



**FORT VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY**  
EMPOWER *the* POSSIBLE.

**Social Work Program**

**Field Placement Manual**

**2024-2025**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Fort Valley State University is to advance the cause of education with an emphasis on fulfilling commitments that our community members have undertaken collectively. As an institution of the University System of Georgia, Fort Valley State University naturally embraces the principles articulated by the Core Mission Statement for State Universities as approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The university's primary commitments include, among others, the enhancement of teacher training programs grounded upon a liberal arts foundation, as reflective of over 110 years of experience and tradition. Additionally, the university recognizes with great pride and desires to further its responsibilities as Georgia's only 1890 Land Grant institution by offering programming excellence in agriculture, agribusiness, family and consumer sciences, extension, technology, and military science and leadership, as well as to further its traditions of excellence in programs in the liberal arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural and physical sciences.

The university's primary commitments extend, as well, to:

- Community outreach through the concept of the communiversity, an approach that highlights the interdependence of community and university.
- Expanding service beyond the campus, as well as within, so that the institution addresses in a meaningful manner the broad diversity—human and technical—of needs in our home region and state as well as nationally and internationally.
- Sparking within our students an enduring interest in learning and providing the tools and skills necessary to maintain that interest through life.
- Preparing students through a mentoring approach for the opportunity to serve their fellow man while enjoying the opportunity provided by hard work and achievement to live the quality of life inherent in the American dream.
- Encouraging and supporting creative expression, innovation, honesty, and integrity as endeavors of lasting and intrinsic merit.
- Providing a productive environment for cutting-edge academic and practical research in, among other fields, agriculture, aquaculture, animal science, biotechnology, energy, environment, social and behavioral sciences, and the humanities; and
- Otherwise acting to enlighten, enrich, and inspire by example those whom we serve.

### **Department of Behavioral & Social Science**

The Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences is committed to Fort Valley State University's mission. It offers undergraduate majors in Social Work, Psychology, Criminal

Justice, and Political Science, as well as minors in Social Work, Criminal Justice, and Gerontology. Additionally, the Department offers a graduate degree in Social Work.

### **Social Work Program Mission Statement**

According to the Council on Social Work Education, the purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. We are guided by a person-in-environment construct, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry; social work's purpose is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons.

Social work educators serve the profession through teaching, scholarship, and service. Their education—at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels—shapes the profession's future by educating competent professionals, generating knowledge, and exercising leadership within the professional community.

**Mission Statement:** FVSU's Social Work Program aims to produce competent social workers educated in the generalist model who demonstrate a heightened sense of social consciousness to be creative, responsible social work professionals committed to the search for solutions to various societal problems. These students, upon graduation, will be prepared to search for solutions to different social issues, focusing on children, families, and communities from various backgrounds. These graduates will promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients (individuals, families, organizations, groups, or communities) locally, nationally, and globally.

The program seeks to educate students who demonstrate a heightened sense of social consciousness to be creative, responsible social work professionals committed to the search for solutions to various societal problems. The emphasis is to prepare graduates to search for solutions focusing on children, families, and communities. The program is committed to the profession's core values, including the promotion of social justice, a responsibility to serve oppressed, at-risk members of society, and the responsible application of professional values and ethics in practice. A liberal arts foundation provides the base upon which the professional self is shaped.

## Introduction

The Fort Valley State University Department of Behavioral and Social Science faculty would like to welcome you to the Social Work Program. We appreciate your decision to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Social Work.

We anticipate great things from you and are committed to ensuring you receive a quality education. We will guide you through the next few years and provide you with the skills and knowledge needed to challenge the demands of this profession while continuing to advocate for the populations we serve.

As you begin to navigate the social work curriculum, it is important to remember that you have a responsibility to seek additional resources to continue to increase your knowledge base. It is also essential for you to understand the demands of this profession in terms of practicing and adhering to the Social Work Code of Ethics.

You will be expected to demonstrate sensitivity and compassion for oppressed populations, including women, ethnic and racial minorities, persons of different sexual orientations, and other culturally diverse populations, through advocacy work, community involvement, and keeping abreast of local, national, and international events that impact our profession and affect us as humans.

You will find a diverse faculty with many combined years of practice experience and educational expertise in such areas as Clinical Social Work, Social Policy, Research, Community Organization and Social Administration, International Social Work, Substance Abuse, and Child Welfare, who will assist you in your pursuit of academic excellence and social responsibility.

We realize that the path to obtaining a degree is full of challenges, many of which are painful. However, it also has indescribable benefits, such as increased self-awareness, personal direction, knowledge, and enduring friendships.

The Field Education Office oversees the field practicum component of the social work curriculum. Field education begins in theory before the field experience. It starts during the foundation year, when students develop their theoretical understanding of social work practice and gain a better perspective on the social context of various populations locally, nationally, and internationally. The field education program allows students to apply this new knowledge in practice under the supervision of a trained social worker.

The Field Manual represents collaboration between social work faculty, social work students, and the field community to ensure a successful field education program. The Field Manual describes field education in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program. It was developed to enhance the field learning experience and provide students and field instructors' guidelines for the Office of Field Education's policies and procedures. The Field Manual should enhance the learning experience and support students and field instructors throughout the field practicum. Please note that the Field Manual is reviewed annually, and the field policies, procedures, and guidelines may be subject to change without advance notice.

## Faculty Members

Dr. Paul Jones, President

Dr. Olufunke Fontenot, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Nasser Momayezi, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Jerry Haywood, Department Chair, Behavioral & Social Sciences

### Social Work Program Faculty

Faculty & Staff	Office	Telephone	Email
Kay L. Gresham, PhD, LCSW  BSW Program Coordinator	129	478-825-6635	<a href="mailto:kay.gresham@fvsu.edu">kay.gresham@fvsu.edu</a>
D'Netra Young- Lawal, LCSW  Director of Field Education	141	478-822-7117	<a href="mailto:dnetra.young-lawal@fvsu.edu">dnetra.young-lawal@fvsu.edu</a>
Deja Thomas, MSW  Title 4-E Coordinator	140	478-827-3679	<a href="mailto:deja.thomas@fvsu.edu">deja.thomas@fvsu.edu</a>
Harvey Beasley, EdD, MSW  Lecturer	137	478-827-3935	<a href="mailto:harvey.beasley@fvsu.edu">harvey.beasley@fvsu.edu</a>

## Field Education Acknowledgements

Students from all walks of life come to the university to study under reputable faculty who have obtained recognition for demonstrated expertise in their respective fields. In Social Work, students request placements in human services settings because of the reputations of those settings linked to quality professionals, services, and programs. The agency-based, trained social worker is the most crucial individual serving as a guide and role model for the developing professional.

There is no substitute for the field instructor, who can convey knowledge, values, and skills through personal contact, interest, feedback, and example. This Field Practicum Manual is an aid in structuring the field practicum. It is a product of previous manuals that were revised and used to strengthen this document. Similar documents from other schools and social work programs provided choices in selecting and presenting the material. New contributions from faculty brought the document in line with recent changes in the social work curricula.

The faculty in the Social Work Program at Fort Valley State University recognizes the contributions of students, field instructors, and the community advisory council in linking us all to a common purpose of professional development for social work.

## **BSW Program Overview**

### **CSWE Accreditation**

The Bachelor of Social Work Program is pursuing accreditation with the Council on Social Work Education. The program serves all students regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture. It elevates the social, cultural, and economic conditions of all people, especially those from historically oppressed populations and geographical regions.

