

Memorial University School of Social Work
MSW Field Education Manual
Learning Contract & Evaluation of Student Learning

The following three documents, which are completed in IPT, are required to negotiate, assess, and evaluate student learning in MSW field practica:

1. *MSW Field Learning Contract* (due by the end of the second week of a full-time or the third week of a part-time practicum);
2. *Midterm Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* (due at the midpoint of the practicum - after completion of approximately 250 hours);
3. *Final Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* (due the final week of the practicum).

It is important that students and field instructors (and agency mentors) read the components of the *MSW Field Education Manual* and the *CASWE-ACFTS Standards for Accreditation (Guiding Principles; Core Learning Objectives; Field Education)*, and review the *MSW Field Practicum forms* prior to developing an *MSW Field Learning Contract* or engaging in any *Evaluation of MSW Student Learning*.

This information is available on the MSW Field Education website <https://www.mun.ca/socialwork/field/MSWFieldEducation.php> and on the on-line learning MSW program shell <https://online.mun.ca/>.

1 MSW Field Learning Contract:

One of the first tasks upon beginning an MSW field practicum is to develop an *MSW Field Learning Contract*, based on the *CASWE-ACFTS Standards for Accreditation: Core Learning Objectives*. Students complete the *MSW Field Learning Contract* in consultation with field instructors (and agency mentors) in IPT.

The *MSW Field Learning Contract* is to be completed and signed by the student and field instructor by the end of the 2nd week of a full-time or the 3rd week of a part-time field practicum. The signed *MSW Field Learning Contract* is reviewed by the MSW Field Education Coordinator, who may suggest revisions. The responsibility for final approval of the MSW

Field Learning Contract rests with the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

A work in process, the *MSW Field Learning Contract* may be revised or changed throughout the MSW field practicum, in consultation with the field instructors (and agency mentors). When changes are made, students must ensure that the latest version is available in IPT.

The purpose of the *MSW Field Learning Contract* is to facilitate the process of identifying individualized learning objectives and learning activities. The content of the *MSW Field Learning Contract* is expected to reflect the MSW curriculum and the *CASWE-ACFTS Standards for Accreditation: Core Learning Objectives*; focus on social work values, knowledge, and skills; and provide time for social work practice, the integration of theory and practice, critical reflection, and self-awareness. It is important that learning objectives and activities be specific, achievable, realistic, recognizable, and timely.

Completed by students, in collaboration with field instructors (and agency mentors), the *MSW Field Learning Contract* is unique and specific to the individual student in their particular MSW field practicum. The nature of field practica varies with the learning opportunities offered by field settings as well as by student level of social work knowledge and skills combined with professional and life experiences. It is incumbent upon students and field instructors (and agency mentors) to develop individualized learning objectives and learning activities which acknowledge the current level of social work knowledge and skills, and provide challenges for new student learning.

When MSW field practica are focussed on direct/clinical practice, it is expected that *MSW Field Learning Contracts* (and field instruction) incorporate discussions of mezzo and macro-level practice, including economic, health, political, and social systems.

1.1 Individualized Learning Objectives

Individualized learning objectives are descriptions of specific expected outcomes or necessary steps toward achieving student learning. Students are expected to translate the core learning objectives into one or more individualized learning objective specific to the learning opportunities within their field practicum and field setting. Learning objectives utilize verbs including, but not limited to: applies, demonstrates, develops, integrates, performs, understands.

Individualized learning objectives are expected to:

- focus on professional social work;
- be grounded in the *CASWE-ACFTS Standards for Accreditation: Core Learning Objectives*;
- be graduate level in depth and complexity; and
- integrate social work values, knowledge, and skills with critical reflection and self-awareness.

1.2 Learning Activities

Learning activities define the practice experiences and tasks in which students engage in order to acquire the capabilities necessary to fulfill the individualized learning objectives. Depending on the field setting and the particular MSW field practicum, learning activities may include a variety of components of social work practice:

- administration/supervision;
- collection and review of literature and other resources;
- community development and capacity-building;
- design, delivery, and evaluation of professional and public education and training;
- design and development of tools, resources, and program materials;
- direct/clinical practice;
- health and wellness promotion;
- inter-professional and inter-agency collaboration;
- needs assessment;
- organizational development;
- policy analysis, development, implementation, and evaluation;
- prevention/intervention; and
- program development, delivery, and evaluation.

