The **Final Evaluation** is an essential part of the field experience for it depicts the students' achievements in placement and signifies completion of the practicum course. The completion of the Evaluation should be based on the learning objectives outlined in the **Learning Contract** completed by the student and the Field Instructor.

The student and Field Instructor should approach the evaluation with a general discussion which draws together the work of all the preceding supervisory sessions. The student is asked to do a self-evaluation to highlight strengths as well as areas to focus in the placement which can then be discussed and incorporated into the final evaluation.

The Field Instructor is asked to indicate the level of achievement in each area using the following scale and add comments:

EE = Exceeds Expectations

ME = Meets Expectations

NI= Needs Improvement

DNM= Does Not Meet Expectations

NA = Not applicable at this time

The final evaluation is to be completed online by student and the Field Instructor for the Faculty Advisor to review. After this is done, the Faculty Advisor submits their Summary to the Field Education Manager online and the Field Education Manager submits the grade on time confirming the student has successfully completed the practicum program. The grade submitted to the Field Education Manager by the Faculty Advisor is either a **PASS or FAIL**, which indicates a credit or no credit granted for the course. The actual evaluation is individually detailed to yield a more precise measure of the student's performance and the amount of growth that has occurred in specific areas.

The completed evaluation becomes a part of the student's permanent record. The School of Social Work will maintain a file for each student which will include the Final Evaluation, as well as any additional comments by the Faculty Advisor. The student file will be stored for 5 years after graduation.

Reminder:

1. Please complete your Final Evaluation online
2. Please ensure your log of hours is complete totaling the amount required for your placement and that the log is approved by your field instructor online
3. Please upload your placement reflection paper online for your Faculty Advisor to review

\*Your Faculty Advisor will only be able to process a grade when all these items are complete.

Any requests for references should be referred to the respective Faculty Advisor. The evaluation will not be sent out in response to a reference request but can be used by the Faculty Advisor in formulating a reply.

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## THE REFLECTIVE PAPER

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The reflective paper is an important part of the Practicum because it provides a medium for reflection and consolidation of the student's learning experience(s). The reflective paper usually describes significant learning which occurred during the placement process. This learning could include observations and challenges around understanding bureaucracies, organizational procedures, challenges with a policy, community organizing, social action or direct practice with an individual client, family or group.

**The reflective paper constitutes part of the requirements for passing the Practicum course and must be uploaded online for Faculty Advisor to review. The Reflective Paper is 1000 – 1200 words in length.**

Each Faculty Advisor will provide a detailed outline of the requirements for this paper during the Integrative Seminars. Students should consult with their Faculty Advisor if they have questions about this assignment

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## **SECTION G:**

# **UNEXPECTED ENDING OF PLACEMENT AND PLACEMENT FAILURE**

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## UNEXPECTED ENDING OF PLACEMENT POLICY

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An **Unexpected Ending of Placement** may occur for several reasons. These reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Concern about a lack of supervision
- Availability of appropriate or robust learning opportunities
- Concern about the safety of a student due to discrimination
- Concern about fit between student and agency
- Concern about student and Field Instructor relationship
- A personal situation that is impeding the student's ability to sustain the placement
- Field Instructor no longer being able to supervise placement (and no replacement available).

Engaging in a process of mediation through collaborative meetings with the Field Instructor and Faculty Advisor can be a learning opportunity for students. If this conflict resolution process is not possible, the Field Education Office will take steps to support the student (whether this includes advocating for some reasonable adjustments to the placement OR exploring an unexpected ending).

**Students CANNOT decide, on their own, to end their placement. Students have committed to a contract -the Student Practicum Agreement- and are required to fulfill obligations for a successful placement. The process of the Unexpected Ending of Placement policy must be followed before a decision to end a placement is made. Not following through with the process as outlined below can result in a placement failure.**

1. Ideally, the student and Field Instructor will attempt to address the difficulties arising in the placement during supervision and develop a plan of action. The Faculty Advisor should be notified of these difficulties and of the planned steps to be taken by the student and Field Instructor. If, however, the student is not comfortable speaking with the Field Instructor alone, the student will involve the Faculty Advisor. The Faculty Advisor normally arranges a meeting with the student, the Field Instructor, and the Field Education Manager (if required or requested), to discuss the concerns and develop a plan of action.
2. Follow up should take place no more than 12 placement days (approximately 1 month) after the initial meeting.
3. If the concerns and difficulties continue to persist, a follow up meeting (Exit Interview) can be requested. At this stage, an Unexpected Ending of Placement can be explored. A reminder that **students cannot end OR stop attending their placement without the Faculty Advisor and the Field Education Manager's approval beforehand.**
4. Normally the Field Education Manager, the Faculty Advisor, the student and Field Instructor will attend the Exit Interview. The Exit Interview is designed to provide an opportunity for the student and the Field Instructor to each say a few words about why they feel the placement has ended. Other discussion points can include: a review of work completed, review of log of hours and approval of said hours; feedback about strength and areas of growth; etc. There may be times when students feel some trepidation about voicing their experiences in an Exit Interview. In these situations, both the Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager will support the student to share their feedback. The meeting is to serve as closure for all.

5. If there is disagreement about whether the placement should be terminated, the Field Education Manager, in consultation with Faculty Advisor, will determine the course of action to be taken. Decisions will consider the best interest of the student, Field Instructor and agency.
6. The Student is required to write a reflective paper (800-1000 words in length in APA format) and submit within 1 week of the Exit Interview. This paper should outline; what they learned in placement, their perspective on why the placement ended; what they could have done differently (if anything); what they would need from a placement and placement supervisor to successfully meet the placement requirements, and any other reflections from their experience.
7. There may be cases where it appears that there are concerns regarding the agency and/or Field Instructor's suitability to supervise a social work student. In these instances, concerns will be explored by the Field Education program and Undergraduate Program Director/Graduate Program Director to assess suitability as a placement site.
8. The Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager will determine if the student is eligible to transfer any hours from the first placement to the alternative placement. For the BSW programs a maximum of **300** hours can be carried forward, and for the MSW programs a maximum of **200** hours can be carried forward to the second placement. To have hours carried over, an approved learning contract must be online. The Field Education Office cannot carry hours into another placement if there is no account of work completed.
9. Once the Unexpected Ending of Placement process (as outlined above) has been followed and the reflective paper is reviewed, students **may be** eligible for an alternative placement and will be connected to the Field Education Coordinator to begin the process of searching for an alternative placement. **Students need to be aware that the time it takes to find an alternative placement will vary according to the availability of placement opportunities. The process of finding another placement can result in the student being deferred to another placement cycle, as such delaying a student's convocation plans and having implications for tuition and OSAP.**
10. If a student has had two Unexpected Endings of Placement, the Field Education Manager and Faculty Advisor may involve the UPD or GPD in a meeting with the student before considering another placement.

