



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



**MSW Field Education Manual**  
**March 2025**

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***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 agency. They also participate in any general discussions or meetings concerning field education on behalf of the field agency.

**Agency Mentors**

When the decision is made by the Field Education Coordinator to place a student in a field agency 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 service recipients 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, preferably with at least two years post-MSW social work employment experience (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021). 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, 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-focused 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.

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Field Practica Requirements & Expectations of Students***

**Students are required to read all of the components of the *MSW Field Education Manual*, the *CASWE-ACFTS (Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education)*, the *MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement*, and the *MSW Field Practicum forms*.**

**These documents are available on the [MSW Field Education website](#)**

**SCWK 6917 Pre- & Co-requisites**

Prerequisites: 6012, 6013, 6014, 6313, and 6413.

Pre or co-requisites: 6314 and 6315.

**Field Practicum Hours**

The MSW field practicum is designed to be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. On a full-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over one semester in 13 to 15 weeks (35 to 40 hours per week). On a part-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over two semesters in 20 to 32 weeks (minimum 16 hours per week). Practica cannot extend beyond two semesters.

Students are required to complete the full 500 hours of the MSW field practicum and are expected to negotiate the scheduling of field hours with their field instructor (and agency mentor). Evening or weekend hours may be expected depending on the field setting and the field activities and learning opportunities. Field hours are to be completed in the field setting or other related settings, as designated by the field instructor (and agency mentor). Remote activities, i.e., working from home need to be approved by the field instructor, agency mentor and possibly the Field Education Coordinator. Completing pre-placement requirements such as health and safety modules, does not count as practicum time.

**The 500 hours do not include:**

- lunch, coffee, and other breaks;
- sick days, family days, and bereavement leave;
- snow days;
- statutory holidays or annual leave;
- any other absences from the field practicum/ field setting;
- work on other SCWK courses, including Pathway Scholarship, Theses, institutes, or any course work associated with institutes.

Students are required to inform their field instructors (and agency mentors) if they will be absent at any time from the field setting. If students are absent from the field setting for four or more days, it is the students' responsibility to inform the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

**Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

**Value 6: Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality:**

**Social workers uphold the interests of service users, members of the public, and other professionals in developing and safeguarding the trust placed in the confidential relationship. Social workers demonstrate respect for the trust and confidence placed in them by service users, members of the public, and other professionals by considering their values and beliefs related to privacy and confidentiality and by respecting their right to control whether or when their information will be shared with third parties. Social workers protect confidentiality across all manner of service provision or communication in all settings and social media environments. (CASW, *Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles*, 2024)**

Students, the School of Social Work (i.e., Field Education Coordinators, offsite field instructors, Associate Deans), and field settings (i.e., field instructors, agency mentors, agency coordinators) agree to maintain confidentiality of information in accordance with social work



values and the CASW-ACTS *Code of Ethics, Values, and Guiding Principles* (2024), the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA), *The Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA) and other applicable privacy legislation. The *Agency-School Affiliation Agreement*, the *Agency-School Information Sharing Agreement*, and the *MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement* outline which information is to be kept confidential and which information can be shared between students, the School of Social Work, and field settings.

## **Academic and Professional Standards**

Within the university community, there is a collective responsibility to maintain a high level of scholarly integrity. Dishonesty has no place in the academic community and academic misbehaviour cannot be condoned or even appear to be condoned. In the course of a graduate degree program, students are expected to learn those principles which constitute proper academic behaviour and are responsible to avoid actions which could be construed as dishonest or improper.

In order to facilitate familiarity with academic and professional standards, it is recommended that, before commencing their field practicum, students familiarize themselves with the:

- [\*Regulations Governing the Degree of Master of Social Work\*](#)
- *MSW Field Education Manual; Field Practicum Agreements* (agencies and students); [\*MSW Field Practicum forms\*](#)
- [\*School of Graduate Studies, Academic Misconduct\*](#)
- [\*Graduate Students' Union\*](#) (student legal rights)
- [\*CASW Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles \(2024\)\*](#)
- [\*CASWE-ACFTS \(Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education\)\*](#) and [\*MSW Field Education\*](#)

## **Field Setting Requirements**

As early as possible in the planning stages, students are required to complete and provide

documentation of any pre-placement screening required by the field setting (i.e., health, immunization, criminal records, vulnerable sector, child welfare) at their own expense. Students are required to fulfill and provide documentation of any field setting pre-placement requirements (i.e., application, oath of confidentiality, online training, orientation). Failure to complete the field setting pre-placement requirements or to submit the required documentation in a timely manner will result in a delay in or cancellation of the MSW field practicum.

Students requiring reasonable accommodation by the field setting for any mental health, physical, or environmental disabilities, challenges, or conditions, or other personal circumstances, shall disclose to the MSW Field Education Coordinator their need for reasonable accommodation very early in the planning stages. The *MSW Intent to Register in Field Practicum* form includes a section pertaining to personal disclosure, and grants permission to share such information with the field setting. (Please refer to *MSW Field Education Manual: Accommodation & Personal Disclosure*)

Upon the commencement of their practicum, students are responsible for accessing relevant field setting rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Typically, field settings require that students review this material in advance of any social work practice with individuals, families, groups, or community partners. By signing the *MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement*, students acknowledge and agree to abide by the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of their field setting while participating in their field practicum.

### **Field Practicum Learning Opportunities**

Field instructors (and agency mentors) are responsible for assigning learning opportunities and activities to students. Typically, this occurs in collaboration with students. The assignment of learning opportunities and activities is expected to be grounded in the *MSW Field Learning Contract* and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021).