### **Underlying Assumptions**

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program at Fort Valley State University views social work practice within a systems framework, incorporating social work knowledge and values with direct and indirect service skills working with individuals, small groups, families, communities, and institutions. Emphasis is placed upon entities' interrelatedness and transactions within diverse systems. Presenting the breadth of social work exposes students to the range of skills and the varying roles social workers take in serving diverse groups. The social environment is the context within which systems are assessed and interventions take problem-solving approaches.

The BSW degree is the first level of professional education required to enter the profession. BSW students attain a beginning level of generalist practice proficiency, which enables them, with instruction, to provide direct services to clients, including organizing and providing resources on their behalf.

### **General Education Core**

The BSW program consists of two components: The General Education Core, scheduled in the first and second years, and the Social Work Core (professional major), planned in the junior and senior years. The BSW Program objectives are as follows:

- To prepare students for entry-level professional social work practice with individuals, small groups, families, communities, and institutions.
- To prepare students for graduate study in social work and related fields.
- To prepare students for employment in private, local, state, federal, and human service agencies.
- To provide an organized structure for students and faculty to serve the community.

### **BSW Curriculum Description**



The liberal arts perspective provides the foundation for the General Education Core and the Social Work Core prescribed and approved by the University Systems of Georgia Board of Regents and the Council on Social Work Education. Students are required to complete 125 semester credit hours to obtain an undergraduate degree.

The General Education Core consists of 63 semester credit hours in Areas A, B, C, D, E, and F in Liberal Arts, Political Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Natural Sciences and Math. Area F represents 18 hours of courses deemed appropriate to the program of study as specified by the major.

The Social Work Core consists of 60 semester credit hours, which includes:

- 24 hours of major course requirements
- 15 hours of field preparation
- 6 hours of restricted electives
- 15 hours of free electives.

### **Admission Procedure for BSW Field Practicum**

Admission to the BSW Field Education Program is a three-tier process. Students must first be admitted to the University, then the Social Work Program, and finally the Field Education program. Admission to the Field Education program is contingent upon the following criteria:

1) Completion of all foundation courses:

- SOWK 2001
- SOWK 2002
- SOWK 3001
- SOWK 3002
- SOWK 3007
- SOWK 3011
- SOWK 3012
- SOWK 4110

2) Earned a minimum GPA of 2.25 in the social work program after formal admission.

3) Adherence to the Standards for Social Work Education as adopted by the Social Work Program and NASW Code of Ethics

4) Proof of Liability Insurance

5) Mandatory attendance to BSW Student Field Orientation

6) Recommendation from the BSW Program Coordinator (readiness based on the course completion standards)

### **Maintaining Academic Excellence**

Students admitted to the BSW program must maintain an overall GPA of 2.25 (C+) in all their social work program courses after formal admission to the Social Work Program. It is important to note that admission to the BSW program is not an entitlement to a BSW degree. All students must meet the standards set forth by Fort Valley State University (SSU), the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the BSW program, and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.

## Field Education Overview

Field Education is critical to social work education in all Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited programs. It consists of practice courses and field practicum, which require students to commit 20 hours per week for a full academic year in an approved social service agency. BSW students must complete two (2) semesters of Field practicum as a requirement for the BSW degree.

### Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

Field education is an integral component of social work education anchored in the program's mission, goals, and educational level. It occurs in settings that reinforce students' identification with the profession's purposes, values, and ethics, foster the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge, and promote the development of professional competence. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program objectives.

(Education Policy 4.7 & 5)

The Accreditation Standards 2.0 Curriculum guides field Education:

- AS 2.1.1 Provides a minimum of 400 hours of field education for the BSW Program
- AS 2.1.2 Admits only those students who have met the specified criteria for field education.
- AS 2.1.5 Provides orientation, field instruction training, and continuing dialogue with agencies and field instructors.

### Field Practicum

Field Practicum refers to that portion of the student's educational program in a human service setting under the instruction of an approved and experienced social worker. The practitioner's activity is directed to a purpose guided by values, knowledge, and interventive approaches, which are collectively unique, acknowledged by, and identified with the social work profession. The faculty approves practice objectives and outcomes with requirements for determining the level of practice, which is considered essential for satisfactory performance as determined by faculty.

Further, students are expected to engage in actual practice, the field instructors will have social work degrees and practice experience, and the primary intent of the practicum experience will be students' learning, which will enhance their proficiency as social workers.

The field practicum courses are required courses in the social work curricula. Without exception, all students must take the field practicum courses listed in their respective degree program requirements. No academic credit is given for life experience and previous work experience, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or the courses in the professional foundation areas specified in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards of the Council on Social Work Education (2004).

### **BSW Generalist Foundation**

The BSW Field practicum prepares students to be generalist social work practitioners. Generalist social work practitioners work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations in various social work and host settings. Generalist practitioners view clients and client systems from a strengths perspective to recognize, support, and build upon the innate capabilities of all human beings. They use a professional problem-solving process to engage, assess, broker services, advocate, counsel, educate, and organize with and on behalf of client and client systems. In addition, generalist practitioners engage in community and organizational development. Finally, generalist practitioners evaluate service outcomes to continually improve the provision and quality of services most appropriate to client needs.

\*The NASW Code of Ethics guides generalist social work practice. It is committed to improving the well-being of individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations and furthering the goals of social justice (BPD, 2006).

### **BSW Field Practicum Framework**

The framework for the BSW field practicum, offered in the senior year, is based upon several educational assumptions:

- The student will engage in general practice at the undergraduate level.
- The field instructors will have undergraduate and/or graduate degrees and practice experience in social work.
- The field instructor's activity is purposeful and guided by the values, knowledge, and skills acknowledged by and associated with the social work profession.
- The practicum learning will be of such high quality that it enhances students' proficiency as social workers.
- The practicum should be integrated with classroom instruction's knowledge, values, and theory content.

- Within the foundation curriculum content, a senior seminar serving as the capstone course can best achieve this integration.

### **Field Practicum Preparation**

- Considering that the student will start their practicum the following semester, the following steps must be taken before the mid-term. **This is a graded assignment for the current semester. Each student is expected to research from the approved list of field placement settings.** Students are expected to start their internship work on the first day of the upcoming semester. Failure to complete this preparation work during the current semester will hinder or even postpone the internship placement until another semester, and/or it could cause you to receive a failing grade for SOWK 4399. The student must also stay in constant contact with all parties and ask relevant questions. Please do not take it upon yourself to coordinate your placement by yourself. This is a team effort; therefore, all parties must be involved and provide input and feedback concerning this critical stage in your education.
- 1. Discuss your placement interest with the BSW Field Director.
- 2. Obtain all relevant documents from both directors pertaining to your placement setting.
- 3. Obtain student liability insurance.
- 4. Research your choices and select the option.
- 5. Have all parties sign the placement forms and return the forms to the BSW Field Director by the end of the mid-term date for the semester.
- 6. Be prepared to start the internship on the first day of the designated semester.
- 7. Check in with the BSW Field Director by phone or email for notification that you have started your work.