**Note: Exceptions to the Unexpected Ending of Placement Policy can be made by the Field Education Program based on health and safety reasons or concerns.**

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**SUMMARY OF UNEXPECTED ENDING OF PLACEMENT PROCESS (FULL TEXT)**

(REFER TO DETAILS IN SECTION ABOVE)

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**Step 1:** An Issue or issues arise in placement.

**Step 2:** Student and Field Instructor attempt to address the difficulties during supervision, if possible. If not possible, student is to notify Faculty Advisor.

**Step 3:** Student or Field Instructor immediately contacts Faculty Advisor to mediate any difficulties that have arisen. Faculty Advisor informs Field Education Manager of issues.

**Step 4:** Faculty Advisor arranges meeting with student and Field Instructor to discuss the issues.

**Step 5:** If issues cannot be resolved, the Field Instructor or student may request that the placement be terminated by the School. The Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager will discuss this request. Students cannot decide to end placement on their own.

**Step 6:** Faculty Advisor normally arranges an exit interview with the Field Education Manager, Field Instructor, and student, if possible.

**Step 7:** Student submits reflective paper.

**Step 8:** Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager determine if another placement can be explored at this time and how many hours (if any) can be transferred to a second placement.

**Step 9:** Student meets with Field Education Coordinator to arrange a second placement.

*[POLICY REVISED AND APPROVED BY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY FEBRUARY, 2021]*

## PLACEMENT FAILURE

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A failure is based on the student's performance in the practice setting and is determined by the Faculty Advisor and/or the Field Education Manager. Reasons for failure include but are not limited to:

- Failure to meet the expectations for MSW level of practice
- Student engages in actions, including the use of social media, which jeopardize the well-being and/or reputation of the agency, the School, the Field Instructor or a client
- Student fails to adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics as espoused by the Canadian Association of Social Workers
- Student fails to act in accordance with the Practicum Centre's regulations and policies and procedures, including appropriate Provincial Acts as they apply to the Practicum Centre including, but not limited to, confidentiality and privacy
- Behaviour or actions exhibiting racism, homophobia, sexism or any other form of discriminatory behaviour
- Student engages in unethical practices as described in the Student Professional Behaviour Policy (see Appendix B for more information).

In cases of a **professional breach of conduct**, the only option may be for the student to be withdrawn from the placement. The Field Instructor brings the area of concern to the immediate attention of the student and the Faculty Advisor. At that time, the Student Professional Behaviour Policy will be followed.

- A. The Student Professional Behaviour Review may result in withdrawal from the program.
- B. If following a Student Professional Behaviour Review, a student is granted permission to undertake a second placement, they will have to wait until the next regular placement period as set out in the MSW program.

In cases where the reason for contemplating a placement failure is the **result of the inability to begin to develop social work practice skills**, the following steps must be taken to attempt to develop these skills. The required skills for practice are identified by the School in the 5 development areas detailed in the learning contract, mid-point progress review and final evaluation forms.

1. The Field Instructor, student, Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager meet to discuss the concern and determine if there are ways in which the issue may be resolved.
2. The Field Instructor, student, and Faculty Advisor will create a plan that would support the student in succeeding in developing the required skills. Follow up should take place no more than 12 placement days (approximately 1 month) after the initial meeting.
3. Once the plan is set, the student's progress should be carefully monitored by the Field Instructor and the Faculty Advisor. Regular on-going communication between the student, Field Instructor, and the Faculty Advisor should occur with regards to the student's progress. The Field Instructor should document regular supervision meetings with the student and any other meetings in which the student's performance is discussed.

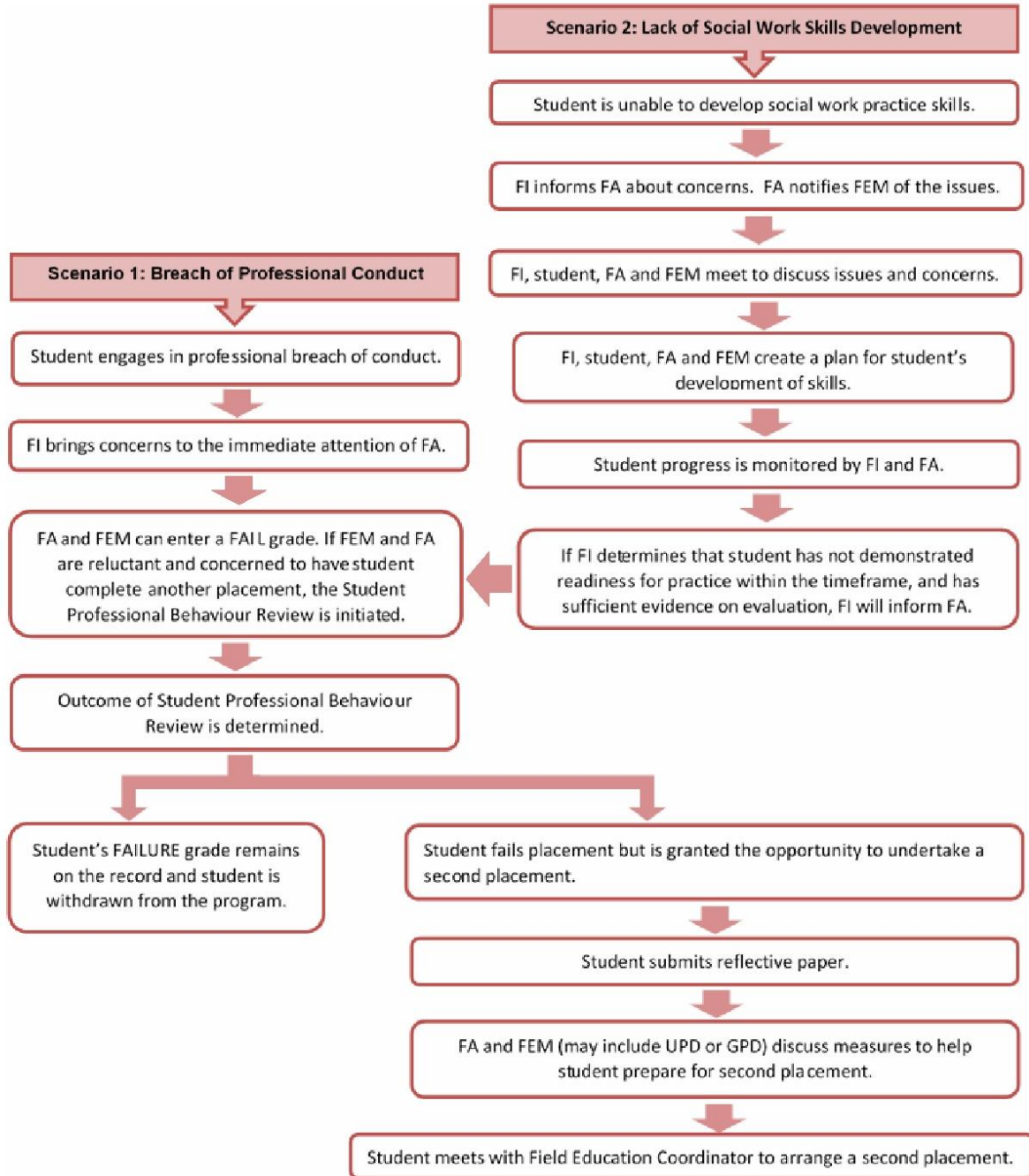


4. If the Field Instructor has determined that the student still has not demonstrated readiness for practice within the timeframe stipulated above, then the Faculty Advisor has the right to fail the student. In such cases, the Field Instructor must ensure that:
  - i. Concerns about the student's readiness for practice were made explicit to the student and the School in a timely fashion
  - ii. The evaluation contains sufficient evidence as to why the student should fail
  