Students are assigned social work responsibilities only to the degree commensurate with the assessment of the student's level of skill and ability by field instructors (and agency mentors). If students experience their responsibilities as too complex, too simplistic, incongruent with or not reflective of their learning goals, it is crucial that they discuss their concerns with their field instructors (and agency mentors). While students and field instructors (and agency mentors) may agree upon the assignment of responsibilities, the wishes of clients/participants/patients/service recipients are primary. Students acknowledge and agree that service recipients have the right to choose whether or not to receive social work services from students.

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;
- interprofessional and interagency collaboration;
- needs assessment;
- organizational development;
- policy analysis, development, implementation, and evaluation;
- prevention/intervention; and
- program development, delivery, and evaluation.

***Research activities within practicum can be discussed with the Field Education Coordinator for suitably for field practicum.***

## Grading

A grade of PASS/FAIL is recommended by the field instructor and assigned to SCWK 6917 by the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

A grade of PASS indicates that performance meets or exceeds expectations; a grade of FAIL indicates unsatisfactory performance. A temporary grade of INCOMPLETE indicates a pending final grade.

Grades will be submitted once students complete their MSW field practicum and the following forms have been completed, signed by all required parties, and submitted to the MSW Field Education Coordinator:

- ☐ *MSW Intent to Register in Field Practicum (IPT)*
- ☐ [MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement](#)
- ☐ *MSW Field Learning Contract (IPT)*
- ☐ *MSW Timesheet & Field Instruction Record (IPT)*
- ☐ *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning (IPT)*
- ☐ *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning (IPT)*
- ☐ *MSW Student Evaluation of Field Practicum (IPT)*

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Step-by-Step Guide to Preparing for Your MSW Field Practicum***

**Preparing for your MSW Field Practicum:**

In preparing, planning for, and completing your MSW field practicum, as an adult learner and a professional social worker in a student role, you are responsible to:

- engage in open, direct, and timely communication with the MSW Field Education Coordinator;
- become familiar with the [MSW Field Education](#) website, manual, agreements, and forms;
- become familiar with the relevant (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021);
- log in, become familiar with, and complete required documentation on IPT; and follow the outlined processes and procedures.

Should any potential field instructors or field settings approach you about your MSW field practicum before you meet with the MSW Field Education Coordinator, it is recommended that you make no commitments during those conversations or that you ask the potential field instructors/field settings to contact the MSW Field Education Coordinator to discuss any possible field practica.

**1 At Least Six Months Before You Hope to Begin Your MSW Field Practicum:**

- 1.1 Read all components of the *MSW Field Education Manual*, including the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021) and [CASW Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles \(2024\)](#); The *Step-by-Step Guide to IPT (Intern Placement Tracking)*; and the *MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement*. Review all of the [MSW Field](#)

[Practicum forms.](#)

- 1.2 Contact the MSW Field Education Coordinator to arrange a virtual or in-person meeting to start the process of practicum planning.
- 1.3 Log in and become familiar with IPT. The Academic Program Assistant for Graduate Programs will send an email linking you to [IPT](#).
- 1.4 In IPT, complete and sign the *Intent to Register in MSW Field Practicum*, then complete the student details page, including uploading your resume or curriculum vitae (PDF).
- 1.5 Contact the MSW Field Education Coordinator to arrange a virtual or in-person meeting to discuss your ideas, options, concerns or limitations, and potential field instructors/field settings for your MSW field practicum.
- 1.6 The MSW Field Education Coordinator will explore options for your field practicum and initiate the process of facilitating a match between you, your field instructor (and agency mentor), and field setting. This is done in collaboration with you, and incorporates an awareness of your learning goals, field instructor and field setting preferences, and relevant personal and professional factors.

**The MSW Field Education Coordinator will contact only one field instructor/field agency at a time.** If that field instructor/field agency is not available, or not suitable, the MSW Field Education Coordinator will contact your next choice. **Out of respect for field instructors and field agencies, discussions will occur with one field instructor and one field setting at a time.** When a placement has been arranged, students will not continue to search for or request alternative placements. Under only very extenuating circumstances would a placement be cancelled for an alternative placement.

As an MSW student who is already a practicing social worker, you likely have personal and professional familiarity and relationships with social workers and agencies/organizations within your community. Thus, following your conversation with the MSW Field Education Coordinator, it is permissible to engage in a preliminary exploration of a potential field practicum. However, you are not to engage in discussions with more than one field instructor/field agency at a time. Nor have you the authority to confirm your MSW field practicum. Negotiation and confirmation of your MSW field practicum are the responsibility of the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

- 1.7 If you wish to complete your MSW field practicum where there is no qualified MSW field instructor available, you are required to read the information outlined in the *MSW Field Education Manual - Special Arrangements*. Students wishing to have a placement without an onsite field instructor will work collaboratively with the Field Education Coordinator to secure a qualified field instructor and potential agency mentor before the MSW field practicum can be officially confirmed.
- 1.8 If you wish to complete your MSW field practicum in your place of employment, you are required to read and fulfill the criteria outlined in the *MSW Field Education Manual - Special Arrangements*. The required documentation must be submitted and approved before the MSW Field Education Coordinator will officially confirm your MSW field practicum. Students wishing to have a practicum without an onsite field instructor will work collaboratively with the Field Education Coordinator to secure a qualified field instructor and a potential agency mentor before the MSW field practicum can be officially confirmed.
- 1.9 In consultation with you, the field instructor (and agency mentor), and field setting, the MSW Field Education Coordinator will officially confirm your MSW field practicum.

## **2 Prior to Beginning Your MSW Field Practicum - Once Your Practicum is Confirmed**

- 2.1 Read, complete, sign, and upload to IPT [MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement](#), which describes the duties and responsibilities of students and the School in reference to MSW field practica.
- 2.2 Complete and provide documentation of any pre-placement screening required by the field setting (i.e., health, immunization, criminal records, vulnerable sector, child welfare) at your own expense. Fulfill and provide documentation of any field setting pre-placement requirements (i.e., application, oath of confidentiality, online training, orientation). Failure to complete the field setting pre-placement requirements or to submit the required documentation in a timely manner will result in a delay in or cancellation of your MSW field practicum.
- 2.3 Register for SCWK 6917.