### **BSW Field Practicum Course Description**

- The undergraduate program's field component includes field seminars and a field practicum (SOWK 4401 and SOWK 4402).
- In the senior year, students must complete a 400-clock-hour field practicum over two consecutive semesters. Students are placed in human service settings under the instruction of approved social work professionals. Typically, students complete 16 to 20 clock hours a week for 200 each semester. A practicum is a course guided by a syllabus with goals, objectives, and outcomes. Students are evaluated on their performance in the field, and a grade is assigned. The seminar and practicum have a single instructor responsible for monitoring the student's performance in the field. The instructor and seminar provide support to the student in the resolution of practicum-related problems and issues. Each student has the opportunity to evaluate the

practicum experience. This information is helpful in future planning. Practicum is an essential part of social work education.

- We recognize that the concurrent schedule may be very demanding as students attempt to manage field hours/assignments, other course work, and personal responsibilities; however, field practicum is a course, and as such, students are expected to attend this course and complete all the requirements for the course. Poor performance in the Field Seminar will automatically be assessed in the Field Practicum. A failing grade in the field seminar will result in a failing grade in the Field Practicum and vice versa, with no exceptions. Students who fail field practicum in their second attempt will be dismissed from the social work program. Field Hours may not be used to complete assignments for other classes unless the Office of Field Education has approved such assignments. Students who violate this rule must complete additional field hours to the satisfaction of the BSW Director of Field Education. In severe cases, they may be removed from field practicum or earn a failing grade.
- The field preparation seminar (SOWK 4399) is required for SOWK 4401 and SOWK 4402. The seminar provides a forum that assists practicum students in integrating classroom learning with field practicum. Emphasis is placed upon providing opportunities for understanding the breadth and diversity of human service organizations, populations served, and social workers' varying roles and functions. The social systems perspective offers the framework for studying the field setting as an organization, which is part of the larger professional social work community. There is an examination of professional issues and current social conditions. The seminar serves as a safe arena for students to hone their presentation, writing, and analytical skills while receiving supportive feedback from the group.
- Every week, students participate in a field practicum seminar—discussions center on social work values and ethics, issues of diversity, and professional Social Work characteristics. For generalist students, emphasis is placed on providing opportunities to understand the breadth and diversity of human service organizations, the populations served, and the varying roles and functions performed by social workers. The seminar serves as a safe arena for students to hone their presentation, writing, and analytical skills while receiving supportive feedback from the group.

### **SOWK 4401 (Social Work Practicum I) and SOWK 4402 (Social Work Practicum II)**

- A one-year placement in an approved human service setting is a requirement for all students completing their senior year in the BSW program. Field practicum allows students to provide direct and indirect services to populations served by human service organizations. Entry into field practicum is contingent upon admission to the

BSW program, completion of the BSW junior year, and permission from the BSW Field Director. The BSW practicum is based on generic foundation content and is oriented toward generalist social work practice. The focus is on social work practice with interrelated and interdependent human systems: individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As part of the curriculum design, the knowledge, values, and skills gained and developed in the first two semesters of the BSW program are applied, elaborated, and tested in the field practicum.

## **BSW Field Practicum Course Offering Outline Summary**

### **Senior Year**

- **Courses:** Field Practicum I & II (SOWK 4401 and 4402)
- **Semester:** 2 consecutive semesters (concurrent) (Typically Fall and Spring Semesters)
- **Credits:** 6 credit hours per semester. Total 12 credit hours
- **Hours:** 20 hours per week for 15 weeks per semester, Total of 400 hours (Practicum schedule arranged with field instructor)
- Minimum 4 hours per day.
- **Field Liaison:** Faculty assigned and/or BSW Director of Field Education

## **BSW Student Learning Experience**

The course syllabus is the primary document determining the goals and objectives for the field practicum course. The Student Placement Plan is a tool designed to facilitate identifying individual goals and objectives for the practicum and a mutually agreed-upon working plan for accomplishing them. Considering student diversity in life experience, previous work/volunteer experience, maturity, and performance, the field instructor is expected to assign appropriate learning experiences with increasing complexity and responsibility through educational assessment.

### **Generalist Foundation**

#### **Suggested Direct Service-Learning Experiences**

(Knowledge, values, and skills related to client engagement, assessment, goal setting, and intervention – problem-solving process)

1. Individual (Responsibility for and on-going contact with clients)
2. Group (Co-facilitator/facilitator & planner for at least one group/class)
3. Family (Responsibility for and on-going contact with at least one family)
4. Community contacts and outreach (Home visits, agency/court contacts, etc.)
5. Crisis and brief contacts, including telephone interviewing.
6. Engagement of clients in informal settings
7. Information and referral responsibilities; Intake

#### **Suggested Indirect Service-Learning Experiences**

(Knowledge, values, and skills related to research, policy, evaluation, and administrative tasks)

1. Formal orientation, including responsibilities of staff.
2. Attendance of at least two high-level policy-making meetings.
3. Attendance at departmental or program-level meetings



4. Exposure to community resources and human-service network
5. Writing, including weekly interview recordings, process notes, and social histories.
6. Technology opportunities include computer skills, audio, and videotaping.
7. Speaking engagements on behalf of setting
8. Data collection, analysis, and interpretation for research or grant writing
9. Special projects (a fair; brochure; survey or grant; annotated bibliography)
10. Staff development opportunities as participant and presenter

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Director of Field Education**

The Director of Field Education directs and coordinates the program and serves as the BSW Director of Field Education. The Director provides administrative support and consultation for practicum-related issues to all Social Work Program faculty and collaborates with the Title IV E Coordinator and the Field Liaisons (when available).

The Director of Field Education provides administrative support and consultation to all department faculty regarding practicum issues. Faculty involvement is essential to evaluating the content of practicum courses.

The Director of Field Education develops and maintains essential links for the department within the University and the broader human services community. Beyond the field practicum arena, these linkages have the potential to identify and develop community service, research, training/teaching, and funding opportunities for students, faculty, and agency personnel. The exchange of information is a significant function of the Director of Field Education and lends itself to the ongoing process of developing avenues for renewal. As an advocate for BSW students and the department in general, the Director of Field Education maintains frequent and regular contact with the community to ensure that the preparation of students is relevant to the training needs of the human service agencies that Fort Valley State University social work students are competitive in the job market and graduate school; and that students and faculty are aware of opportunities to participate in community activities and events. The Director of Field Education is often the agency's first link to the department and the university.

The Director of Field Education for the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program has administrative responsibility for field practicum in support of the BSW program, objectives, and assumptions; the Director of Field Education's area of responsibility includes planning and monitoring how field practicum settings and field instructors are selected; the assignment of students to field settings; and the monitoring and evaluation of student performance. The dual functions of administration and teaching are essential to maintaining a quality program relevant to the changing needs of students, human service organizations, and the populations served and increasing the development of the professional knowledge base.

## **Faculty Field Liaison**

The Director of Field Education and the faculty share responsibility for monitoring the field practicum. Faculty members serve as liaisons for general practice. The liaison can meet with students individually and in groups to share experiences. Faculty members assign students to work in the field. In addition to the expected liaison agency visits, they are encouraged to invite field instructors to class. The faculty's involvement is crucial to integrating class and field.

Field Liaisons must have one contact with the agency-based field instructor and student each placement semester. Additional contacts are made as needed for assessment, evaluation, and problem-solving. The faculty liaison seeks to involve the student and the field instructor in all aspects of the practicum experience.