5. The Student Professional Behaviour Review Policy (MSW policy approved on January 27, 2017 and BSW Policy approved by Senate on June 26, 2008) states "where the matter concerns the possible outcome of denying the student an opportunity to complete the practicum requirement, the matter shall be referred for a Student Professional Behaviour Review".
  - a. The Student Professional Behaviour Review may result in withdrawal from the program.
  - b. If following a Student Professional Behaviour Review the student is granted permission to undertake a second placement, they will have to wait until the next regular placement period as set out in the MSW program.
  
6. In order to qualify for another placement, the student must write a reflective paper (1500-2000 words in length, APA format and submitted in hard copy) that clearly outlines their understanding of why they failed the placement, including examples of where they need to increase their learning, what they have learned from this experience, and how and why they feel completing another placement will benefit them in terms of their readiness for practice. The reflective paper will be reviewed by the Field Education Manager and the Faculty Advisor.
  
7. The Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager may involve the GPD or UPD to talk about options or measures that can be put in place to help the student prepare for another placement (i.e. a directed reading course).

**There is a two-placement limit for failed placements in this program, therefore, if a student fails a second time they will not be offered a third placement and will not graduate with an MSW.**

*[POLICY APPROVED BY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY ON MAY 10, 2016]*

SUMMARY OF PLACEMENT FAILURE (REFER TO DETAILS IN SECTION ABOVE)



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## SUMMARY OF PLACEMENT FAILURE (FULL TEXT)

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### **Scenario One: Breach of Professional Conduct**

1. Student engages in breach of professional conduct
2. Field Instructor brings concerns to the immediate attention of Faculty Advisor.
3. Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager can enter a FAIL grade. If Field Education Manager and Faculty Advisor are reluctant and concerned to have student complete another placement, the Student Professional Behaviour Review is initiated.
4. Outcome of Student Professional Behaviour Review is determined
  - 4.1. Scenario A. Student's fail grade remains on the record and student is withdrawn from the program. The process ends.
  - 4.2. Scenario B. Student fails placement but is granted the opportunity to undertake a second placement.
    - 4.2.1. Student submits reflective paper.
    - 4.2.2. Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager (may include Undergraduate Program Director or Graduate Program Director) discuss measures to help student prepare for second placement.
    - 4.2.3. Student meets with Field Education Coordinator to arrange a second placement.

### **Scenario Two: Lack of Social Work Skills Development**

1. Student is unable to develop social work practice skills
2. Field Instructor informs Faculty Advisor about concerns. Faculty Advisor notifies Field Education Manager of the issues.
3. Field Instructor, student, Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager meet to discuss issues and concerns.
4. Field Instructor, student, Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager create a plan for student's development of skills.
5. Student progress is monitored by Field Instructor and Faculty Advisor.
6. If Field Instructor determines that student has not demonstrated readiness for practice within the timeframe, and has sufficient evidence on evaluation, Field Instructor will inform Faculty Advisor.
7. Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager can enter a FAIL grade. If Field Education Manager and Faculty Advisor are reluctant and concerned to have student complete another placement, the Student Professional Behaviour Review is initiated.
8. Outcome of Student Professional Behaviour Review is determined
  - 8.1. Scenario A. Student's FAILURE grade remains on the record and student is withdrawn from the program. The process ends.
  - 8.2. Scenario B. Student fails placement but is granted the opportunity to undertake a second placement.
    - 8.2.1. Student submits reflective paper.
    - 8.2.2. Faculty Advisor and Field Education Manager (may include Undergraduate Program Director or Graduate Program Director) discuss measures to help student prepare for second placement.
    - 8.2.3. Student meets with Field Education Coordinator to arrange a second placement.

## MSW STUDENT PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR REVIEW POLICY

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### York University Master of Social Work (MSW) Student Professional Behaviour Policy

#### PREAMBLE

The Master of Social Work (MSW) degree is an important determinant of eligibility for registration with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. Given the professional trajectory of the MSW degree, a professional standard of behaviour is expected from all Social Work students. At issue in this policy is the protection of the public in view of the University's role in graduating competent professionals.

Progression through the MSW program at the School of Social Work at York University is therefore contingent on compliance with the ethical and behavioural standards required of them. The MSW Student Professional Behaviour Policy recognizes the general responsibility of the faculty members of the School of Social Work to foster standards of behaviour that are acceptable in a professional context and the responsibility of the students to be mindful of and abide by such standards at all times, both in the Program and outside of it.

#### POLICY

##### A. Behaviour that may result in failure or withdrawal from the MSW program

The standards required of Social Work students are those set forth in the *Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (CASW)*<sup>1</sup>, the *Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Standards of Practice*<sup>2</sup> and the School of Social Work's "MSW Practicum Manual". Conduct that breaches the York University *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities* or any other relevant York University policy<sup>3</sup> including but not limited to the Policy Concerning Academic Honesty, the Sexual Harassment Policy and the Policy Concerning Racism, may also be found to constitute unprofessional behaviour and allegations of such behaviour may be dealt with concurrently under this Policy and under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

A student who fails to abide by such standards may, depending on the gravity of the breach, face consequences ranging from failure in a specific course to being withdrawn from the Program with no possibility of return. Such consequences are independent of any proceedings or consequences that may be imposed by the professional governing body of a student who is already a registered Social Worker at the time of such breach.