Prior to registering for SCWK 6917, contact the Academic Program Coordinator of Graduate Programs to ascertain the correct section number and CRN.

If you are completing your field practicum in the final semester of your MSW program, you are responsible for applying to convocate. Please see [Graduation Procedures](#).



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***Special Arrangements for MSW Field Practica***

Students may request approval to complete MSW field practica in field settings requiring special arrangements (i.e., in field settings with no available qualified field instructors, in their workplace, paid practica). Final approval and related decisions concerning field practica rests with the MSW Field Education Coordinator (who reviews the requests, consults with appropriate parties, and informs students of the decision to accept, revise, or deny their request) and with the field settings (who make the final decisions regarding the selection and placement of students within their respective organizations).

**1. Completion of Field Practica in Field Settings Lacking Access to Qualified MSW Field Instructors**

While it is preferable to have onsite field instruction, there also exist excellent learning opportunities within field settings where there are no qualified field instructors available. Thus, students may request approval to complete an MSW field practicum in a field setting where there are no qualified field instructors available. Students wishing to have a placement without an onsite field instructor will work collaboratively with the MSW Field Education Coordinator to secure a qualified field instructor and potential agency mentor before the MSW field practicum can be officially confirmed.

Field instructors are required to possess an MSW, preferably with at least two years post-MSW social work employment experience (*CASWE-ACFTS Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021)). In a number of provinces, including NL, field instructors are required by provincial legislation to be Registered Social Workers.

Offsite field instructors are responsible for providing a minimum of 25 hours of field

instruction, supervising and mentoring students, facilitating the integration of social work theory and practice, and for collaborating with the agency mentor in overseeing the completion of the learning contract, assigning learning opportunities, and evaluating student learning.

Where there are no qualified field instructors available and an offsite field instructor is assigned, the field setting designates a staff member (where possible, a social worker) as an agency mentor. Agency mentors are responsible for the mentoring and day-to-day supervision of students and for collaborating with offsite field instructors in overseeing the completion of the learning contract, assigning learning opportunities, and evaluating student learning.

## **2. Completion of a Field Practicum in a Student's Workplace**

Students may request approval to complete an MSW field practicum in their place of employment, if:

- the learning opportunities, activities, and responsibilities are congruent with the learning needs of the student;
- the learning opportunities, activities, and responsibilities do not constitute or overlap with the student's activities, duties, and responsibilities as an employee;
- the MSW field practicum involves the student commencing employment in a new position with new activities, duties, and responsibilities;
- the proposed field instructor is not a direct supervisor or manager to whom the student reports as an employee; and
- the student's employer accepts and supports that the primary goals and objectives of the practicum are educational.

Approval to complete the MSW practicum may be given if students apply to complete their MSW field practicum in their workplace by submitting a written proposal (of one to three

pages), which includes:

- a current job description;
- a new job description (if the student is commencing employment in a new position);
- a detailed description of the proposed field activities;
- a description of proposed learning objectives and opportunities;
- a discussion of how the proposed field practicum differs from the student's current/past work responsibilities and activities;
- the names, telephone numbers, and email addresses of the student's direct supervisor/manager and the proposed field instructor; and
- assurance that the student's employer understands the difference between the activities and responsibilities of the proposed field practicum and the student's employment.

The MSW Field Education Coordinator reviews the written proposal, consults with the proposed field instructor and/or direct supervisor/manager, and informs the student of the decision to accept, revise, or deny the request.

### **3. Paid Placements**

Students completing an MSW practicum with the Government of NL typically are paid for the 500 required hours of the practicum, subject to current government policy. Other agencies or jurisdictions also may pay students for the 500 required hours of the practicum (or any portion thereof), subject to agency policies.

The same process is used for matching students to paid and unpaid placements. Normally, students indicate their interest in completing a practicum in an agency offering paid placements on their *MSW Intent to Register in Field Practicum* form and in their discussions with the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

Students are not guaranteed a paid placement, whether in their workplace or in another field setting. Neither the School of Social Work nor the MSW Field Education Coordinator is involved in any aspects of the payment for field practica. Any negotiations or arrangements for payment, or the discussion thereof, rest with the field setting and the student.

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#### ***Accommodation & Personal Disclosure***

##### **Reasonable Accommodation for Mental Health, Physical, or Environmental Disabilities, Challenges, or Conditions - or Other Personal Circumstances**

Students may have particular mental health, physical, or environmental disabilities, challenges, or conditions, or other personal circumstances which may require reasonable accommodation by the School of Social Work and field settings. 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.

For further information, please refer to the [Memorial University Policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)

All students with disabilities are encouraged to contact [Accessibility Services \(The Blundon Centre\)](#)

Students have the right not to disclose any personal information pertaining to any mental health, physical, or environmental disabilities, challenges, or conditions, or other personal circumstances. However, the School and the field setting are not obligated to provide reasonable accommodation to students who do not disclose such personal information.

##### **Disclosure of Information Prior to Confirming an MSW Field Practicum**

The field setting will provide reasonable accommodation, if, prior to the MSW Field Education Coordinator confirming an MSW field practicum with the field setting:

1. the student discloses any mental health, physical, or environmental disabilities,

challenges, or conditions, or any personal circumstance which may require reasonable accommodation; and

2. that information is part of the negotiations between the School and the field setting. Field agencies are not obligated to accommodate students if such information is not disclosed prior to confirmation of an MSW field practicum.