### **Functions of the Faculty Field Liaison**

1. Serves as the instructor for the practicum course (if assigned a practicum course).
2. Monitors the performance in the practicum.
3. In cooperation with the Director of Field Education, contribute to the field practicum program's planning, development, and design.
4. Works with field instructors to implement course objectives by developing appropriate learning experiences.
5. Identifies problems and issues related to concurrence between classroom and field practicum content.
6. Provides feedback to the faculty relative to the validity of curriculum assumptions in practice.
7. Identifies core concepts adopted by the Department to be taught in field practicum.
8. Participates in developing and using learning opportunities in field practicum.
9. Assure them that the evaluation for each student has been received and submitted to the Director of Field Education in a timely fashion.
10. Serves as a consultant in the resolution of field practicum issues.

11. Serves as co-instructor when the field instructor needs additional educational support or in the absence of a trained social worker.

### **Assignment of Field Liaisons**

The Director of Field Education will assign students to faculty field liaisons. The expressed interest, teaching, and personal expertise of faculty and the effectiveness of existing relationships with agencies may be used to assign faculty/field liaisons to students. All faculty have field liaison responsibilities; however, the Director of Field Education will teach the field practicum courses for BSW students.

### **Responsibilities of Practicum Intern Students**

Students are expected to comply with the policies of Fort Valley State University and the field practicum setting. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Following all pre-placement instructions in a timely fashion for completion of the pre-placement interview and confirmation of the placement.
2. Complying with expectations of the Department for meeting requirements for NASW membership and professional liability insurance.
3. Adhering to the Social Work Code of Ethics and carrying oneself in a manner consistent with the moral/ethical standards of the Code.
4. Clarifying agency expectations related to dress code, absence reporting, car use for agency business, health requirements, practicum expenses, confidentiality, etc.
5. Assuming responsibility for completing the required hours of the practicum.
6. Notify the field instructor of all absences and arrange to make up the time to the satisfaction of the field instructor and the Director of Field Education.
7. Advocating for self in pursuit of learning, including preparation for conferences with the field instructor and participating in preparing the Student Placement Plan.
8. Assuming responsibility for making the field instructor and the Director of Field Education aware of potential difficulties and changes in planning related to the practicum.
9. Using the field instructor as a base for channeling contact with others.

10. Maintaining confidentiality regarding agency records, materials, and clientele.
11. Engaging in appropriate termination activities with clients and setting the practicum at any point ends.
12. Maintaining at minimum a four (4) hour schedule at their field placement

To be admitted to the Field Education Program, students must comply with all requirements and deadlines for field practicum placement.

## **SELECTION OF THE FIELD INSTRUCTOR**

### **Criteria for Selection of Field Instructors**

**The Director of Field Education uses the following criteria in the evaluation of potential instructors:**

1. Social work students are expected to be instructed by trained social workers who have earned their degrees from CSWE–accredited social work programs. The minimum degree for BSW students is the BSW, and the minimum for MSW students is the MSW.
2. Two years post-degree experience in the social work field is the minimum requirement for field instructors.
3. Sufficient experience within the setting to permit familiarity with agency programs and learning opportunities available for students.
4. Interests in and ability to teach, communicate knowledge, and stimulate student self-development and an appreciation for unique individual development.
5. A clear orientation towards learning should supersede focus on task performance.
6. Sound knowledge of at least one area of practice and the community social welfare structure.
7. Understanding, acceptance, and willingness to implement the department's philosophy and objectives and assumptions of responsibility for contributing ideas and thinking that strengthen the educational experience in the classroom and field.
8. Sufficient time allocation by the setting, as well as management of time by the individual to carry out instructional responsibilities, including availability and accessibility to students,

regularly planned conferences with students, written evaluative summaries of student performance, and meetings with the faculty liaison.

9. Professional identification through organizational affiliation.
10. Sound knowledge of current trends in social work and social welfare.
11. Participation in the Social Work Program's field instructor orientation

### **Functions of the Field Instructor**

1. Explicates the field practicum objectives of the Social Work Program.
2. The student is assisted in designing, negotiating, and implementing an appropriate range of learning experiences consistent with the department's expectations, individual interests and needs, and the agency's expectations.
3. Familiarize students with the resources within the agency and the extensive social welfare system.
4. Meets with the student for weekly, planned conferences to engage in continuing mutual educational assessment.
5. Submits a written plan of educational goals for the student's practicum to the faculty liaison.
6. Submit appropriate, well-documented grades to the faculty liaison before the deadline for each semester of practicum.
7. Communicate continuously with the faculty liaison regarding the student's performance and related issues.
8. Develop a relationship with the student that will encourage a climate of reciprocal learning.
9. Encourages maximum student activity and creativity within educationally sound limits.
10. Acts as a primary role model of the professional practitioner.

Note: In situations where a student may be working with more than one agency professional, only one individual is expected to assume the field instructor role. The field

instructor is responsible for approving and coordinating the learning experiences and monitoring and evaluating the student's performance. In the absence of a Field Instructor on-site, the identified Task supervisor/Preceptor is expected to give regular feedback to the field instructor on the student's performance. Extra care must be taken to ensure open communication between all parties.

### **Task Supervisor/ Preceptor**

Task Supervisors are agency personnel qualified to assume responsibility for the day-to-day direction and supervision of students only when no Field Instructor is on-site to perform these duties. This individual would consult with the assigned Field Instructor to identify learning experiences. The individual may or may not hold a BSW or MSW degree. If the individual does not have an MSW degree, they will work closely with the assigned Field Instructor.

\* These individuals hold a professional position in the agency, can monitor the learning experiences of social work students, and can provide appropriate feedback.

## **Field Placement Process**

The Office of Field Education works collaboratively with students to identify a potential field placement site. In making our final decision, we consider the following:

- **The student's preference**
- **The perceived educational needs of the student**
- **Identified learning style.**
- **Availability of the desired placement**
- **Agreement by the Field Instructor/Agency**

The Office of Field Education makes the final decision in all placement matters. The Director of Field Education is responsible for student-agency matches consistent with the guidelines as determined by faculty. Each placement requires a formal referral and approval by the coordinator. Students must follow through on the placement process and meet the deadlines necessary to be allowed admission to the field practicum. Under no circumstances is a student permitted to make arrangements for their placement. Any suggestions for future placement opportunities can be made to the Field Education Program for eligibility.

**The Director of Field Education makes the final decision on all field placements.**

### **BSW Field Orientation**

All students planning to enter field practicum in the fall of their senior year must attend the BSW Student Field Orientation in the SOWK 4399 class. This orientation aims to familiarize students with the field placement process. During this orientation, students receive their field orientation packets. Several guests discuss the different aspects of the field experience, and students can express their concerns and clarify their understanding of the field process.

### **Agency Requests for Practicum Students**

During the spring semester, the agencies are surveyed to determine specific student requests for the approaching academic year. The responses provide current information on the number of students requested and the program/personnel changes impacting the practicum experience. This is also an opportunity to bring any relevant issues or concerns to the attention of the practicum coordinator.

### **Student Requests for Placement**



All placement requests must be processed through the Director of Field Education. A formal referral is required. Only those requests approved by the Director of Field Education will be confirmed. The Field Placement Questionnaire is distributed to the appropriate students the semester before the anticipated placement. This document requests specific information on the student's employment/volunteer experience, previous practicum experience, the kinds of learning experiences requested, and the unique needs or requests.

For BSW students, a copy of the student's most recent course grid should be attached to the questionnaire to aid in determining readiness for the field. Faculty and/or the Director of Field Education may suggest potential practicum settings for consideration in the student-agency match. Students are helped to make informed decisions regarding practicum requests by focusing on their educational goals and objectives. Each student receives a copy of the course syllabus and the field manual.