##### B. Jurisdiction

Allegations of a breach of professional behavioural or ethical standards by a student enrolled in the MSW degree program offered by the School of Social Work, York University shall be dealt with by the School of Social Work, York University in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

1. [http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/files/2016/02/codeofethics\\_e-2.pdf](http://practicum.sowk.laps.yorku.ca/files/2016/02/codeofethics_e-2.pdf)
2. <http://www.ocswssw.org/professional-practice/code-of-ethics/>
3. For a complete list see : <http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/>

### **C. Circumstances leading to a Student Professional Behaviour Review**

1. A Student Professional Behaviour Review is to be conducted when there is evidence indicating that a student may have engaged in any behaviour that is deemed unprofessional.
2. Non-Practicum Courses: In instances where a Course Director of a non-practicum social work course has concerns about student behaviour that have not been resolved through discussion with the student, he or she will consult with the Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director, the Course Director and the student will normally meet to discuss the concerns in the hopes of determining a resolution. If no resolution is achieved or if conditions agreed to by the student as part of the resolution were not fulfilled the matter shall be referred for a Student Professional Behaviour Review.
3. Practicum Courses: In the event that a Faculty Advisor or the Field Coordinator has concerns about the behaviour of a student enrolled in SOWK 5350 6.0 or SOWK 5310 6.0 (Practicum and Advanced Practicum), he/she will follow policies detailed in the School of Social Work's Practicum Manual. Where the matter concerns the possible outcome of denying the student an opportunity to complete the practicum requirement, the matter shall be referred for a Student Professional Behaviour Review.
4. When allegations of a breach of professional behaviour standards by a student enrolled in the MSW program are reported to have occurred in a venue other than a MSW course or practicum, the matter will be investigated by the Graduate Program Director or designate. Normally this investigation will include meeting with the student to discuss the allegation in the hopes of determining a resolution. If no resolution is achieved or if conditions agreed to by the student are not fulfilled the matter shall be referred for a Student Professional Behaviour Review.

### **D. Student Professional Behaviour Review Procedure**

1. Once informed of a potential breach of professional behaviour standards by a student in the MSW degree program, the designated Faculty causes the Office of the Registrar to post a block on the student's enrolment activity in the concerned course(s). The student may not drop or be deregistered from the course for any reason, nor withdraw from the University, nor may transcripts be released to the student, until the Professional Behaviour Review has been completed and a final decision is reached in any appeal from it.
2. The Graduate Program Director of the School or their designate asks the designated Faculty office to convene a review committee consisting of three persons: the Associate Dean of Students of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, or their designate; the Director of the School of Social Work; and one other full-time School of Social Work faculty member who is also appointed to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and who has not been privy to the alleged behaviour or discussions concerning it.
3. The Graduate Program Director of the School or their designate and the Manager of Field Education for the School or their designate are responsible for presenting the evidence and testimony concerning the alleged unprofessional behaviour. They may call testimony from the Course Directors if the behaviour was observed by them or occurred in a course or courses,

and/or from Field Instructors including placement agency staff where the behaviour occurred in a practicum setting, as well as from any other person(s) with relevant knowledge.

4. The student is notified in writing by email and by courier or priority commercial post of the intention to hold a Student Professional Behaviour Review. The notice contains proposed date(s) and time(s) that are a minimum of **twenty-one** calendar days following the date on which the notification is sent out to the student. It is the student's responsibility to provide the School with their current email, postal and telephone contact information. If, by reason of having failed to update their contact information with the University, the student either fails to receive the notice or receives it late, the Review hearing may be conducted without the student's participation.
5. The notification to the student includes a summary description of the alleged behaviour, an indication of the standard it breached, and an outline of the procedures to be followed.
6. The student's first obligation is to respond, within **seven** days of delivery of the above-described notification, to the proposed time and date for the hearing. If this is not done the Review hearing may take place without further consultation of the student as to time or date.
7. If the student wishes to file a written substantive response to the allegation, it must be delivered and confirmed as received within **fourteen** calendar days following delivery of the notification of the Review.
8. No less than seven calendar days prior to the Review hearing, all parties are required to inform the Review Committee of their intention to call witnesses and the names of these witnesses.
9. The student may bring a representative to the Review hearing to call evidence, question witnesses and make closing submissions. If the student chooses to do this, the representative's name and relationship to the student must be provided to the Director in advance of the Review.
10. The Director or designate chairs the Review hearing. A School staff person may be designated to take notes of the timing and order of witnesses and any rulings made by the Review Committee during the proceeding.
11. The representatives of the School first present their concerns. If witnesses are present they are called to present their information concerning the alleged behaviour of the student. The student or the student's representative is then given an opportunity to put questions to the witnesses about the evidence presented and to present evidence in response. Finally, the representatives of the School have an opportunity to comment on any issues or information that has been presented by the student. The Review Committee is not bound by formal rules of evidence applicable in courts of law.
12. When all available relevant evidence and witnesses have been heard and both the faculty representatives and the student have had opportunity to sum up about the case, the Review Committee then enters into a closed session to determine whether a breach of professional standards or ethics occurred and, if so, what actions will be taken. The decision is made by a majority vote of the review committee.
13. A Student Professional Behaviour Review results in one of four possible outcomes:
  - i) A finding that no breach of professional standards or ethics has occurred. No records will be retained.

- ii) A finding that a breach of professional standards or ethics has occurred but it is determined that no action other than remedial educative measures will be taken;
  - iii) A finding that a breach of professional standards or ethics has occurred that warrants the imposition of conditions on the student as a requirement for continuation in the program.
  - iv) A finding that a breach of professional or ethical standards has occurred that warrants either or both assigning a grade of F in the course and withdrawal of the student from the MSW degree program.
14. The decision of the Review Committee is communicated to the student in writing and is delivered by hand, by email or by mail, at the discretion of the Committee. The decision incorporates a summary of the timing and of the evidence presented and testimony heard before expressing the Review Committee's findings and conclusions. No minority or dissenting opinion is expressed. Except where the outcome is (i) above (no breach), a record of the decision is retained in the Office of the Director of the School of Social Work, regardless of the severity of the outcome, for a time consistent with the University's records retention guidelines. This record is for internal academic purposes only. A note shall be placed on the Student Information System to bar retroactive withdrawal from the course.

#### **E. Appeals**

Students may appeal a decision of a Student Professional Behaviour Review Committee to the FGS Appeals Committee on grounds permitted by FGS. Information on the FGS Appeals Committee procedures can be found at: <https://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/regulations/petitions/>

(Revised April 7, 2016; effective July 1, 2016)

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## **SECTION H:**

# **HEALTH AND SAFETY AND ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS**

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## HEALTH AND SAFETY

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The School of Social Work at York University is concerned with student safety and security in the placement. Placement settings are responsible for ensuring that students receive an orientation to safety protocols, policies and/or procedures. In addition, students should be made aware of how to handle emergency situations in the absence of their Field Instructor.

Students with concerns about safety are advised to discuss these with their Field Instructor and Faculty Advisor. Students should not be alone in the placement setting either during placement hours or after hours, unless this has been discussed with the Faculty Advisor and appropriate training and support is available.

## WSIB INFORMATION (WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE BOARD)

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York University assumes coverage for students involved in University education which takes place off campus under normal circumstances. This coverage does not apply to students who are completing a paid work placement.