### **Disclosure of Information During an MSW Field Practicum**

If, during the course of an MSW field practicum, there arise any unforeseen mental health, physical, or environmental disabilities, challenges, or conditions, or any unforeseen personal circumstance that may require reasonable accommodation, wherever possible, field settings will negotiate the provision of reasonable accommodations. These negotiations will include the student, field instructors/agency mentors, and MSW Field Education Coordinator, and may include the agency coordinator or delegate and/or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research or delegate.

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#### *Support & Coverage for MSW Students*

#### **Employee Benefits**

Participation in a field practicum does not entitle students to benefits afforded to employees of field agencies, unless otherwise agreed upon by that particular field agency (such as in the case of workplace or paid practica). Students are responsible for obtaining health and disability coverage during their field practicum, if they so desire.

#### **Expenses**

Students are responsible for personal expenses incurred in completing MSW field practica (i.e., health, criminal records, vulnerable sector, child welfare, other required checks). Field settings are responsible for expenses incurred in relation to actual field practica (i.e., office supplies, program materials, travel).

#### **Liability Insurance**

It is recommended that students consider purchasing professional liability insurance, which is available through a variety of sources. Students who are Registered Social Workers are eligible to purchase professional liability insurance through [CASW-ACTS](#).

Memorial University agrees to maintain sufficient liability insurance to indemnify and save harmless field settings from all loss, cost, expense, judgement, or damage on account of injury or damage to persons or property, including death, in any way caused by the negligence or willful act of the school, its servants, agents, students, or employees related to or arising from field practica or other matters to which the *Agency-School Affiliation Agreement* pertains, together with all legal costs and expenses incurred by field settings in defending any legal

action pertaining to the above.

Field settings agree to maintain sufficient liability insurance to indemnify and save harmless the school from all loss, cost, expense, judgement, or damage on account of injury or damage to persons or property, including death, in any way caused by the negligence or willful act of the field setting, its servants, agents, or employees related to or arising from field practica or other matters to which the *Agency-School Affiliation Agreement* pertains, together with all legal costs and expenses incurred by the School in defending any legal action pertaining to the above.

### **MSW Fellowships**

MSW Students may be eligible to receive a \$2,000 MSW Fellowship when registered in SCWK 6917. Full-time MSW students who are in receipt of other fellowships/funding from the School Graduate Studies (SGS) may not be eligible to receive this fellowship.

MSW students are required to ensure that they meet all of the following eligibility criteria prior to submitting the [MSW Fellowship Application](#):

- a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, or holding a valid Canadian study permit;
- not beyond the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 9<sup>th</sup> semester in the MSW Program, excluding leaves of absence, depending on their payment plan;
- an academic average of 75% or greater;
- not engaged in paid employment of more than 24 hours per week (excluding paid vacation time or deferred leave);
- not paid for their MSW field practicum; and
- completed and signed on IPT *MSW Intent to Register in Field Practicum* form, *MSW Field Learning Contract*, *MSW Timesheet & Field Instruction Record*, and *MSW Midterm Evaluation* (wherein they are not at risk of failing).



Further information, including application forms, are available on the [MSW Field Education website](#)

### **Sexual Harassment**

The School of Social Work promotes a healthy working and learning environment, free from sexual harassment. The School is supported in doing so by the Memorial University [Sexual Harassment Office](#) and through the [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and the [University-wide Procedures for Sexual Harassment Concerns and Complaints](#).

### **Workers' Compensation Coverage**

Students who are completing an unpaid MSW field practicum and who are:

1. participating in field practica within NL or
2. residents of NL and participating in field practica outside of NL or
3. residing in NL during the time they complete their courses and participating in field practica outside of NL

are entitled to Workers' Compensation Coverage from the Workplace Health, Safety, and Compensation Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador. MSW Students participating in unpaid MSW field practica are covered as workers of the Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, under Section 49 of the Workplace Health, Safety, and Compensation Act.

When students are completing an unpaid practicum and are:

- 1) not participating in field practica within NL or
- 2) not residents of NL or
- 3) not residing in NL during the time they complete their courses

The School is responsible for obtaining Workers' Compensation Coverage in the province in which Students complete their field practica (unless otherwise agreed upon or specified in the

field setting affiliation agreement).

When students are completing a paid MSW field practicum, the Field Setting (as the employer) is responsible for obtaining Workers' Compensation Coverage.

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Learning Contract & Evaluation of Student Learning***

The following four 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. *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning* (due at the midpoint of the practicum -after completion of approximately 250 hours);
3. *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning* (due the final week of the practicum).
4. *MSW Timesheet & Field Instruction Record* (completed weekly, due at the midpoint of practicum with the midterm evaluation and the final week of practicum with the final evaluation)

***It is important that students and field instructors (and agency mentors) read the components of the *MSW Field Education Manual* and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021) 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](#) and on the on-line learning [MSW program shell](#)**

### ***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) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021). 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 2<sup>nd</sup> week of a full-time or the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021); 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 sets 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 focused 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 Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021)
- 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 activities within practicum can be discussed with the Field Education Coordinator for suitability for field practicum.*

### **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 *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning* and *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning*. Field instructors (and agency mentors) and students are expected to collaborate in the completion of *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning* and *MSW Final Evaluation of 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 MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning:***

The *MSW Midterm Evaluation of 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 *MSW Midterm Evaluation of 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 *MSW Midterm Evaluation of 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 *MSW Midterm Evaluation of*



*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 *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning* must include a written summation of issues that need to be addressed and an action plan to address concerns. (Please refer to the *MSW Field Manual - Suspension & Termination*.)**

## **2.2 MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning:**

The *MSW Final Evaluation of 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 *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning* includes a written summation of learning objectives and activities completed, not achieved, or not fully achieved - to be completed by students. The *MSW Final Evaluation of 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 *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning*. The *MSW 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. (Please refer to the *MSW Field Manual - Suspension & Termination*)**

*Memorial University School of Social  
Work MSW Field Education Manual  
Suspension & Termination of MSW Field  
Practica*

MSW field practica may be suspended or terminated as a result of:

- labour unrest in field settings; or
- concerns raised by students, field settings, or the School of Social Work.

