

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT *of*
SOCIAL WORK

Bachelor of Science in Social Work Field Manual



2021-2022

Liberty University
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I. INTRODUCTION

This manual provides an overview of Liberty University's social work field education policies, procedures, and requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Social Work (BSSW). The purpose of the manual is to orient and offer guidance to BSSW students, faculty, field instructors, and other agency personnel involved in undergraduate social work field education as they engage in the field experience.

In addition to describing the roles and responsibilities of each party involved, this manual provides an overview of the Department of Social Work's BSSW program mission statement, goals, and learning outcomes; the social work competencies and behaviors adopted by the Department; the Code of Ethics for the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW) Statement of Faith and Practice; and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS, 2015). This information offers guiding principles for social work education that support the goal of successfully preparing students for a professional career in social work.

Any inquiries or comments regarding any of the information included in this manual should be directed to bsswfield@liberty.edu. Written inquiries and/or comments may also be sent by postal mail to the Department of Social Work, 1971 University Blvd., MSC 710575, Lynchburg, VA 24515.

II. MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS, AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. Mission Statement

The mission of Liberty University's Bachelor of Science in Social Work program is to prepare healthy, generalist social workers to be servant leaders who follow the example of Christ and will influence the world by enhancing the lives of all individuals, families, and communities through competent, research-informed knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes consistent with the purpose of the profession.

B. Program Goals

The goals of Liberty University's BSSW program is to develop Christ-centered competent social workers, who:

1. Advocate for oppressed people groups;
2. Embrace the values of the profession;
3. Recognize the impact of the environment on human behavior;
4. Are empathetic and strength-based;
5. Practice with research-informed wisdom;
6. Demonstrate cultural and relational humility; and
7. Are healthy emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

C. Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the BSSW, the student will be able to demonstrate competency as a beginning social work professional in the following areas:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior;
 2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice;
 3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic & Environmental Justice;
 4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research & Research-Informed Practice;
 5. Engage in Policy Practice;
 6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities;
 7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities;
 8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; and
 9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
-

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A. NASW Code of Ethics

The *NASW Code of Ethics* is a key set of values, principles, and standards that guide the conduct of faculty, staff and students at Liberty University's Department of Social Work. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

As described on the NASW website, the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) serves six purposes:

1. The *Code* identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. The *Code* summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The *Code* is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The *Code* provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. The *Code* socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.
6. The *Code* articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members. In subscribing to this *Code*, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

B. NACSW Statement of Faith and Practice

NACSW is a membership association that seeks to equip its members to integrate Christian faith and professional social work practice. To this end, NACSW established a set of values, principles, and standards to guide the conduct of social workers seeking to professionally integrate the Christian faith into their social work practice. The [NACSW Statement of Faith and Practice](#) guides the practice of faculty, staff, and students of Liberty University's Department of Social Work.

C. CSWE Education Policy and Accreditation Standards

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate- and master's-level social work programs. As described on their [website](#), CSWE supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for

professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparability across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate. The Liberty University Department of Social Work is committed to adhering to the EPAS standards and has secured accreditation for its BSSW program. This ensures that the program is congruent with current standards of practice in the field of social work and provides a framework by which ongoing peer evaluation ensures high standards of quality. Additional benefits to graduates are that such accreditation is required for graduates to pursue licensure and/or Advanced Standing eligibility for graduate social work education.

IV. SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCIES AND BEHAVIORS

The table below depicts Liberty University's social work competencies and the behaviors that relate to each competency. As a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the BSSW program reflects these competencies as defined by CSWE in the 2015 Educational and Policy Standards. The social work curriculum, including field education, is generalist focused and is designed to prepare students to master each competency through demonstration of knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, as well each of the associated behaviors in a real-life practice setting. Students are prepared in a generalist approach that facilitates development of competencies that can be applied broadly to a variety of clients and populations, at a variety of levels (micro, mezzo, macro), and in a variety of settings.