A Declaration Letter needs to be submitted by the student to acknowledge their understanding of the reporting process for WSIB incidents. It is imperative that the Declaration Letters be submitted at the beginning of the placement. Should an injury occur while the student is at the placement site or conducting placement related responsibilities, this completed form will provide proof of participation, but most importantly this form implies WSIB insurance coverage for the duration of the placement through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

Should an injury occur while the student is at the placement site or conducting placement related responsibilities, the placement site will need to contact the Field Office ASAP and fill out the appropriate WSIB forms with the School, according to the WSIB's timelines. We suggest that the Field Instructor and/or student immediately (or within 24 hours the latest) report after the injury so that we can provide support.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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The ethics governing behaviour in a professional relationship between a student and Field Instructor should be the same as the ethics governing worker-client relationships. Students are particularly vulnerable because of the perceived authority and power of the Field Instructor. If students feel uncomfortable or under pressure, they should consult immediately with their Faculty Advisor and/or the Field Education Manager. Please refer to Appendices B and C for further information on York University's Policy on Sexual Harassment and the Sexual Assault Survivor's Support Line (SASSL) at York University.

## DEALING WITH PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

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It is important to note that practices resulting in the oppression and marginalization of minority groups with respect to race, class, colour, gender, culture, age, sexual orientation, religion, language or disability will not be tolerated by the School, and any such offenses will result in the termination of the student with that particular agency (please see Appendix E for York University's Policy on Racism). Likewise, it is incumbent on the agency to report abusive incidents by students so that appropriate actions can be taken. The Office of the Ombudsperson and Centre for Human Rights at York University is available for consultation (please see Appendix F and G for further information on the Office of the Ombudsperson and the Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion, York University). Students and/or Field Instructor should consult immediately with their Faculty Advisor and/or the Field Education Manager if such practices occur.

## GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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Social media is a catch phrase for (1) internet-based communication technologies, (2) digital technologies, and (3) sharing platforms. These services and sites contribute to:

- **Easy sharing of content** which can lead to exponential dissemination....
- **A sense of community** through targeted audiences, focused subject matter....
- **Engagement** through polls, comments, metrics, alerts for new content....
- **Being readily accessible** via smart phones, tablets, laptops, public computers....
- **Being low-cost or free** but a large time commitment on the part of your social media account manager

Social media's use in community development has largely been as a promotional tool as well as a vehicle for knowledge mobilization (both academic and community created knowledge). It has also been used as a mechanism of communication for activists.

With more and more social workers embracing social networking sites, the question arises – where do you draw the line in terms of boundaries with your clients? Setting and maintaining clear boundaries is very important in developing professional relationships.

As a student you should also know what (if any) policies exist at your practicum agency, as they may go beyond those laid out in this guideline and what the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers expects of you in terms of professional liability. As a placement student, you are expected to follow your placement site's policies re: the use of social media.

### **Communication about the School of Social Work and Your Practicum, using social media:**

- Whenever you identify yourself online as a student from a particular practicum site/agency or School, you effectively represent that agency or School. To make the distinction between speaking on your own behalf or the agency or School's behalf, you might want to say something like "I'm speaking on my own behalf" or "all opinions communicated here are my own".
- If you are developing a site or writing a blog that will mention the School of Social Work, your practicum and/or their employees, as a courtesy to the School and/or agency, please let the School of Social Work and/or your practicum supervisor know that you are writing about them- **and you**

***should clearly state your goals and what your blog intends to say or reflect.*** Representatives of the School of Social Work and/or your practicum supervisor may choose to “visit” from time to time to understand your point of view.

- It is advised that you not say/write things on a social media platform that you wouldn't want attributed to you. Even things you may think are private on social media may not be. Before making a comment or statement you might want to ask yourself, “would I say this in public?”
- Online communication strips away all the non-verbal cues we rely on to understand what someone is saying: tone, body language, facial expressions, intonation, etc. It is wise to always give your audience the benefit of doubt when ascertaining meaning.
- As a Social Work Student, you are also bound by the Social Work Code of Ethics to maintain confidentiality with respect to your practicum setting and the clients you work with. Everyone is entitled to their privacy online.
- The School of Social Work encourages you to write knowledgeably, respectfully, and accurately, using appropriate professionalism. Despite disclaimers, your web interaction can result in members of the public forming opinions about the School of Social Work, your practicum and/or their employees or clients.
- It is not advised that you “friend” your clients (current or past) or allow your clients (current or past) to “friend” you on your personal account. Use the agency account, as outlined by the agency policy, if you are trying to outreach to clients.
- It is also not advised that you use your personal Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts to contact your clients or respond to clients who may have contacted you. Use the agency account, as outlined by agency policy.
- It is advised that you become intimately familiar with the privacy controls on these networks and ensure that the clients cannot see personal details of your life you would prefer to share only with your immediate friends and family.
- Only use your professional (work/practicum) email address to communicate with clients. Once the placement is complete, you cannot share your personal emails with clients due to concerns about ethics and professional boundaries.
- If you choose to communicate with your clients by email, please be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your agency and their internet service providers. While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the internet service provider.

### **Photographs or visual aids**

Posts that use visuals are more effective than ones that don't. The use of a photo or a graphic might give your content the greatest chance at being discovered. However, keep in mind that taking and sharing photographs without consent is a breach of confidentiality. Agencies increasingly use photography for professional consultation, research and education purposes. Know your agency's policy regarding photography including any limitations on its use.

## Legal Liability

Recognize that you are legally liable for anything you write or present online. It must be noted that anything published on the web is NOT confidential. Students can be disciplined by the School of Social Work for commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment. You can also be sued by any individual or organization that views your commentary, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. Note that the use of unfounded or derogatory statements or misrepresentation is not viewed favourably by the School of Social Work or your practicum agency and can result in disciplinary action up to and including school/practicum termination. If the School of Social Work is concerned or made aware of a breach of these guidelines, the Professional Behaviour Policy may be invoked.

(If you would like a complete guide of York University's Social Media guidelines, please contact Mark Farmer at: 416-736-2100, ext. 55131 or the Communications and Public Affairs Division at York University).

*[This guideline was approved by School of Social Work Faculty on June 10, 2014]*

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## STRIKE POLICY

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The School of Social Work recognizes that for students in placement in a unionized environment, a strike during placement is a possibility as such, the School supports student learning regarding labour relations in social service agencies. Students who are applying for a placement in a unionized environment are encouraged to speak to the agency about the potential for a strike and the agency's policy around students in placement during a strike. In the event that a strike happens, the following policies will be followed:

- Students who are on placement in a site where the Field Instructor or other professionals engaging in social work practice are on strike should not cross the picket line to perform duties associated with their practicum.
- The School of Social Work recognizes that strikes are a reality in the social work profession and therefore sometimes part of the social work practice experience. While it is acknowledged that students are not employees of the placement agency, a strike situation provides an opportunity for learning, albeit a different kind of learning.

