

***Memorial University School of Social Work***  
***MSW Field Education Manual***  
***Key Terms & Roles***

**Agency Coordinators**

Agency coordinators are agency/organization employees (typically professional practice or educational coordinators, program managers, senior managers or directors) designated by their agency/organization to represent that agency/organization in matters pertaining to social work field education. Agency coordinators serve as the primary point of contact with Field Education Coordinators, and negotiate which social workers will provide field instruction, which agency mentors will supervise students (where there are no qualified field instructors), the number of students to be placed, and which students are placed in that field setting. They also participate in any general discussions or meetings concerning field education on behalf of the field setting.

**Agency Mentors**

When the decision is made by the Field Education Coordinator to place a student in a field setting where there are no available qualified MSW field instructors and an offsite field instructor is assigned, the field setting designates a staff member (where possible, a social worker) to act as the agency mentor. Agency mentors are responsible for the mentoring and day to day supervision of students. They also are responsible for collaborating with offsite field instructors in assigning learning opportunities and evaluating student learning.

**Clients/Participants/Patients/Service Recipients**

Depending on the field setting and the learning activities, the people with whom students interact may include individuals, families, groups, communities, community partners/agencies /organizations, and systems.

**Field Education**

Field education is a modality of social work practice with its own conceptual base, special skills, and unique process. It involves the synthesis of theory with practice, specifically to prepare students to deliver effective and responsive social work.

**Field Education Coordinators**

Field Education Coordinators are academic staff members of the Memorial University School

of Social Work, whose primary responsibilities include:

1. recruiting field instructors and field settings;
2. facilitating appropriate matches between students, field instructors, agency mentors, and field settings;
3. building reciprocal relationships, liaising, and exchanging information with agency coordinators, agency mentors, field instructors, and field settings;
4. monitoring students and their educational experiences in field practica through consultation and collaboration with field instructors, agency mentors, and students regarding student progress, including any challenges arising;
5. developing, administering, reviewing, and approving all field practica forms;
6. submitting the final grade for all MSW field practica;
7. reviewing all student and field instructor evaluations of field practica and, where appropriate to do so, acting upon that feedback; and
8. developing, administering, promoting, coordinating, facilitating, and evaluating field instructor courses and seminars.

### **Field Instruction**

Field instruction, which is essential to the completion of all field practica, is the provision of regularly scheduled field education in the specific field setting by the designated field instructors (in partnership with agency mentors). Field instruction is directly relevant to student practice performance and professional development, and provides students with ongoing educational supervision and performance evaluation. The integration of social work theory and practice is a core function of field instruction.

### **Field Instructors**

Field instructors are required to possess an MSW with at least two years post-MSW social work employment experience (*CASWE-ACFTS Standards for Accreditation, 2014*). In a number of provinces, including NL, field instructors are required by provincial legislation to be Registered Social Workers.

Field instructors are responsible for providing a minimum of 25 hours of field instruction, including assignment of learning opportunities, integration of theory and practice, supervision of students, and evaluation of student learning. Field instructors may be employees of the field setting, or from the community or the School of Social Work (offsite field instructors).

### **Field Practicum/Practica**

Field practica provide opportunities for students to synthesize theory with practice, to gain experience and be mentored in social work practice responsibilities, and to apply social work values, knowledge, and skills to practice situations. Students also experience educationally-focussed field instruction, practice supervision, and evaluation of practice performance and professional development.

### **Field Settings**

Field settings are agencies or organizations in which students complete their field practica, under the direct supervision of qualified field instructors, who provide students with ongoing educational supervision and performance evaluation. The selection of field settings is guided by the support of agencies/organizations for the goals of field education and the ability of agencies/organizations to offer students the variety, range, and intensity of experiences required to achieve their learning goals. **Field settings have the sole authority and discretion to determine the number of students accepted for field practica and which students they accept.**

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

Reasonable accommodation includes adjusting a course, program, policy, procedure, or the physical environment which adversely affects students - without compromising academic integrity or changing the essential educational requirements of field practica.