***SOCIAL WORK
COMPETENCIES***

SOCIAL WORK BEHAVIORS

***DEMONSTRATE ETHICAL AND
PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR***

- Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and oral, written and electronic communication;
- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

***ENGAGE DIVERSITY AND
DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE***

- Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

***ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS,
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC &
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE***

- Apply their understanding of social, economic and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels and
- Engage in practices that advance social, economic and environmental justice.

***ENGAGE IN PRACTICE-
INFORMED RESEARCH AND***

- Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
-

***RESEARCH- INFORMED
PRACTICE***

- Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

POLICY PRACTICE

- Identify social policy at the local, state and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery and access to social services;
- Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; and
- Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.

***ENGAGE WITH INDIVIDUALS,
FAMILIES, GROUPS,
ORGANIZATIONS, AND
COMMUNITIES***

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies and
- Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

***ASSESS INDIVIDUALS,
FAMILIES, GROUPS,
ORGANIZATIONS, AND
COMMUNITIES***

- Collect and organize data and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
 - Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
 - Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
 - Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.
-

***INTERVENE WITH
INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES,
GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS,
AND COMMUNITIES***

- Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

***EVALUATE PRACTICE WITH
INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES,
GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS,
AND COMMUNITIES***

- Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
 - Apply knowledge of human behavior and social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
 - Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo and macro levels; and
 - Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
-

V. OVERVIEW OF FIELD EDUCATION

Field education is a central component of the instruction and training students receive to prepare them for a professional career in social work. Fieldwork offers students the opportunity to:

- Develop and demonstrate competencies as a social work professional as defined by the Council on Social Work Education;
- Apply the theory and knowledge gained in the classroom to different practice settings as a beginning practitioner, and to broaden their exposure to this application in different settings by sharing experiences with peers who are placed in other settings; and

- Receive support and mentoring during this early professional experience from an experienced Field Instructor, a Faculty Liaison, and their peers.

BSSW students must complete two separate and distinct internship experiences, Junior and Senior field, in order to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work (BSSW) from Liberty University. In the Junior and Senior Field Experience and Seminar courses, students receive supervised practice experience in an agency setting, while concurrently attending a seminar class that offers the opportunity to process their field experience. The integration of classroom and field activities provides students with a unique and comprehensive learning experience to support their development as professional social workers. Requiring two separate field experiences helps provide students with a well-rounded and generalist experience in the field.

- **Junior field students are required to complete 8 hours per week, which breaks down to one full work day or two half-work days per week, for 14 consecutive weeks** (a minimum total of 100 hours) in addition to a **weekly, 2-hour, synchronous seminar.**
- **Senior field students are required to complete 32 hours per week, which breaks down to 4 full work days per week, for 14 consecutive weeks** (a minimum total of 400 hours) in addition to a **weekly, 2-hour, synchronous seminar.**

For more details regarding field schedules, please see page 23.

For more details about seminar, please see pages 26, 39.

The Junior field placement must be completed before the Senior field placement and must provide a different learning experience with a different population, tasks, supervision, and/or setting. The Department of Social Work does not provide exemptions to any field requirements based on previous work or life experience.

For information regarding the proposal of a repeat placement, please see page 14.

Students may engage in approved field experiences working with a variety of client populations in a variety of practice settings (both private and public) for both Junior and Senior field. These settings include opportunities to engage in different levels of practice including direct practice with individuals (micro level), practice with families and groups (mezzo level), and practice with communities or other system intervention such as policy analysis, administration, and research (macro level). Students may complete field experiences in a variety of geographical locations, including international settings.

Prior to a student being eligible for Field Placement, the department must approve the student's proposed placement experience. If approval is not given, the student will not be eligible for credited placement. To receive approval, Placement Proposals must meet the following criteria:

AGENCY	Agency provides social services to an identified population and can provide opportunities for the student to be socialized to the profession.
TASKS	Student tasks involve experiencing day-to-day life of an agency and the development and demonstration of competencies based on social work knowledge, values, and skills.
SUPERVISION	Student receives proper supervision and instruction.
SCHEDULE	Time and duration of the student-proposed schedule meets BSSW program policy.