Students in placement during a strike are expected to undertake learning opportunities associated with the effects or influences of the strike on their learning. Possible activities that can be undertaken include participating in strike activities, writing a reflective paper, journaling, writing and circulating a letter of support or a research project related to field experience. It is acknowledged that pursuing these learning opportunities will require negotiation between the student, the Faculty Advisor and the Field Instructor. The strike may result in a shifting of responsibilities between the student, Faculty Advisor, Field Instructor, and practicum office. This shift in responsibilities is indicated below. Any changes in the student's learning objectives should be documented in the learning contract and the revised contract submitted to the student's Faculty Advisor.

There is a limit as to how many placement hours could be devoted to the kind of learning that could happen during a strike. A suggested limit is fifty (50) hours in an undergraduate placement and thirty-five (35) hours in a graduate placement. If the strike has not been resolved within two weeks, the practicum office will work with the student to negotiate further arrangements and/or find a new placement. It is important to note that every case is unique and the number of hours that a student has already completed will be taken into consideration when determining the most appropriate option for the student. Students should also be aware that the process of finding a new placement may delay their graduation date.

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## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CASE OF A STRIKE:

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### Field Instructor/Agency

- To inform the student of the strike as soon as possible, be sure to give the student the contact information for the union/unit/agency and the names of any the strike representatives.
- If possible, before or during the strike, discuss with the student and/or Faculty Advisor what types of learning opportunities might be available (i.e.: does the local unit want student participation, could the student get a sense of the issues for a paper, etc.).
- It is not the responsibility of the Field Instructor to supervise or advise students during a strike.

### Student

- To inform their Faculty Advisor and the Field Office of a strike at the practicum site, sending forward any contact information.
- To meet with their Faculty Advisor to revise and renegotiate the learning contract, devising new learning objectives that pertain to the strike.
- To seek supervision and advice from the Faculty Advisor for the duration of the strike.
- Will not cross the picket line or seek to perform regular practicum duties outlined in the original learning contract with the agency.
- If the strike continues for more than two weeks the student should meet with the practicum office to negotiate further arrangements and/or to find a new placement. However, the student can begin to look for a new placement at the start of the strike if they should so wish. The student should be aware that the process of finding a new placement may delay their graduation.

### Faculty Advisor

- To contact the union/unit/agency to determine what learning opportunities associated with the strike are available to the student. Be sure that no new learning opportunities involve crossing a picket line (either physically crossing the picket line or doing placement related work from home).
- To collaborate with the student in determining learning opportunities, some possible opportunities include participating in strike activities, journaling, writing and circulating a letter of support, writing a reflective paper, or undertaking a research project related to field experience.
- To incorporate new learning opportunities into a revised learning contract with the student and to sign off on the new learning objectives.
- To supervise the student for the duration of the strike, this means at least one, 1-hour supervisory meeting per week.

## Field Office

- To support the Faculty Advisors through the process of renegotiating the learning contract.
- To meet with the student to negotiate further arrangements and/or to find a new placement in cases where the strike lasts longer than two weeks or at the students' discretion.
- If they are the first to be informed of the strike, they will inform the students and faculty advisors who would be affected by this strike.

*[Strike policy revised and approved by Faculty on June 11, 2012]*

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# **SECTION I:**

# **APPENDICES**

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## APPENDIX A: IMPORTANT DATES

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Graduate studies at York consists of three academic terms: Fall term, Winter term, and Summer term.

Please refer to this website for any update:

<http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/student-status/important-dates/>

## APPENDIX B: YORK UNIVERSITY'S POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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### SEXUAL VIOLENCE, POLICY ON

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**Legislative History:**

Approved by the Board of Governors, 12/14/2016; Reviewed, revisions approved 2019/10/08

**Approval Authority:** Board of Governors

**Signature:** Rick Waugh

<https://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/sexual-violence-policy-on/>



## APPENDIX C: SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVOR'S SUPPORT LINE (SASSL)

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### **SASSL is a Pro Survivor, Pro Feminist, Pro Diversity Organization**

The Sexual Assault Survivor's Support line (SASSL) exists to provide unbiased and non-judgmental peer support and referrals to survivors of sexual violence.

#### **SASSL provides:**

24 hour crisis line – 416-650-8056

Office Line – 416-736-2100 Ext. 40345

E-mail – [sassl@yorku.ca](mailto:sassl@yorku.ca)

Referrals

Public Education

Fund Raising

Office location - 4th floor of the Student Room B449

#### **Who are we?**

York University's Sexual Harassment Education and Complaint Centre (SHEACC) realized the need to have an emergency service available to survivors of sexual assault. With the support of York University's administration, SASSL was formed in 1995. SASSL has received funds from the Campus Safety for Women Grant, the Work Study Program and the Graduate Assistant Program.

In March 1999, SASSL was voted by York students to receive a \$2.10 tuition levy to maintain the presence of this important organization on campus.

#### **What do we stand for?**

**Pro-survivor:** We exist as a support network for all survivors of sexual assault, both male and female. We never question the legitimacy of a caller's experience.

**Pro-diversity:** We recognize and respect the different experiences that survivors from similar and different backgrounds face due to race, religion, ethnicity, sex, ability, and/or sexual orientation.

**Pro-feminist:** We recognize that there is a disparity of power in our society between men and women. We also work to provide an equally effective and respectful service for survivors.

#### **What you should know**

Sexual assault can happen to anyone, anywhere regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, education, culture, ability, socio-economic background, etc.

**Sexual Assault** is any unwanted advance, phrase, gesture, implied meaning, touch, or any other sexual act to which you have not consented. It also includes when someone is forced to perform sexual acts against their will. Sexual Assault violates a person's boundaries, trust and feelings of safety. It is defined by a lack of consent not by the act itself.

**Consent** is the voluntary agreement of a person to engage in sexual activity. It is expressed permission, agreement and approval that is freely given.

**Sexual Harassment** is any behaviour, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature that could be considered objectionable or offensive. It includes implicit and explicit sexual coercion, sexist comments and/or sexual innuendo.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers at SASSL are an integral part of our student-run organization. It is only through the countless hours contributed by the many selfless volunteers that this service has achieved some of its original goals.

SASSL volunteers are needed to provide support and referrals over our crisis line, participate in educational outreach seminars at schools in the area and on campus, and help raise funds for valuable services such as the women's shelter on campus.

By volunteering for SASSL you give yourself the opportunity to make new friends, participate in volunteer social events, and get that warm, fuzzy feeling inside!

And we only ask that you commit 4 hours of your time each week during our Monday-Friday. Once you feel comfortable with taking calls, you will also be offered the chance to take the occasional overnight or weekend shift, if you are interested. We normally hold training sessions for volunteers in September and January. If you would like more information on training dates and volunteer applications please contact us at 416-736-2100 ext. 40345 or drop by our office Room B449 Student Centre.