The rationale and process for suspending or terminating MSW field practica are outlined below.

### **Labour Unrest in Field Settings**

In the event of a strike, walkout, or lockout occurring at a field setting during MSW field practica, **under no circumstances are students permitted to cross picket lines or to perform the duties of striking workers.** Recognizing that each circumstance and solution is unique, and that different decisions may apply to each of the field practica affected, the following process will apply in the event of labour unrest in field settings.

### **Process for Responding to Labour Unrest in Field Settings**

In the event of a strike, walkout, or lockout occurring at a field setting during MSW field practica, students and field instructors (and agency mentors) are expected to consult immediately with the MSW Field Education Coordinator. Decisions about suspending or terminating MSW field practica will be made subsequent to one or more formal meetings (in person or utilizing distance technology) involving the students, field instructors (and agency mentors), and MSW Field Education Coordinator. The meeting(s) also may include the agency coordinator (or delegate) and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research (or delegate). Other persons may be invited to the meeting(s), subject to mutual agreement by the

student, field setting, and MSW Field Education Coordinator.

### **1. Suspension of MSW Field Practica**

If timing permits and all parties, including the student, field instructor (and agency mentor), field setting, and MSW Field Education Coordinator, are in agreement, those MSW field practica affected by labour unrest will be delayed or temporarily suspended. If circumstances change, the decision to delay or temporarily suspend those field practica can be renegotiated.

### **2. Termination of MSW Field Practica**

If timing does not permit or if all parties, including the student, field instructor (and agency mentor), field setting, and MSW Field Education Coordinator, are not in agreement with delaying or temporarily suspending the MSW field practica affected by labour unrest, those field practica will be terminated.

When MSW field practica are terminated, the field agency will provide a written assessment of the learning and performance of each affected student up to and including the time the MSW field practica were terminated. Students will have access to this written assessment, as per the [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(ATIPPA\)](#).

The MSW Field Education Coordinator will facilitate new matches between the affected students, new field instructors (and agency mentors), and new field agencies. The hours completed in the initial field agencies will be credited to the affected students. As such, the affected students will be obligated to complete only the remainder of the total 500 hours in the new field settings.

During negotiations with the new field instructors (and agency mentors) for new MSW field practica, the MSW Field Education Coordinator will provide any potential field settings with

information concerning the affected students' academic preparation, performance, and past field practicum experience. Students are encouraged to share with the new field instructors (and agency mentors) all relevant information pertaining to the terminated field practicum.

### **Concerns Raised by Students, Field Settings, or the School of Social Work**

Concerns, which may lead to suspension or termination of an MSW field practicum, may be raised by students, field settings, or the School of Social Work due to:

- concerns or circumstances related to students (i.e., inappropriate conduct, unacceptable performance, personal circumstances);
- concerns or circumstances related to field instruction, field instructors, or agency mentors; and/or
- concerns or circumstances related to the field setting.

While it is expected that students will never knowingly compromise the well-being of clients/participants/patients/service recipients, **field settings are the final authority on all aspects of care or intervention for clients/participants/patients/service recipients.**

The processes outlined below will be followed before any decisions are made to terminate an MSW field practicum. In exceptional circumstances, a field practicum may be suspended until a formal meeting is convened. Students who, without prior approval of the MSW Field Education Coordinator and the field setting, suspend or terminate an MSW field practicum normally will be given a grade of FAIL in SCWK 6917.

### **Process for Responding to Concerns Raised by Students, Field Settings, or the School of Social Work**

Regardless of who raises concerns, decisions about a student leaving a field setting or about suspending or terminating an MSW field practicum will be made subsequent to one or more formal meetings (in person or utilizing distance technology) involving the student, field instructor (and agency mentor), and the MSW Field Education Coordinator. The meeting(s)

also may include the agency coordinator (or delegate) and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research (or delegate). Other persons may be invited to the meeting(s), subject to mutual agreement by the student, field setting, and MSW Field Education Coordinator.

Only after concerns have been explored fully and alternative actions considered will a decision be made to terminate an MSW field practicum. When such a decision is made, the MSW Field Education Coordinator will terminate the field practicum at that field setting, and the field setting will provide a written assessment of student learning and performance up to and including the time the field practicum was terminated. The student will have access to this written assessment, as per the [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(ATIPPA\)](#).

When an MSW field practicum is terminated, those present at the meeting(s) will discuss the grading outcome for the student and may recommend that the student will:

1. receive a FAIL grade and not be permitted to continue SCWK 6917; or
2. not receive a FAIL grade and be permitted to continue SCWK 6917 in a subsequent field setting.

The final decision regarding grading outcome rests with the MSW Field Education Coordinator and is subject to appeal by the student.

### **1. FAIL Grade in SCWK 6917**

When the decision, following the termination of the MSW field practicum, is that the student will receive a FAIL grade, there will be no continuation of SCWK 6917.

### **2. Continuation of SCWK 6917 in a Subsequent Field Setting**

When the decision, following the termination of the MSW field practicum, is that the student be permitted to continue SCWK 6917 with a new field instructor (and agency mentor) in a new field setting, the MSW Field Education Coordinator will facilitate a new match between the

student, a new field instructor (and agency mentor), and new field setting. The MSW Field Education Coordinator, in consultation with the initial field instructor (and agency mentor) will decide if and how many of the hours completed in the terminated field setting will be credited toward the 500-hour field practicum. The student may be obligated to complete only the remaining hours, the full 500 hours, or a portion thereof in the subsequent field setting.

During negotiations with a new field instructor (and agency mentor) for a subsequent field practicum, the MSW Field Education Coordinator will provide any potential field settings with information concerning the student's academic preparation, performance, and past field practicum experience. Students are encouraged to share with the new field instructor (and agency mentor) all relevant information pertaining to the terminated field practicum.