### **Placement Decision**

The Director of Field Education makes the placement decision. It reflects student input from the questionnaire, Department expectations for students by rank, and the availability of resources approved as field settings. Each request is given full consideration, particularly for public transportation needs, physical access, out-of-town placement requests, stipend opportunities, the work-site option, etc. Every attempt is made to accommodate student interests within the department's guidelines.

### **Announcements of Placements**

A confirmation email will be sent to the agency contact person and the BSW student. The agency contact person will also receive a placement approval notification via email, identifying the student referred to their agency for practicum placement. Once the placement is confirmed, the field instructor should complete the necessary documentation and return it to the BSW Director of Field Education. Additionally, a copy of the first page of the field questionnaire will be included to provide the field instructor with general background information about the student.

BSW students will receive an email from the Director of Field Education with a placement approval notification. This notification details their assigned field practicum site and includes essential contact information, allowing students to initiate the pre-placement process. Once the placement is confirmed, the student will complete any additional required documentation and return it to the Director of Field Education.

### **Pre-Placement Interviews**

You'll need to have a pre-placement interview to confirm the placement. The student is responsible for scheduling the interview with the agency contact person. Depending on the agency's size, more than one interview may be necessary. The student is expected to have the opportunity to interview with the field instructor before accepting placement. Students must participate actively in the interview to ensure appropriate placement matches. Students may be invited to observe agency activities before acceptance. The agency or student may seek a second interview for clarification.

### **Confirmation of Placements**

The confirmation of the placement, as indicated by the completion of the referral forms, shows a mutual agreement between the student and agency to follow agency and department policies regarding field practicum. All placement referrals are tentative and pending written confirmation by the student and the agency. Problems or concerns may be noted on the form. The coordinator will process requests for adjustments, including placement changes.

The Director of Field Education and the agency contact person are jointly responsible for informing the student of any special requirements necessary to confirm the placement. These requirements may include, but are not limited to, physical examinations, immunization records, immunizations, fingerprinting, background checks, etc.

### **Student Placement Plan**

The program expects the student and the field instructor to complete a document reflecting joint planning for the entire practicum. This plan should be completed by the fifth week of the first placement semester, allowing sufficient time for orientation to the setting. Emphasis is placed upon communication between the student and the field instructor during goal-setting. Completing the form in a timely fashion results in early feedback from the student, field instructor, and faculty liaison on the performance assessment. There is adequate time for these issues to be addressed before the evaluation at the end of the semester. Copies of this plan should be made for use during evaluation. This form is a tool and may be modified as appropriate. The completed form must be sent to the Director of Field Education. The coordinator forwarded a copy of the plan to the field liaison. The original is placed in the student's permanent file.

### **Evaluation of Student's Performance**

Before the deadline indicated on the Field Practicum Calendar for midterm and end of the semester, the evaluations will be submitted to the Director of Field Education. The grading

process is complete with a well-developed narrative statement. The narrative is expected to include a description of all assignments. Wherever possible, the field instructor is encouraged to present examples illustrating evaluative observations regarding student learning. The signatures of the field instructor and the student are required on the document. The student's signature only denotes that the evaluation has been reviewed. The student may attach a rebuttal or self-evaluation. The evaluations are shared with the field liaison and placed in the student's file.

### **Student's Evaluation of Field Placement**

The Student Evaluation of Field Placement form will be distributed to all practicum students during the week of the final placement semester. Students are asked to complete and return the form unsigned to the Director of Field Education. The Director of Field Education will later review the information and may share findings as appropriate with the faculty and agencies.

## **Practicum Policies & Procedure**

### **Student Personal Safety**

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the university's safety programs. They are also advised to exercise sound judgment when traveling within the campus area, avoid walking alone at night, always be aware of their surroundings, and stay on well-lit and traveled paths.

Similar precautions and preventions should be taken in the learning environment of field practicum. Some agencies provide training relative to personal safety, including management of complex and/or dangerous clients or situations. Students should inquire about agency policies regarding safety concerns and procedures within the agency.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

The Fort Valley State University provides coverage for all faculty. All social work students, prior to enrollment in any field practicum course, must have the following:

- Confirmation of membership in NASW
- Purchase of student liability insurance from American Professional Agency, Inc.
- Individual-only policy.
- Each claim \$1,000,000; Aggregate \$1,000,000.
- Students who do not comply may be refused registration for the practicum course.
- Students who do not obtain their liability insurance before entering the field practicum will not be allowed to begin until they submit proof of liability insurance.
- The Office of Field Education requires the minimum coverage for liability insurance under NASW-Preferra. However, some agencies may require additional coverage under NASW- Preferra. This information will be provided to the students during the pre-placement process.

### **Student Health Requirements**

- Practicum settings, which are primarily medical, may require students to meet certain health requirements as a condition for placement confirmation. Upon request, the student may be asked to provide proof of health insurance and immunization records and update immunizations. If placement in the setting is expected, the student must inquire about special requirements and costs and meet them.
- Further, the setting is responsible for providing orientation or training in special precautions relevant to social workers in that setting.

### **Background Checks and Fingerprinting**

- It is important to note that although the Office of Field Education does not require a criminal background check for students entering field practicum, such a check may be required for certain sites. A criminal record and health screening checks, such as TB, will also appear on a CBI check.
- Practicum settings may require students to submit background checks and fingerprinting as a condition for placement confirmation. These settings are primarily child and family correction settings. It is the student's responsibility to inquire about special requirements and the cost and to meet them if there is an expectation of placement in the setting. Students are encouraged to share information that may be potentially damaging with the agency contact person before submitting to the process if the practicum is desired. Placement may be denied because of misrepresentation of information.

### **Automobile Insurance**

- Each student is expected to maintain adequate coverage as required by law. It is not recommended that students transport clients in personal cars. Students are expected to discuss coverage questions with their insurance agent.

### **Reimbursement for Agency Business**

- Each student is expected to discuss expenses incurred during the practicum. These include, but are not limited to, immunizations, mileage, workshops, supplies, etc. It is appropriate that students be made aware of these expectations before placement confirmation.

### **Incident Report**

- The student is expected to inform the field instructor of any situations involving personal injury, injury to others, or potential harm that may occur while the student is carrying out the practicum duties. Students are encouraged to take standard precautions, be attentive to agency instructions for personnel, and seek advice from the field instructor. The agency is expected to orient the student concerning specific client behaviors that may threaten the student's safety. The faculty liaison should be informed as appropriate.

### **Procedures for Work Site Practicum**

- The work-site practicum is defined as an approved field placement in the organization where the student is employed. It can be any organization or place of business where a student works or has worked FT/ PT voluntarily.

### **Paid Placement**

- All monies offered to practicum students must be educational stipends, with the joint approval of the Director of Field Education and the agency. Students can only accept employment from the practicum setting with the Director's prior approval. Agencies are encouraged to work with the Department to expand the financial resources available to students.

### **Field**

- We recognize that the concurrent schedule may be very demanding as students attempt to manage field hours/assignments, other course work, and personal responsibilities; however, **field practicum is a course**, and as such, students are expected to attend this course and complete all the requirements for the course. Field Hours may not be used to complete assignments for other classes unless the Director of Field Education has approved such assignments. Students who violate this rule will have to conduct additional field hours to the satisfaction of the Director of Field Education. In severe cases, they may be removed from field practicum or earn a failing grade.