## **Outreach**

Education and information exchanges are vital components of SASSL's work and growth, in order to maintain contact with all sectors of public and private organizations. Our goal is to provide education to York University's community with regards to the issues surrounding assault on campus. Our educational teams participate in regular workshops within high schools and throughout the York community. Our goal is to aid survivors of sexual violence. Through education, referrals and support, SASSL works towards ending sexual violence within York University community.

For more information, please refer to the SASSL website: <http://sassl.info.yorku.ca/>

## APPENDIX D: HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Please refer to York University Secretariat website for any updates on University Policies:  
<https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/human-rights-policy-and-procedures/>

## APPENDIX E: MANDATE OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON

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The York University Ombudsperson, appointed by the President, is a respected, credible and knowledgeable individual whose ethical standards are above reproach and whose experience with institutional process is both wide and long.

The role of the York University Ombudsperson is to provide an impartial and confidential service to assist current members of York University (students, faculty and staff) who have been unable to resolve their concerns about University authorities' application of York University policies, procedures and/or practices.

In addition, under special circumstances the President may refer a matter for review to the Ombudsperson when she/he determines that such review is warranted.

For more information, please refer to the following website: <http://ombuds.info.yorku.ca/>

## APPENDIX F: CONTACT INFORMATION – CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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### **Contact Information:**

#### **Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion**

Room 2070, Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Building (Formally, TEL)

4700 Keele Street

Voice: 416-736-5682

Email: [rights@yorku.ca](mailto:rights@yorku.ca)

For more information, visit the Centre for Human Rights' Website at: <http://rights.info.yorku.ca/>

## APPENDIX G: YORK UNIVERSITY SENATE POLICY ON RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

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### **Senate Policy on Religious Observance**

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. (Senate 032)

Every effort will be made to avoid scheduling in-class or formal examinations on days of special religious significance throughout the year.

### **Senate Policy on Identifying and Distributing a Schedule of Dates**

A schedule of dates for such days for various faiths will be compiled annually and distributed widely. Students will be informed of procedures for requesting and arranging accommodations. (Senate 032)

### **Senate Policy on In-class and Formal Examinations**

In October 2008, the Senate Policy on Sessional Dates and the Scheduling of Examinations was amended. As such, formal examinations will not be held on public holidays or at other times as directed by the University Senate, administration, or Board of Governors (Senate 032). However, students who,

because of religious commitment, cannot write a formally scheduled examination or meet other academic obligations, should follow the procedures outlined below to arrange for a religious accommodation.

### **Religious Accommodation Guidelines: Final Examinations**

Students who, because of a religious commitment cannot write a formally scheduled examination (December and April examination periods) on the date scheduled, should contact the course instructor and submit a Religious Accommodation Agreement to the department offering the course no later than three weeks prior to the start of the examination period to arrange an alternative examination date.

When arrangements between the student and instructor cannot be made, or if the student does not feel comfortable about approaching the instructor to request a religious accommodation, then the student should contact the associate dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered. Students are required to contact the associate dean not less than 14 days prior to the start of the examination and, if requested to do so, present evidence concerning the religious obligations involved.

The associate dean may consider a number of options to provide an accommodation. The choice will depend on the student's particular circumstance. For example, the accommodations may include:

- a. Treating the request as a conflict and accommodating it within the examination period, or
- b. Providing a deferred examination as soon as possible.

### **Religious Accommodation Guidelines: Other than Final Examinations**

Students, who because of religious commitment cannot meet academic obligations, other than formally scheduled examinations (December and April examination period), on certain holy days are responsible for giving their instructor reasonable notice (not less than 14 days), of each conflict.

Solutions may include:

- a. Rescheduling the evaluation, or
- b. Preparing an alternative evaluation for that particular student or
- c. Recalculating the total evaluation in the course to eliminate the component that has been missed.

When the instructor and student are unable to agree on suitable accommodation, the matter will be referred to the associate dean who may request that the student present evidence concerning the religious obligations involved.

### **Religious Accommodation Guidelines: Course Directors**

Course directors, who because of religious commitment cannot hold a formally scheduled examination (December and April examination period) on a specific day/time, must inform the Registrar's Office, through their associate dean, in a timely fashion only if another day/time is required. Otherwise, it will be assumed that arrangements were made within a department for a replacement.

For more information, visit: <https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>

## APPENDIX H: FIELD INSTRUCTOR SEMINAR SERIES

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### FIELD INSTRUCTOR SEMINARS SERIES FOR 2022 - 2023

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The Field Education Manager will convene three (3) seminars per term and appropriate educative forums relating to the Field. The content of these educational seminars will differ from year to year as they are tailored to address issues that may arise from placements. Current trends in field education may also be examined.

These Seminars serve as an orientation for all Field Instructors, provide opportunities for networking and for Field Instructors to have direct input into the education process and thus influence and help shape field education. Field Instructors are recognized as valuable sources of knowledge and expertise.

Field Instructor Seminar information is usually included in the confirmation packages sent via e-mail prior to the start of the placement.

Note: It is requested that all first time Field Instructors attend the Field Instructor Seminars. It is strongly recommended that Field Instructors who have experience but are supervising York students for the first time attend at least one of the three (3) seminars offered each term.

**Friday, September 9, 2022 (IN PERSON), 9:30 am – 1:00 pm**

**AND**

**Monday, September 12, 2022 (via ZOOM), 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

### **INTRODUCTION TO FIELD EDUCATION: BUILDING A POSITIVE CONTEXT FOR SUPERVISION AND LEARNING – A PROCESS OF LEARNING EXCHANGE**

The aim of this Field Instructor session is to provide an introduction to the processes and systems used by the Field Office, students and Field Instructors throughout the practicum as well as the roles, responsibilities and expectations that York University School of Social Work has of both the student and Field Instructor throughout the placement. We will also review the school's approach in teaching social work, which arises from critical social work practices. The training will focus extensively on the relationship between the student, Field Instructor and agency and how this can be used to create and foster a positive context for learning. *Student can attend this particular event with their Field Instructor.*

**Friday, October (TBD),2022**

9:300 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**To be Determined**

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**Friday, March 24, 2023 (for Jan group)**

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.

*Location -- TBD*

**EVALUATIONS AND ENDINGS**

The purpose of this Field Instructor training session is to familiarize Field Instructors with the York University School of Social Work's evaluation process for Direct Entry BSW, Post Degree BSW, and MSW students. Field Instructors will also have an opportunity to explore the issues and concerns related to both of their own and the students' experience of the evaluation process and completion of the practicum. *Field Instructors only.*

# APPENDIX I: PRACTICUM COMMITTEE

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## THE PRACTICUM COMMITTEE

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School of Social Work, York University

### **PRACTICUM COMMITTEE**

Terms of Reference

Revised October 2019

#### **1.0 GENERAL**

The Practicum Committee is a standing committee of the School of Social Work, York University. The Committee reports to the Faculty of the School.