***Memorial University School of Social  
Work MSW Field Education Manual  
MSW Field Instructors***

Field instructors are an integral component of professional education for social workers. As social work educators, field instructors assist students in integrating theory into practice and in developing advanced social work knowledge and skills. Being a field instructor requires passion, dedication, and commitment, plus highly developed social work values, knowledge, and skills. Field instructors are required to possess an MSW, preferably with at least two years post-MSW social work employment experience (*CASWE-ACFTS Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021)). In a number of provinces, including NL, field instructors are required by provincial legislation to be Registered Social Workers (RSW).

**Field Practica in Field Settings Lacking Access to Qualified MSW Field Instructors**

Students wishing to have a placement without an onsite field instructor will work collaboratively with the MSW Field Education Coordinator to secure a qualified field instructor and an agency mentor before the MSW field practicum can be officially confirmed. Offsite field instructors have the similar responsibilities as on-site field instructors and provide 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.

Where there are no qualified MSW field instructors available and an offsite field instructor is assigned, the field setting designates a staff member (where possible, a social worker) to act as 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.

## Roles and Responsibilities of MSW Field Instructors

**Field instructors are strongly encouraged to read all of the components of the *MSW Field Education Manual* and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021); plus review the *MSW Agency-School Affiliation Agreement*, *Information Sharing Agreement*, and the *MSW Field Practicum forms*.**

**This information is available on the [MSW Field Education website](#)**

MSW field instructors have responsibility for providing **25 hours of field instruction** (approximately one hour of field instruction for each 20 hours the student is in field). This includes assignment of learning opportunities, integration of theory and practice, supervision of students, and evaluation of student learning.

Field Instructors assume a number of roles and responsibilities in providing field instruction to MSW students, which are grounded in the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021), and the MSW curriculum. The following list of roles and responsibilities of field instructors may be individualized to fit particular field practica. MSW field instructors are expected to:

- complete and submit a [Field Instructor/Agency Mentor Information Form](#)
- log into IPT (Intern Placement Tracking), where most MSW field practicum forms can be accessed, reviewed, completed, and signed;
- orient students and provide them with all relevant field setting rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, in advance of their field experiences with clients/participants/patients/service recipients;
- provide guidance and support to students in developing their *MSW Field Learning Contract* (IPT);



- identify appropriate learning opportunities and facilitate student involvement with services and programs in the field setting;
- demonstrate selected approaches to social work practice and provide opportunities for students to observe social work practice;
- provide a minimum of 25 hours field instruction during the 500-hour MSW field practicum, including critically discussing the integration of social work values, knowledge, and skills with social work practice;
- provide regular feedback and evaluation of student performance and learning, including completing of the *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning*, the *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning* and the *MSW Timesheet and Field Instruction Record* (in IPT, collaboratively with students and agency mentors);
- complete and submit the *Field Instructor Evaluation of Field Practicum* (IPT).

## **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.

## **MSW Field Practicum Learning Opportunities**

Field instructors (and agency mentors) are responsible for assigning learning opportunities and activities to students. Typically, this occurs in collaboration with students. The assignment of learning opportunities and activities is expected to be grounded in the *MSW Field Learning Contract* and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021).

Students are assigned social work responsibilities only to the degree commensurate with the assessment, by the field instructors (and agency mentors), of the student's level of skill and ability. While students and field instructors (and agency mentors) may agree upon the assignment of responsibilities, the wishes of clients/participants/patients/service recipients are primary. Service recipients have the right to choose whether or not they receive social work services from students.

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;
- interprofessional and interagency collaboration;
- needs assessment;
- organizational development;
- policy analysis, development, implementation, and evaluation;
- prevention/intervention; and
- program development, delivery, and evaluation.

*Research activities within practicum can be discussed with the Field Education Coordinator for suitably for field practicum.*

### **MSW Field Practicum Hours**

The MSW field practicum is designed to be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. On a

full-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over one semester in 13 to 15 weeks (35 to 40 hours per week). On a part-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over two semesters in 20 to 32 weeks (minimum 16 hours per week). **The 500 hours do not include:**

- lunch, coffee, and other breaks;
- sick days, family days, bereavement leave, or other leaves of absence;
- snow days
- statutory holidays or annual leave;
- any other absences from the field practicum/field setting;
- work on other social work courses (including Pathway, Pathway scholarship, Theses, institutes, including work associated with institute)

Students are required to inform their field instructor (and agency mentor) if they will be absent at any time from the field setting. If students are absent from the field setting for four or more days, it is the students' responsibility to inform the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Students, the School of Social Work (i.e., Field Education Coordinators, offsite field instructors, Associate Deans), and field settings (i.e., field instructors, agency mentors, agency coordinators) agree to maintain confidentiality of information in accordance with social work values and the *CASW Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles* (2024), the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA), and other applicable privacy legislations. The *Agency-School Affiliation Agreement*, the *Agency-School Information Sharing Agreement*, and the *MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement* outline which information is to be kept confidential and which information can be shared between students, the School of Social Work, and field settings.

## **Honorarium**

As a token of appreciation for giving so generously of their time, energy, and wisdom to students, the School of Social Work, and the social work profession, field instructors receive a modest honorarium from Memorial University. Field instructors can expect to receive their honorarium after students complete their MSW field practicum and the following forms have been completed, signed, and submitted to the MSW Field Education Coordinator:

- ☐ [Field Instructor / Agency Mentor Information Form](#)
- ☐ *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning (IPT)*
- ☐ *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning (IPT)*
- ☐ *MSW Field Instructor Evaluation of Field Practicum (IPT)*

Once the forms are received, the MSW Field Education Coordinator will arrange for the Academic Program Assistant of Graduate Programs to process the honorarium.