For more information regarding the placement proposal process, please see page 29.



AGENCY: AGENCY PARTNERS AND FIELD PLACEMENTS

CENTRAL VIRGINIA AREA (CVA) PLACEMENTS

The field team has established partnerships with a number of local agencies within 1.5 hours of the University. The field team works closely with each agency to ensure consistent, quality placements for students. Students hoping to complete a CVA placement will be matched and assigned to interview with CVA agencies based on interests, skills, and a variety of other factors. Students interested in a placement with a CVA agency must go through the CVA placement process with the field team.

The Department of Social Work partners with numerous organizations in the Central Virginia Area. The Department is eager to be of service to these agencies by providing well-prepared interns who can assist in expanding the agency's capacity to serve clients. This is also of immense value to our students who have the opportunity to be mentored by professionals in our local area.

Prior to field experience interviews, the field team meets with both students and agencies. Agencies provide input on what type of student would have the best potential fit with agency needs and internship specifics. Students also submit information prior to participating in an interview, identifying their areas of interest, abilities, past experience, strengths and areas of needed growth, and other factors to consider for placement matching. This combined information guides the field staff in making placement decisions. After the field team determines preliminary matches, they inform both the agency and student.

In the Fall and Spring semesters, the Department field staff hosts the Interview Day for students who will be completing their Field Experience in the Central Virginia Area (CVA). At this event, local agency partners come to campus to interview students. While this event is optional for agencies, it is a highly beneficial and effective way to find the best placement match for both the agency and the student. The agency may also elect to have the identified student interview on-site. However, agencies will interview only those students who have been pre-selected by the Department for potential placement with them.

The agency and student are given an opportunity to confirm the placement through the interview process. Unless there is a reason that either party is not comfortable proceeding, the agency and student are considered committed to each other pending the confirmation interview. Ultimately, each agency will approve the finalization of the placement.

DISTANCE PLACEMENTS – OUTSIDE CENTRAL VIRGINIA AREA (OCVA) PARTNERS

The field team has also developed partnerships with agencies outside the 1.5-hour radius of the University. These are referred to as OCVA placements and are typically utilized by online students.

As is the case with local Central Virginia Area (CVA) students, the field staff will discuss with OCVA students their interests. The team can provide information on agencies in each student's specific geographic area who have provided placements in the past for Liberty social work students. Due to the wide geographic region represented in online BSSW students, it is most common that OCVA students will wish to pursue placement at an agency that does not yet have an approved partnership with the University. In this case, the field staff will support the student in communicating with that agency to ensure that it meets all educational requirements and to execute the required legal documentation to become a partner.

The Department of Social Work has partnered with numerous organizations throughout the United States and the world. The Department is eager to be of service to these agencies by providing well-prepared interns who can assist in expanding the agency's capacity to serve clients. This is also of immense value to our students who have the opportunity to be mentored by professionals in their local area.

A. Onboarding Process for New Agency Partnerships

In order to establish a partnership, the following forms should be completed and returned to the BSSW Field Staff by the designated deadline for approval. If the placement receives preliminary approval, additional forms are required specific to the students and the proposed placement.

A.1 BSSW Placement Proposal

This form details information about the proposed field experience, including information about the agency, tasks, schedule, and supervision. It includes agency contact information, services rendered, proposed tasks for the intern, and relevant staff information. Additionally, this form details the educational and vocational qualifications of the Field Instructor. The field team will review the form to verify that the placement agency, tasks, supervision, and schedule all meet the requirements and standards set by the University and the Council on Social Work Education.

A.2 Affiliation Agreement

The University requires that all agencies partnering with the BSSW program for field experiences sign a Liberty University Affiliation Agreement or submit an equal counterpart for review. This formal contract, signed by the agency and Liberty University, outlines the legal obligations to

which both parties are agreeing. This agreement must be signed by a qualified individual from the agency who is authorized to sign legal agreements. Once signed by the agency, the field staff submits it to the University Contracts Department for final execution. If an agency requires the BSSW program to sign an agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, or similar contract, prior to the student's field placement, the Contracts Department will review the contract and request any changes needed.