Research is a key component of Pathways/Pathways Scholarship/Theses and, as such, is not an acceptable learning activity of MSW field practica.

Sample of Individualized Learning Objectives and Learning Activities

Core Learning Objective: *Demonstrates graduate-level knowledge of selected social problems and client populations.*

Individualized Learning Objective: *Demonstrates advanced knowledge of the dynamics of same sex relationships, family violence, and the impact of separation on same sex families.*

Individualized Learning Objective: *Develops an understanding of the impact of marriage and divorce legislation and social policy on same sex relationships.*

Learning Activities:

- *Reviews relevant literature and resources pertaining to same sex relationships, family violence, marriage and divorce legislation and other relevant social policy, and the impact of
 - *separation on same sex families.**
- *Discusses relationship dynamics, family violence, and the impact of separation during sessions with individuals and couples.*
- *Analyses the dynamics presented during sessions with same sex individuals and couples,
 - *reflects critically, and discusses in field instruction.**
- *Develops and presents one or more in-service sessions regarding same sex relationships,
 - *family violence, marriage and divorce legislation and other relevant social policy, and the impact of separation on same sex families.**

2 Evaluation of MSW Student Learning:

Evaluation of student learning is a key aspect of the MSW field practicum. To ensure relevancy in evaluating individualized learning objectives and particular learning opportunities, more personalized evaluation criteria can be designed and added to the *MSW Field Learning Contract*, and to the *Midterm* and *Final Evaluations of MSW Student Learning*. Field instructors (and agency mentors) and students are expected to collaborate in the completion of *Midterm* and *Final Evaluations of MSW Student Learning*. These evaluations are required to be completed and signed by students and field instructors (and agency mentors) in IPT in a timely manner.

MSW students are evaluated on the basis of their ability to function within a theoretical, professional, organizational, and community context, at a level exceeding that expected upon completion of a BSW program. MSW students also are evaluated on the basis of their ability to demonstrate, at a level that exceeds the knowledge and skills acquired in a BSW program,

social work values, knowledge, and practice skills; communication and critical thinking skills; and self-awareness.

The following methods may be used to evaluate student performance:

- student self-assessment (i.e., discussions with students, journals, reflection logs);
- student written work (i.e., assessments, agency documentation, meeting minutes, policy reviews, summary reports);
- field instructor (and agency mentor) observation (i.e., direct observation of students, group co-facilitation, students and field instructors working together); and
- solicited or unsolicited feedback from colleagues and clients/participants/patients/service recipients.

2.1 *Midterm Evaluation of MSW Student Learning:*

The *Midterm Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* is to be completed collaboratively by field instructors (and agency mentors) and students at the half-way point of the MSW field practicum (based on completing approximately 250 of the required 500 hours). Using the *MSW Field Learning Contract* as a guide, the *Midterm Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* includes a written review of the learning objectives and activities completed to date and yet to be achieved - to be completed by the student. The *Midterm Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* also includes a written summation of student progress and specific recommendations for further learning - to be completed by the field instructor (and agency mentor). The *Midterm Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* is to be completed and signed by students and field instructors (and agency mentors) in IPT in a timely manner.

If students are at risk of not successfully completing the MSW field practicum, it is crucial that the field instructor contact the MSW Field Education Coordinator. Further, the *Midterm Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* must include a written summation of issues that need to be addressed and an action plan to address concerns. (Refer to the *MSW Field Manual - Suspension & Termination*.)

2.2 *Final Evaluation of MSW Student Learning:*

The *Final Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* is to be completed collaboratively by field instructors (and agency mentors) and students during the last week of the field practicum.

Using the *MSW Field Learning Contract* as a guide, the *Final Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* includes a written summation of learning objectives and activities completed, not achieved, or not fully achieved - to be completed by students. The *Final Evaluation of MSW Student Learning* also includes a written summation of student learning and specific recommendations for further learning - to be completed by the field instructor (and agency mentor). Where desired, other documentation describing or evaluating student learning during the MSW field practicum may be attached to the *Final Evaluation of MSW Student Learning*. The *Final Evaluation of Student Learning* is to be completed and signed by students and field instructors (and agency mentors) in IPT during the final week of the MSW field practicum or within one week of the completion thereof.

If students are at risk of not successfully completing the MSW field practicum, it is crucial that the field instructor contact the MSW Field Education Coordinator. (Refer to the *MSW Field Manual - Suspension & Termination*.)