### **BSW**

- At the BSW level, Poor performance in the Field Seminar will automatically be assessed towards the Field Practicum. A failing grade in the field seminar will result in a failing grade in the Field Practicum and vice versa, with no exceptions.

### **Attendance**

- All students are required to complete all practicum hours. Field instructors must be informed of all absences. Time missed must be made up to the satisfaction of the field instructor and the Director of Field Education. Planned and/or extended absences must be approved in advance by the field instructor and the Director of Field Education. Examples of scheduled absences would be anticipated hospitalization, maternity leave, etc.

## **Field Days**

- The student will arrange all field days and hours in collaboration with the agency field instructor. Students are expected to confirm their schedules with their respective field instructors on each semester's first day of placement. Within the first week of the field practicum, students must submit a copy of their schedules to the Director of Field Education.

## **Semester Break Policy**

- All students are expected to continue in the field during the period between semesters, either on their regular schedule or at reduced hours. This policy fosters continuity in the learning experience. Students planning to leave placement during this period must make alternative arrangements mutually agreed upon with the field instructor.

## **Holidays**

- Students will receive credit for the actual clock hours they complete within the agency. If the University is open and the agency is closed in observance of a holiday, students will receive credit for that day if it falls on their field day. If the agency is open and the University is closed, students may take the holiday time as scheduled or continue in the field and receive credit for the completed hours. Students only receive credit for Thanksgiving, Christmas holidays, and Spring break if they continue or complete field hours.

## **Carry-Over (SOWK 4401)**

- It is common for students to complete more than the required field hours during the fall semester field practicum (SOWK 4401). When this happens, students may apply those hours (not exceeding 40) towards their second semester field practicum hours (SOWK 4402).

## **Department Meetings/Workshops**

- Students are strongly encouraged to participate in department meetings/workshops/conferences as scheduled by the Social Work Program. Title IV-E students must attend additional meetings sponsored by the Title IV-E program.

Notices will be sent campus-wide informing all instructors of the planned absence from class or field placement.

- Students who choose not to attend meetings scheduled during class time will have an unexcused absence from their scheduled class, and students in the field will be required to make up the field hours. Those students planning to be away from placement during this period need to make alternative arrangements mutually agreed upon with the field instructor in advance.

### **Department Meetings/Workshops**

- Students are strongly encouraged to participate in department meetings/workshops/conferences as scheduled by the Social Work Program. Title IV-E students must attend additional meetings sponsored by the Title IV-E program. Notices will be sent campus-wide informing all instructors of the planned absence from class or field placement. Students who choose not to attend meetings scheduled during class time will have an unexcused absence from their scheduled class, and students in the field will be required to make up the field hours. Those students planning to be away from placement during this period need to make alternative arrangements mutually agreed upon with the field instructor in advance.

### **Conference/ Workshop**

- Students are given ten field hours for conference/workshop participation over two academic semesters and five (5) hours over one academic semester. Participation in conferences/workshops must be negotiated with the respective Field Instructor. However, students who present at conferences as Fort Valley State University's Social Work Program representatives will be excused from field placement. The Field Instructor will receive a notice from the Office of Field Education.

### **Practicum Supervision Time**

- Each practicum student is expected to receive one hour of supervision a week as a minimum standard from the field instructor. Typically, this is in the form of a weekly one-hour conference at a regularly scheduled time. Additionally, one-hour informal supervision may include informal contacts, telephone contacts, and time for writing reports related to student performance. Students are encouraged to be prepared for conferences and use this time effectively for their benefit. The importance of regular, ongoing, and meaningful feedback from the field instructor and the student is the basis for open communication.
- Communication ensures a mutually rewarding practicum.



## **Tracking Field Hours**

- Students must submit a copy of their field schedule via D2L to the Director of Field Education within the first week of each semester. The form must include the signatures of both the student and the field instructor.

## **Monitoring Students in Placement**

- The Director of Field Education is expected to make one contact each semester with the field instructor and the student. This contact may be a personal visit to the setting, a telephone conference with the field instructor, or a group meeting with the selected field instructors and their students. Where indicated, those students or instructors needing additional educational support will receive more contact and greater involvement in supervision. Faculty liaisons are also encouraged to meet with students on campus. The Director of Field Education is responsible for completing a Field Education Conference Form whenever contact is made with the student, field instructor, or agency director.

## **Co-Instruction**

- In the absence of an experienced social worker in a potential setting that has been evaluated as offering unique and desirable learning experiences, co-instruction allows the use of the setting for practicum purposes. An approved social worker co-instructs with the task field instructor to ensure that the supervision requirements are met. If needed, the Director of Field Education may serve in this capacity. Co-instruction has historically been significant in developing non-traditional settings with underserved populations and rural communities.

## **Taking an extra course (BSW Field Practicum)**

- In keeping with the BSW course curriculum, students are typically expected to have completed SOWK 2001, 2002, 3001, 3002, 3012, 3012, 4110, and Liberal Arts core courses before seeking admission into the field practicum. The Office of Field Education and Program Coordinators will assess exceptions to this rule on a case-by-case basis.

## **Grading and Evaluation**

- All practicum students receive a letter grade (A, B, C, D, F) at midterm and the end of each placement semester. The field instructor is responsible for preparing the student

evaluation. However, the field liaison assigned to the field practicum course(s) is primarily responsible for determining the final grade. The faculty liaison reviews the evaluation material and provides input as required. The Director of Field Education is available for consultation. All documentation related to the field practicum is sent to the Director of Field Education for distribution as appropriate.

## **Academic Policy**

### **Academic Integrity, Academic Misconduct, and Professional Behavior**

Social work majors must adhere to Fort Valley State University's Code of Student Conduct (Undergraduate Catalog) and exhibit a strong commitment to social work goals and the profession's ethical standards, as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics.

The Social Work Program, in keeping with the expectations set forth by Fort Valley State University under the auspices of the University System of Georgia, expects all social work majors to maintain academic honesty in all their coursework. As such, the Social Work Program expects students to strictly adhere to the following standards in all social work courses:

- No cheating, fabrication, or falsification of information on papers, reports, take-home and in-class exams, posters, etc.
- No plagiarism
- No abuse of academic material complicity in reports, take-home exams, posters, etc.),
- No sharing graded work (i.e., papers, reports, exams, etc.) with peers in and outside this class.

Academic evaluation in all social work courses assumes that all work submitted is free from academic dishonesty and that any work submitted by students will be their own. The standard penalty for a first offense is zero credit on work submitted. Course grades should and will be adversely affected and may result in a grade of "F." Furthermore, students may be expelled from the social work program and Fort Valley State University.

The Social Work Program, in keeping with the expectations set forth by Fort Valley State University under the auspices of the University System of Georgia and the NASW Code of Ethics, expects all social work majors to conduct themselves professionally at all times by exhibiting behavior that complies with program policies (BSW Student Handbook), institutional policies, professional, ethical standards, and societal laws in classroom, field, and community. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect professional manners.

## **Students Experiencing Difficulty in Practicum Settings**

All students, field instructors, and faculty must follow the guidelines for resolving issues. Two factors are of significant concern:

- 1) protection of the rights of students
- 2) preserving the educational soundness of the practicum.