## **Continuing Education for Field Instructors and Agency Mentors**

While not a requirement for providing field instruction, current and prospective field instructors and agency mentors are encouraged to complete the online Field Instructors Course and to participate in continuing education events offered by the School of Social Work and Memorial University.

Designed to provide prospective, new, and experienced field instructors and agency mentors with opportunities to advance their understanding of and increase their skills in field instruction and professional education, the online Field Instructors Course is a non-credit course, offered at no charge. The course addresses the theoretical and practical aspects of social work field instruction, and is designed to challenge participants to think critically about field instruction, adult education concepts, field education methods, field education issues and

challenges, and evaluating the field practicum experience.

Current and prospective field instructors and agency mentors are invited to contact [scwkfield@mun.ca](mailto:scwkfield@mun.ca) for more information or to register.

**Social workers may receive Continuing Education Credits for Field Instruction and for Field Instructor Courses from their provincial social work regulatory body (i.e., NLCSW).**

***Memorial University School of Social  
Work MSW Field Education Manual  
Agency Mentors***

**Field Practica in Field Settings Lacking Access to Qualified MSW Field Instructors**

Students wishing to have a placement without an onsite field instructor will work collaboratively with the MSW Field Education Coordinator to secure a qualified field education/agency mentor before the MSW field practicum can be officially confirmed.

Offsite field instructors are responsible for providing 25 hours of field instruction, including assignment of learning opportunities, integration of theory and practice, supervision of students, and evaluation of student learning.

Where there are no qualified MSW field instructors available and an offsite field instructor is assigned, the field setting designates a staff member (where possible, a social worker) to act as 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.

**Roles and Responsibilities of MSW Field Instructors**

Field Instructors assume a number of roles and responsibilities in providing field instruction to MSW students, which are grounded in the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021), the CASW *Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles* (2024), the School of Social Work [\*Vision, Mission, and Values\*](#), and the MSW curriculum.

The following list of roles and responsibilities of field instructors may be individualized to fit particular field practica. MSW agency mentors are expected to:

- complete and submit a [\*Field Instructor / Agency Mentor Information Form\*](#);
- log into IPT (Intern Placement Tracking), where most MSW field practicum forms can

be accessed, reviewed, completed, and signed;

- orient students and provide them with all relevant field setting rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, in advance of their field experiences with clients/participants/patients/service recipients;
- provide guidance and support to students in developing their *MSW Field Learning Contract* (IPT);
- identify appropriate learning opportunities and facilitate student involvement with services and programs in the field setting;
- provide regular feedback and evaluation of student performance and learning, including collaborating with offsite field instructors and students in the completion of the *MSW Midterm Evaluation of Student Learning* (IPT) and the *MSW Final Evaluation of Student Learning* (IPT).

**Agency mentors are strongly encouraged to read all of the components of the *MSW Field Education Manual* and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021); plus review the *MSW Agency-School Affiliation Agreement*, *Information Sharing Agreement*, and the *MSW Field Practicum forms*.**

**This information is available on the [MSW Field Education website](#)**

## **MSW Field Practicum Learning Opportunities**

Agency mentors, in partnership with field instructors, are responsible for assigning learning opportunities and activities to students. Typically, this occurs in collaboration with students. The assignment of learning opportunities and activities is expected to be grounded in the *MSW Field Learning Contract* (IPT) and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021).

Students are assigned social work responsibilities only to the degree commensurate with the

assessment, by the agency mentors and field instructors, of the student's level of skill and ability. While students, agency mentors, and field instructors may agree upon the assignment of responsibilities, the wishes of clients/participants/patients/service recipients are primary. Service recipients have the right to choose whether or not they receive social work services from students.

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;
- interprofessional and interagency collaboration;
- needs assessment;
- organizational development;
- policy analysis, development, implementation, and evaluation;
- prevention/intervention; and
- program development, delivery, and evaluation.

*Research activities within practicum can be discussed with the Field Education Coordinator for suitability for field practicum.*



## MSW Field Practicum Hours

The MSW field practicum is designed to be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. On a full-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over one semester in 13 to 15 weeks (35 to 40 hours per week). On a part-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over two semesters in 20 to 32 weeks (minimum 16 hours per week). **The 500 hours do not include:**

- lunch, coffee, and other breaks;
- sick days, family days, bereavement leave, or other leaves of absence;
- snow days;
- statutory holidays or annual leave;
- any other absences from the field practicum/field setting;
- work on other social work courses (including Pathway, Pathway scholarship, Theses, institutes, including work associated with institute)

Students are required to inform their agency mentor and field instructor if they will be absent at any time from the field setting. If students are absent from the field setting for four or more days, it is the students' responsibility to inform the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

## Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Students, the School of Social Work (i.e., Field Education Coordinators, offsite field instructors, Associate Deans), and field settings (i.e., field instructors, agency mentors, agency coordinators) agree to maintain confidentiality of information in accordance with social work values and the *CASW Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles (2024)*, the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ATIPPA)*, and other applicable privacy legislations. The *Agency-School Affiliation Agreement*, the *Agency-School Information Sharing Agreement*, and the *MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement* outline which information is to be kept confidential and which information can be shared between students, the School of Social Work, and field settings.

### **Continuing Education for Field Instructors and Agency Mentors**

While not a requirement for providing field instruction, current and prospective field instructors and agency mentors are encouraged to complete the online Field Instructors Course and to participate in continuing education events offered by the School of Social Work and Memorial University.

Designed to provide prospective, new, and experienced field instructors and agency mentors with opportunities to advance their understanding of and increase their skills in field instruction and professional education, the online Field Instructors Course is a non-credit course, offered at no charge to social workers and agency personnel interested in field education. The course addresses the theoretical and practical aspects of social work field instruction, and is designed to challenge participants to think critically about field instruction, adult education concepts, field education methods, field education issues and challenges, and evaluating the field practicum experience.

