

**University of Akron School of Social Work**

**Field Instructor (FI) Guidelines**

In an attempt to ensure all field instructors (new and experienced) know and meet our university’s expectations, we have developed the following guidelines to use with our students.

One of the important things to know is we value our field instructors. We are proud you have taken our students. We view FIs as professionals who provide us feedback on the level of skill development of our students. We value your experience and know it is used in assessing our students. We are also aware that our academic standards may differ from practice standards so these guidelines will hopefully bridge some of these differences.

**SUPERVISION:**

1. FIs may want to treat interns as employees but remember, interns are students – they are learners. As such, they will make mistakes. The university expects students to make mistakes during field. Field is a learning experience. However, there are some mistakes that are severe and we will work with the agency to take the necessary steps to protect the agency and student if that occurs.
2. The university will assign a liaison. This person will be assigned in the forms platform system as well.
3. FIs need to set a weekly supervision meeting starting from the first week. Weekly supervision is a non-negotiable. While life happens in practice, remember the learner in your department is new to learning social work and needs on-going guidance from you the social worker. If something arises that interferes with the established supervision, reschedule. During supervision, at a minimum the following should be discussed each week:

\*Reviewing completed activities with student – giving feedback on strengths and areas of development

\*Identify learning activities needing to completed and plan student has to complete Identify any needs of student to be successful in completing learning activities

\*Student growth/development – ethical/boundary/clarification aspects

\*If any behaviors of concern are identified, they need to be reviewed first during weekly supervision and include plan to address behaviors.

\*If needed, any areas of concerns –a specific behavior-based plan must be developed using the Student Improvement Plan form, including timeframe, for the student to address these behaviors for improved change. A copy should be sent to the liaison.

1. FIs should to make it a habit to write down notes from weekly supervision. A sample has been attached.
2. FIs should review any areas of concerns as soon as they appear. Do not wait to see if things change. Develop a plan as soon as you see an ongoing issue (something that happens more than once). If you develop a plan, provide a copy of the written documentation to the assigned liaison of these concerns and the plan for the student to address the behaviors. The liaison will follow up with FIs as needed to check in on any plans. If you are not sure if something should be written, ask your liaison. It is recommended that the Student Improvement Plan be developed. A copy has been attached.
3. If a problem continues or a significant concern develops, please complete the Student Concern form and submit to your liaison. A copy has been attached.
4. If it is decided that a task supervisor will be used (someone with a degree level equal to the student but not necessarily a social worker), please communicate this information to the assigned liaison as soon as identified so the team can be updated.
5. FI will ensure a timely field visit is set up when contacted by the liaison. The first semester field visit should occur within the first 4-7 weeks from the start of field with no visit occurring later than the 8th week. The second semester field visit can occur a little later but all field visits for second semester students must be completed no later than week 10. It is appropriate to use the weekly supervision as time for this visit. If there are issues getting in contact or getting a response from the liaison, please reach out to the field contact person at the university. Students must have a liaison visit in order to receive a grade for field.
6. FI will communicate any areas of concern/ways to improve the field experience, etc. with their field contact person.

**Field Forms/Documentation**

1. The university uses the field forms platform, Tevera. FIs are set up into the system upon hire. Trainings can be held at FIs need/request using various methods: come to agency, phone conference and/or virtual meeting via computer.
2. Students are to submit their forms (assignments) in four-week increments (learning activities and baseline assessment are due within first four weeks, evaluations [midpoint and endpoint] are due within the final two weeks of each semester and hours logs and narratives are due every four weeks). Students MUST submit their assignments as indicated. These assignments are viewed as any in-class assignment and students are held to the same standard of timely submission. Undergraduate can and should receive a lower grade for missing more than one submission of assignments.
3. We now use a combined tool (the Field Learning and Evaluation tool) that includes the learning activities and evaluations over both field semesters. There are separate directions and tips provided for this tool. The timeline to complete the different areas of the tool is as follows:

* The learning activities should be developed within the first four weeks of the placement.
* During the fourth week, student and field instructor will meet to do their baseline assessment of the student on the nine (9) competencies and behaviors connected with them. The student will upload this document Tevera. The field instructor will email a copy to the liaison. If the liaison has any questions or wants changes to any, please communicate this within a week after receiving.
* During the final two weeks of the first semester, the student and field instructor will both evaluate the student and then meet to review and discuss any different ratings. The field instructor will add comments and recommend a grade for the semester. This is called the Midpoint evaluation. The student will upload this document to Tevera. The field instructor will email to the liaison.
* During the first four weeks of the second semester, if needed, any final revisions to any learning activities can be made and emailed to the liaison.
* During the final two weeks of the second/last semester, the student and field instructor will both evaluate the student and then meet to review and discuss any different ratings. The field instructor will add comments and recommend a grade for the semester. The student will upload this document to Tevera. The field instructor will email a copy to the liaison. This is called the Endpoint evaluation.

1. FIs will communicate with liaison and/or field contact person to work through concerns/issues with online field forms platform.
2. FIs knows the university will do a training on the online field forms platform using a virtual video conference and/or can come to the agency to sit with a FI to walk them through the system. Please contact your field contact person to arrange this training.

**GRADING/ASSIGNMENTS**

1. As a reminder: undergraduate students can be recommended a letter grade: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F. Graduate students (both foundation and concentration levels) are recommended a grade of either Satisfactory or Fail.
2. For grades, if a FI is going to recommend a failing grade for a student (Fail for graduate or anything below a C for undergraduate), liaison should have the following at least four(4) weeks prior to the end of the semester:
   1. There is on-going written documentation of the behaviors that have been addressed, when it was addressed, the plan developed to correct the behaviors, when the plan was shared with the liaison and outcome for each step of the plan that has continued to result in a failing grade.
   2. FI needs to complete a new (or revised) Student Concern Form to document issues, plan to resolve issues and outcomes of plan.
   3. Evidence supporting this information has been communicated to the student needs to be communicated no later than four weeks prior to the end of the semester of the possibility of failing field. A meeting with the liaison and student is held to review this written information and determine if anything can be done to obtain a passing grade. Any plan discussed to improve a failing grade should be in writing and emailed to the student, liaison and the field contact person.
3. Students are to submit the following field forms, considered assignments in field, using the Tevera system. Students who continuously submit these assignments late should receive a lower grade or lower ratings as appropriate. Students are given the following guidelines to submit assignments with the expectation they will make sure they are submitted into Tevera at the required time:
   1. Students are to document their hours correctly:
      1. UG: average 15 hours week during fall/spring and 22.5 for 10 week summer & 17.5 for 13 week summer | Foundation Graduate: average 16 hours a week | Concentration Graduate: average 17 hours a week.
         1. All regular field hours are recorded as Time at Site/Agency. They should all document at minimum one (1) hour a week supervision. This means on average every four weeks UG should have at minimum 60 hours, Foundation: 64 hours and Concentration 68 hours in field with a minimum of four (4) hours showing as supervision.
         2. Students not reflecting the proper information and/or there are issues with their entered time should receive an email, including their field contract person, indicating the issue and timeframe requirement for this to be corrected.
      2. Hour Logs assignments are required to be completed/run, signed and submitted every four (4) weeks. FIs will review and sign off or review and send back for changes. Then the liaison will review and sign off/send back for changes after FIs sign. Students must submit every four (4) weeks.
      3. Narrative forms assignments are required to be completed, signed and submitted every four (4) weeks. FIs should review and make sure students have 6-9 sentences for each week (3-4 sentences for each day in field). This should occur before they sign. The narratives should support the hours indicated for their time log AND be a review of the work they have done that support their learning activities.
      4. Field Learning & Evaluation (AMFE) Tool:
         1. Learning activities and baseline assessment are completed and uploaded by the end of the first four (4) weeks of field in the first semester. The student will upload a copy in Tevera. The field instructor will send a copy to the liaison. If there are any changes after this initial submission, the student will email the revised document directly to the liaison.
         2. Midpoint evaluation (first semester) is to be completed and submitted in Tevera within the last two weeks of the first semester due NO LATER THAN the last day of field. The student will upload the copy in Tevera. The field instructor will send a copy to the liaison.
         3. Endpoint evaluation (second semester) is to be completed and submitted in Tevera within the last two weeks of the second semester due NO LATER THAN the last day of field. The student will upload a copy in Tevera. The field instructor will send a copy to the liaison.

Thank you for your time with supervising our students. We appreciate you and all your efforts.