Typically, the student is expected to discuss concerns with the field instructor as the first avenue of resolution. It is appropriate for the student to seek out the faculty liaison for guidance, if needed, in communication with the field instructor. If required, the three-way (student, field instructor, and faculty liaison) conference is highly recommended for resolving practicum-related problems. Most problems are resolved through improved communication. The Director of Field Education is available for consultation.

## **Early Warning Policy**

The early warning policy aims to help identify students experiencing academic difficulty in the field practicum and provide educational support to retain and graduate capable social work students. The policy is a mechanism for offering students assistance during the semester to improve their learning experience. It is necessary to augment existing university notifications of probationary status and grades after coursework is completed in any given semester when it is too late for academic assistance.

When it is recognized that a student is performing below the expected standards in a course, the Director of Field Education shall inform the student's advisor. The Director of Field Education shall then appoint a committee to meet with the student and the BSW Program Coordinator to identify problems and develop a resolution plan.

## **Non-academic issues**

Social Work students are expected to demonstrate and maintain academic and personal suitability for the profession. Behavior that is not appropriate to the profession may be exhibited in the form of illegal actions defined by law, mental health or substance abuse issues that impair the student's functioning, etc. The faculty liaison will meet with the student and the field instructor to collect all relevant information. In consultation with the Director of Field Education, a conference with the advisor and pertinent faculty may be called to prepare an action plan.

Corrective measures may be suggested with time limits, a recommendation for a change of major, or withdrawal from the University. (See Student Handbook)

### **Termination of Placement**

The field instructor and/or the student may request termination of the placement. Before the withdrawal of any student from placement, a full discussion of all relevant facts will be conducted with all the people concerned. Termination is regarded as a last resort in problem-solving. Once the decision has been made to terminate the placement, the student is expected to disengage from the agency formally. This may include terminating clients, turning in keys and records, removing personal items, etc. The field instructor is responsible for providing a final evaluation of the student's performance.

### **Policies & Procedures for Review of Academic Performance in the Social Work Program**

The Social Work Program can review students' academic performance at three levels, depending on the potential severity of the concern.

I) Student & Instructor of Course

II) Student & Academic Advisor

III) Student & Performance Review

Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, program directors/coordinators, or school administrators will not be kept confidential if it concerns professional performance. Faculty and/or program coordinators will share pertinent information to identify student issues and enhance problem-solving.

### **Performance that may result in a Review and/or Possible Dismissal from the Social Work Program.**

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under Scholastic Performance
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (faculty must

adhere to university guidelines. For complete university policy and procedures, see the student handbook:

- Behavior judged to violate the current Code of Ethics
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else.
- Commission of a criminal act contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study or before admission to the Social Work Program and becoming known after admission.
- A consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior
- Failure to meet any of the Standard for School Work Education: Department of Social Work Criteria for Evaluation of Academic Performance

### **Field Education**

Student Review in the field may occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Disregard for Performance Standards as per Student Handbook
- Disregard the NASW Code of Ethics
- Failure to show up for the Field Practicum
- Failure to engage in the field learning experience.
- Failure to maintain professional boundaries.
- Lack of professional responsibility
- Concerned with the "salvation" of others.
- Inability to use feedback constructively.
- Arrogance/hostility/ aggressiveness
- Gossiping/lying.
- Inability to establish rapport with clients.
- Biased remarks
- Inability to work with others.
- Argumentative
- Personal/Emotional problems that significantly interfere with the ability to meet field requirements.
- Consistently absent from field practicum
- Violating department/agency policies
- Irrational outbursts
- Drug/Alcohol Abuse

### **Early feedback**

Early feedback is an essential component of a successful field practicum. So, Students/ Field Instructors need to immediately communicate all concerns regarding field placement to the Field Liaison or the Office of Field Education to ensure it's a good time.

We encourage the student and field instructor to address their concurring during the field practicum. Still, we'd expect the field liaison to be immediately aware of the issue (s) to

ensure more significant support from the Office of Field Education. Although the Office of Field Education is committed to supporting the student-field instructor relationship, early feedback is critical to ensuring a successful practicum.

### **Performance Review**

All students are admitted on the assumption that they have the potential academic ability and personal suitability for completing the professional program they are enrolled in. However, during study, if a student needs to perform at the required level. Any faculty member may bring the problem to the attention of the Director of Field Education and request a performance review.

The Director of Field Education may appoint a Performance Review Committee of faculty members (to include a committee Chair, faculty representative (s), and the student's advisor, whenever possible). The committee may extend invitations to additional parties, such as the field instructor or other individuals with relevant information. The student is permitted to have one person accompany them to the meeting. This may include a parent, a peer, or a lawyer who is not acting as an attorney since this is not a legal procedure.

The Performance Review Committee will be concerned with detecting and handling problematic performance situations, including academic and non-academic issues. In conjunction with the advisor and the faculty, the committee will promote utilizing all available resources within the department and the university to aid students in maximizing their performance. Students will be equally responsible for discussing perceived academic and performance difficulties with their instructors and advisors.

The Performance Review Committee shall also be aware of the importance of maintaining standards for student performance to ensure that program graduates demonstrate the knowledge, skill, and ethical behavior required of the professional social worker. Consequently, it may become the responsibility of the committee to recommend to the Department Chair, the Dean, and the student that it would be in the student's best interests, as well as those of maintaining degree standards of the Department, that the student not continue in the program. While carrying out its activities, the committee may become aware of conditions or situations in the educational milieu that appear to be problematic for students and/or potentially affect their performance. These should be referred to the Director of Field Education if it is a field-related issue.

### **Performance Review Policy**

Consistent with the Council on Social Work Education, Evaluative Standards, and The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers, the Fort Valley State University Social Work Program will consider the performance or behavior of students that provides relevant information reflecting their likely performance as social work practitioners as an academic student progress matter. Performance or behaviors that demonstrate poor interpersonal skills, unethical threatening, or otherwise unprofessional conduct will be considered grounds for academic disciplinary action that includes but is not limited to academic probation and dismissal. The Code of Ethics, as adopted by the National Association of Social Workers and the Regent's rules regarding student behavior, serve as the primary basis for judgments concerning the appropriateness of students' behavior.

### **Performance Review Procedures**

Suppose a recommendation for a performance review has been initiated. In that case, the student's academic advisor will meet to discuss the student's current academic standing and the identified concern based on the adopted Standards for Social Work Education and inform the student of the performance review process.

The performance review committee will also send correspondence to the student, informing the student of their rights and the date and time of the performance review. This correspondence should be sent (at minimum) two (2) weeks before the scheduled performance review date.

On the scheduled date, the Performance review committee will meet with the faculty member(s) who have initiated the performance review to discuss the concern (s). The Performance Review Committee will then meet with the student and his/her representative (Parent, Peer, or lawyer who is not acting as an attorney since this is not a legal matter). The Performance Review Committee requests that all parties meet to clarify information. Once the Performance review has been completed, a letter will be sent to the Chair for a final decision. The Chair will send correspondence to the students indicating the identified concerns and recommendations. The student has the right to appeal against any decision or recommendations.

### **Social Work Student procedures for addressing academic and nonacademic issues.**

Students who wish to address academic/nonacademic concern(s) must take the following steps:

Step 1. The student must address the issue with the course instructor.

If the students follow this step, the student will be redirected back to the course instructor. The instructor, of course, informs the academic advisor of the scheduled meeting.

Step 2. If there is no resolution, the student must contact their Academic advisor for a solution. The course instructor may also meet with the academic advisor to discuss and process the situation.