Current and prospective field instructors and agency mentors are invited to contact [scwkfield@mun.ca](mailto:scwkfield@mun.ca) for more information or to register.

**Social workers may receive Continuing Education Credits for Field Instruction and for Field Instructor Courses from their provincial social work regulatory body (i.e., NLCSW).**

***Memorial University School of Social  
Work MSW Field Education Manual  
Field Settings & Agency Coordinators***

## **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.

The MSW Field Education Coordinator facilitates appropriate matches between students, field instructors (and agency mentors), and field settings. The MSW Field Education Coordinator also is responsible for negotiating with field settings the number of students participating in field practica, and the expected dates for commencing and completing MSW field practica.

**Field settings have the sole authority and discretion to determine the number of students accepted for field practica and which students they accept.**

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Field Settings**

The following is a list of field settings roles and responsibilities:

- designate an agency coordinator;
- sign and submit the *Agency-School Affiliation Agreement* and the *Agency-School Information Sharing Agreement*;
- provide support to students and field instructors (and agency mentors) in accordance

with the *MSW Field Education Manual* and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education* (2021).

- make reasonable accommodations when students disclose, prior to confirming an MSW field practicum, any particular mental health, physical, or environmental disabilities, challenges, or conditions, or personal circumstances requiring accommodation during field practica; and
- negotiate reasonable accommodations when students disclose, during an MSW field practicum, any unforeseen mental health, physical, or environmental disabilities, challenges, or conditions, or personal circumstances that arise during MSW field practicum.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Students, the School of Social Work (i.e., Field Education Coordinators, offsite field instructors, Associate Deans), and field settings (i.e., field instructors, agency mentors, agency coordinators) agree to maintain confidentiality of information in accordance with social work values and the *CASW Code of Ethics, Values and Guiding Principles* (2024), the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ATIPPA)*, and other applicable privacy legislations. The *Agency-School Affiliation Agreement*, the *Agency-School Information Sharing Agreement*, and the *MSW Student-School Field Practicum Agreement* outline which information is to be kept confidential and which information can be shared between students, the School of Social Work, and field settings.

## Agency Coordinators

Field settings are required to designate an employee, who may or may not be a social worker, as agency coordinator. In larger organizations, agency coordinators normally are social work professional practice coordinators, educational coordinators, senior managers or directors, or senior social workers. In smaller agencies, agency coordinators normally are agency directors, program coordinators, or senior social workers. Responsibility for the assignment of an agency coordinators rests entirely with agencies/organizations.

**Agency coordinators are strongly encouraged to read all of the components of the *MSW Field Education Manual* and the (CASWE-ACFTS) *Education Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education (2021)*; plus review the *MSW Agency-School Affiliation Agreement, Information Sharing Agreement*, and the *MSW Field Practicum forms*.**

**This information is available on the [MSW Field Education website](#)**

Agency coordinators are the primary contact persons for agencies/organizations with the School of Social Work (normally the MSW Field Education Coordinator) for matters pertaining to field education. As such, agency coordinators receive all general correspondence from the School of Social Work concerning field education, and normally complete any field setting agreements with the School of Social Work. If challenges arise during MSW field practica or with field education in general, agency coordinators or their designates may participate, on behalf of their field setting, in any discussions or meetings. Normally, agency coordinators are not expected to be involved directly in the day-to-day supervision of individual MSW field practica. All correspondence concerning any particular MSW field practicum is directed to the designated field instructor (and agency mentor).

## Field Practica in Field Settings Lacking Access to Qualified MSW Field Instructors

When the decision is made by the MSW Field Education Coordinator to place students in

a field setting where there are no available qualified MSW field instructors, the MSW Field Education Coordinator, student, and potentially the agency will, work collaboratively to secure a qualified social worker to provide offsite field instruction. Offsite field instructors are responsible for providing 25 hours of field instruction, including assignment of learning opportunities, integration of theory and practice, supervision of students, and evaluation of student learning.

Where there are no qualified MSW field instructors available and an offsite field instructor has been 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.

### **MSW Field Practicum Hours**

The MSW field practicum is designed to be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. On a full-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over one semester in 13 to 15 weeks (35 to 40 hours per week). On a part-time basis, the 500 hours normally are completed over two semesters in 20 to 32 weeks (minimum 16 hours per week). **The 500 hours do not include:**

- lunch, coffee, and other breaks;
- sick days, family days, and bereavement leave;
- snow days;
- statutory holidays or annual leave;
- any other absences from the field practicum/field setting;
- work on other SCWK courses, including Pathway, Pathway Scholarship, Theses, institutes, or any course work associated with institutes.

Students are required to inform their field instructor (and agency mentor) if they will be absent at any time from the field setting. If students are absent from the field setting for four or more days, it is the students' responsibility to inform the MSW Field Education Coordinator.

## **MSW Field Practicum Learning Opportunities**

Field instructors (and agency mentors) are responsible for assigning learning opportunities and activities to students. Typically, this occurs in collaboration with students. The assignment of learning opportunities and activities is expected to be grounded in the *MSW Field Learning Contract* and the *CASWE-ACFTS core learning objectives* (2021)

Students are assigned social work responsibilities only to the degree commensurate with the assessment, by the field instructors (and agency mentors), of the student's level of skill and ability. While students and field instructors (and agency mentors) may agree upon the assignment of responsibilities, the wishes of clients/participants/patients/service recipients are primary. Service recipients have the right to choose whether or not they receive social work services from students.

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;
- interprofessional and interagency collaboration;
- needs assessment;
- organizational development;
- policy analysis, development, implementation, and evaluation;

- prevention/intervention; and
- program development, delivery, and evaluation.

*Research activities within practicum can be discussed with the Field Education Coordinator for suitability for field practicum.*