##### 1.1 Committee Mandate

The objectives of this Committee are as follows:

- to develop and recommend policies and procedures relating to the Field Placement
- to bring together a cross-section of constituencies for ongoing development of field education in Social Work
- to provide a forum for each constituency to bring issues and concerns relating to their specific areas relating to the Practicum
- to make recommendations to the Faculty of the School regarding the Practicum
- to provide consultation to the Field Education Program for any matters relating to the field
- to suggest the development of new and innovative practicum sites
- to enhance the integration of the Practicum into the curriculum
- to promote and enhance diversity in all aspects of field education

#### **2.0 MEMBERSHIP**

##### 2.1 Committee Composition

- 1 B.S.W. student representative;
- 1 M.S.W. student representative;
- 1 Contract Faculty Advisor;
- 3-4 Full Time Faculty Members;



- 4 Field Instructors representatives
- Field Education Staff

The Field Education Manager, Field Education Coordinators (BSW and MSW programs) and the Field Education Assistant shall also be members of the Practicum Committee.

## 2.2 Membership Expectations

It is expected that each member will report to and consult with their respective constituent group and provide feedback to the Committee:

- The Chair will provide feedback at the Faculty meetings and any other Committee.

## 2.3 Recruiting Committee Members

It is the responsibility of the Field Education Office to seek representation from the various constituencies. Committee members are recruited by September of each year so that pertinent materials and minutes of the meetings can be perused before the first meeting in October.

## 2.4 Term of Membership in the Committee

- Full Time Faculty Representatives serve a 3-year term.
- All other members have the flexibility to end their commitment to the committee after 1 year (if they so choose).
- The terms begin in September and continue through to June.

## 3.0 CONSULTANTS

Educational Coordinators and other community partners can be invited to attend meetings as guest participants for the development of practicum issues.

## 4.0 ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES

### 4.1 Meetings

4.1.1 The Field Education Manager will chair the meetings.

4.1.2 The Field Education Manager will consult with the Undergraduate and Graduate Program Directors and other relevant Committees on Practicum issues.

4.1.3. Meetings are held every six weeks, October to May at the School of Social Work. Each meeting will have a duration of approximately one and a half (1.5) to two (2) hours.

Meetings will not be scheduled during the months of July and August except under extenuating circumstances.

It is expected that members will make every effort to attend every meeting.

#### 4.2 Minutes

The Field Education Program Assistant will record and distribute the minutes and any accompanying documents. Minutes will be circulated, prior to each meeting.

Agenda items should be forwarded to the Field Education Assistant or the Field Education Manager prior to meetings.

All minutes are confidential. The actual minutes cannot be shared by student reps.

### **5.00 QUORUM**

The Committee must have a quorum of 50% of its members in order to conduct business.

## APPENDIX J: GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING A WORK PLACEMENT PRACTICUM PROPOSAL

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The School of Social Work recognizes that the Practicum may present some problems for a number of students who are employed full time, and who may not be able to obtain or take a leave of absence due to tenuous work situations and economic need. It is for these reasons that the following guidelines were created to maintain accreditation standards and to ensure an equitable process. We are committed to recognizing these unique circumstances and expect students to consider and follow proper procedures.

The Practicum was designed to allow students to put into practice theories and knowledge learnt in the classroom. The Field Instructor at the agency plays a crucial role in providing supervision and guidance. Students must be able to demonstrate that their situation warrants work placement consideration by exploring leave of absence possibilities or alternative schedules for completing the placement, such as using vacation days, evenings and weekends. These approaches require careful planning, organization, patience and flexibility.

The following guidelines will help you to write a proposal in order to be considered for a work placement. In addition to this proposal, you must also submit your online placement application which includes a cover letter and resume by the application deadline. The completed Work Placement Proposal must be submitted to the Assistant Field Education Coordinator. Please note that the Field Education Manager will determine if the Work Placement Proposal will or will not be approved.

### **WORKPLACE PRACTICUMS ARE NOT AUTOMATICALLY GUARANTEED!**

#### **Writing your workplace practicum proposal:**

You must complete the Placement Application Form and submit with a cover letter and resume to the Field Education Office. This proposal must be attached and should contain the following:

1. Rationale for requesting a work placement. You must indicate why the work placement is requested as the practicum requirements are clearly stated upon entry into the B.S.W. and the M.S.W. program.
2. **A signed letter from the agency supporting your work placement** must be submitted with the proposal and must be on the agency's letterhead. The letter should include that the agency: *recognizes the nature of the Practicum, the student must commit FULL days for placement, approves the student attending their assigned integrative seminars, will allow faculty field visits and is willing to provide the necessary supervision for students.*
3. You must have a new learning opportunity and not be expected to continue performing the same duties as your regular position. **Your present job will NOT be recognized as a practicum opportunity.** You must commit **FULL** days to placement.
4. You must be supervised by someone other than your current supervisor. It is very difficult for students to maintain the same supervisor and be able to challenge workplace and educational experiences.

5. The proposal must be submitted to the practicum office at least three months in advance of the start date of the practicum.
6. **Work placements can be paid or unpaid. It is at the discretion of the agency whether this happens or not. If the agency has Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WISB) insurance, they will be responsible for covering the student's insurance during the placement.**
7. A full description of your present job description is necessary together with a detailed analysis of the proposed placement.
8. If you have completed a previous placement with this agency, you will have to outline how this placement will be different. You must be a part of a different program, have a different supervisor and different learning opportunities for the proposed Work Placement.
9. The placement must also follow appropriate procedures, e.g., attending Integrative Seminars; allowing for Faculty Field Visits; completing evaluation forms and other procedures as laid out in the Practicum Manual.
10. Please contact the Field Education Coordinator to discuss this option and to obtain the form.

APPENDIX K: PLACEMENT EXTENSION/GRADE DEFERRAL REQUEST  
FORM

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PLACEMENT EXTENSION/GRADE DEFERRAL REQUEST

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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

- Program:
- BSW- D.E.A. (From High School)
  - BSW- D.E.B. (From College)
  - BSW- P.D. (Post Degree)
  - MSW- Full Time Advanced Standing
  - MSW- Part Time Advanced Standing
  - MSW- 2 Year program - Year 1
  - MSW- 2 Year program - Year 2

Placement Site:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement hours to date: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Placement End date (as indicated on Confirmation package): \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Placement End date: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Instructor Approval (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor Approval (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Field Manager Approval (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

***Students need to complete a MINIMUM of 2 PLACEMENT DAYS A WEEK***

***Students, please submit completed forms to Field Office to ensure a DEFERRAL is indicated in your practicum courses should you go passed the initial deadline for completion AND to ensure you remain covered by York University's insurance.***

***Please NOTE: Your Faculty Advisor or Field Education Manager may ask you for documentation in support of your request (example, A physician's note).***