Step 3 If there is no resolution, the course instructor, Academic Advisor, and The BSW Program Coordinator meet to determine an appropriate resolution or whether a Performance Review is required.

Step 4: If a Performance Review is required, the BSW Program Coordinator schedules one (Rotating committee) to request a recommendation for resolution (Performance Review Procedures as stated on page#).

**Student concerns regarding the Field Practicum are addressed in the following:**

Step 1. The student and the course instructor (Field Instructor or Field Liaison) address the issue. If the student skips this step, the student is redirected back to the instructor.

Step 2. If there is no resolution, either party should contact the Director of Field Education. The Director of Field Education seeks a resolution. The field liaison will inform the academic advisor of the scheduled meeting.

Step 3. If no resolution is reached, the Director of Field Education seeks input from the BSW Program Coordinator and/or the Department Chair to discuss the current situation and arrive at a solution.

Step 3. If there is no resolution

**Removal for Academic Misconduct**

Educational enterprises require high trust based on certain principles, including honesty and integrity. Unfortunately, situations occur where students violate those principles by engaging in academic misconduct. Such actions can have serious repercussions, including failing grades, probation, suspension, dismissal, and even degree revocation. "Academic misconduct" is defined as any activity that tends to compromise the institution's academic



integrity or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Provide or receive information during examinations; provide or use unauthorized assistance in the classroom/laboratory, at the computer terminal (including internet plagiarism), or fieldwork.
2. submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement. Plagiarism represents another's work or ideas as one's own: it includes unacknowledged word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas.
3. falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in reporting research results.
4. serving as, or enlisting the assistance of, a ringer or substitute for a student in taking examinations.
5. alteration of grades or marks by the student to change the earned grade or credit.
6. alteration of university forms used to drop or add courses to a program or unauthorized use of those forms.
7. falsification of faculty or administrative signature

### **Removal Procedures for Academic Grades or Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct takes place when a student fails to maintain good standing in one of these areas for either Academic Grades or Academic Misconduct is subject to the following actions:

Step 1: If the student falls below a 2.5 GPA for one consecutive semester after formal admission to the BSW program, fails a course for a second time, receives an "I" or "W" grade, and indicates academic difficulty. The academic advisor will request a meeting with the student.

Step 2: The student's academic advisor then formally meets with the student to consult and give suggestions, which might include, but are not limited to, requesting a modification in the program, changes in concentration, or extensions of time for the student to complete the program. If the issue is academic misconduct, the academic advisor may recommend the need for additional information, a meeting with the individual or person making the accusation, or the initiation of a Performance Review Committee.

Step 3: Regarding academic grades, if the student falls below a 2.5 GPA after formal admission to the BSW Program and 3.0 in the MSW Program for another consecutive semester, the program coordinator automatically sends the student a notice of probation.

Step 4: In the case of a Performance Review, the Performance Review Committee reviews the case and determines if all the above steps have been followed accurately. If this is the case, the Committee can recommend one of the following actions:

- a) Dismiss the case due to lack of evidence.
- b) Develop a formal written and mutually agreed upon plan with the student.
- c) Make a grade recommendation.
- d) Recommend formal academic termination\*

\*Step 5: If the decision is to terminate the student from the program, the Committee will provide written notice of this decision to the department Chair and Dean of CLASS. If approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, others will be notified of this action, and the student will not be allowed registration for any more courses.

Step 6: The students can accept this decision or make an Appeal\*\* (per the FVSU Student Handbook) to the Chair, Dean, and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## **Planning & Development**

Preparation for the practical experience results from the combined efforts of faculty and field instructors. Several approaches stimulate productive exchanges in promoting a shared understanding of field practicum objectives and processes.

### **The Social Work Community Advisory Council**

The Social Work Program has organized an Advisory Council of great substance and enthusiasm, consisting of community leaders from government, the court system, and the social services, business, and religious communities. This is an opportunity for interested people to actively participate in a supportive role with the social work program. Committees adopt special projects to provide a service to the Department. A set of by-laws governs the advisory council and has a newly instituted memorandum of understanding with the University.

### **The Advisory Committee on Field**

This committee, advisory to the Director of Field Education, assures the maintenance of reciprocal and ongoing relationships between the practice community and the Department to promote and advocate for advancing practice-relevant education framed by social work values and ethics. The scope of this committee ranges from preparing students for the field to post-degree employment issues and alumni support for the field program. A significant contribution of this committee is exploring new placement settings, increasing agency stipends for students, and hosting field instructor meetings for orientation and training.

## **Field Instructor Development Series**

### **Orientation**

The Department requires that all field instructors participate in an orientation, typically held before students begin their placements during the fall and spring semesters. This orientation aims to prepare new field instructors to assume their roles effectively. The director of field education will conduct the orientation virtually. Field instructors are provided comprehensive written information on the social work curricula to support their professional development in this position. Participation in the orientation is a requirement for continued appointment as a field instructor for the Department.

### **Field Instructors-Student Packet**

Each field instructor is provided with the necessary information and forms for the supervision of the student. The contents are as follows:

- Field Manual
- Course Syllabus
- Electronic Evaluation of Student Performance forms

## **Title IV-E Program**

The Title IV-E Program at FVSU will be activated through coordination with the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services. This section applies only when the program has been re-activated.

### **Title IV E Child Welfare Program**

The Title IV –E Child Welfare Program at Fort Valley University fosters excellence in public child welfare services. It is a collaboration between Fort Valley State University’s Social Work Program, the Georgia Department of Human Resources, and the Department of Family and Children Services Education and Training Services Section.

The Title IV—E Child Welfare Program increases the number of competent child welfare professionals in Georgia by recruiting, educating, and developing students’ skills in child welfare.

#### **Students are accepted into the program if they have met the following criteria:**

- 1) Admission into the Social Work Program and/or current DFCS employees
- 2) Completion of Title V-E application at [www.gadfcs.org/ive.php](http://www.gadfcs.org/ive.php)
- 3) Completion of an interview with DHR personnel
- 4) Letter of acceptance into the Title IV-E Program

Once accepted, students will receive an annual stipend to cover their tuition based on a full-time schedule and stipends for mileage and books. Upon graduation, students are expected to fulfill employment commitments. These employment commitments are based on one year of employment for each annual stipend awarded.

Students admitted under the Title IV-E Program must complete a Field Placement in a Department of Family and Children Services.

### **Title IV-E Coordinator**

The Title IV-E Coordinator is responsible for planning and coordinating the Title IV-E Child Welfare Grant.

## **Functions of the Title IV-E Coordinator**

1. Provides general information about the IV-E Child Welfare Grant
2. Assists interested IV-E students with online application and procedure.
3. Assesses level of interest in pursuing a career in Child Welfare.
4. Schedules interviews for potential IV- E recipients
5. Acts as liaison between IV-E students and external (DHR/DFCS) collaborators.
6. Coordinates tuition, book, stipends, and travel reimbursements for IV-E students
7. Maintains individual student files for IV-E documentation (e.g., IV-E contract, contact sheet, IV-E training, and certifications).
8. Monitors IV-E database for grant expenditure.

## **Title IV- E Field Responsibilities**

Title IV- E students must complete 400 hours of field practicum in a Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS). As part of their DFACS practicum, they must complete the following:

- Completion of the Title IV- E application and interview
- Must attend the Title IV-E Graduation Event
- Completion of SOWK 4399 and SOWK 4080 with a minimum of C.