Note: As part of a completed Placement Proposal, the BSSW Program must have a signed copy of the Affiliation Agreement before a student's placement can be finalized. Students will not be registered for the field placement course until this is completed and all aspects of the Placement Proposal have been approved. Any questions, needs, or specific accommodations should be sent to the Field Team at bsswfield@liberty.edu.

B. Field Orientation Training for Students and Agency Staff of Approved Placements

The Field Orientation Training for CVA students and agencies is held at the start of Fall and Spring semesters as a requirement for the student, Agency Task Supervisor, and Field Instructor. The BSSW program field staff hold the training on campus and review details of field expectations and procedures. Agencies have the opportunity to ask pertinent questions and connect with the interning student(s). Once this training has been completed, the student may officially begin accruing field hours at their placements.

Field Orientation Training for OCVA students and agencies is also required and is available online through the seminar course. Students, Agency Task Supervisors, and Field Instructors will complete the training and corresponding activity together. Once this training has been completed, the student may officially begin accruing field hours at their placements.

C. Special Requests and Waivers

Students are able to submit a waiver to request approval for a placement that deviates from the standard. **Submitting a waiver request does not guarantee the approval of the placement the student is proposing.** Approval to move forward in pursuing this type of placement will be granted upon thorough review of this proposal by the BSSW Field Team and the BSSW Director of Field Education.

1. Employment Site Placement (Waiver Request Required)

Because BSSW field experiences are designed to be primarily educational in nature, it is considered an exception to do a placement at one's place of employment. However, some students may have the opportunity to complete their field placement where they are currently employed as long as the requirements are met. The Council on Social Work Education specifically requires that BSSW programs employ policies to ensure the role of the student as learner and to demonstrate that student assignments and field education supervision differ from those of the student's employment if they are given permission to participate in a field placement at the same organization.

Placements at an employment site require differences in 1) roles, 2) tasks, 3) supervisor(s), and 4) scheduled hours. If students would like to pursue this option, they must submit a written proposal that requires the approval of the BSSW Director of Field Education.

Students need to submit an Employment Site Placement Proposal. This proposal will detail the student's request to participate in a field placement at their current place of employment. On the form, they will demonstrate how the field experience will significantly differ in tasks, responsibilities, and supervisors in comparison to the student's employment. This often is accomplished by completing the field experience in a different department of the agency or with a different service or population. Students must consult with agency staff when drafting this proposal. If students are continuing to be employed at the same time, they must identify the hours that will be designated for their paid functions and the hours that will be designated for their internship. Though permitted under unique circumstances, Employment Site Placements are considered to be less than ideal for student learning.

Students pursuing an Employment Site Placement should keep in mind that the hours spent in their current job will not count toward their field hours. The hours for their Field Experience must be spent doing tasks separate from their current job tasks and responsibilities. This would be an additional 8 hours per week for 14 weeks for Junior field or an additional 32 hours per week for 14 weeks for Senior Field. Students must also be supervised by someone other than their current employment supervisor. The field experience is an educational, learning opportunity and must be evaluated as such. The Council on Social Work Education specifically requires that BSSW programs employ policies to ensure the role of the student as learner.

2. Repeat Placement (Waiver Request Required)

Students hoping to complete their Senior field placement at the same agency where they completed their Junior Field will also need to submit a waiver request. Students pursuing a Repeat Placement Proposal must secure a placement with significantly different responsibilities and opportunities for learning, such as being assigned to a different department in the agency, different setting, or a different population.

It is not sufficient to simply allow a student to be in the same functions at a more advanced level than those in Junior Field placement. Students must also be supervised by someone other than their Junior Field experience supervisor. Also note that Senior Field hours are calculated entirely separately from Junior Field hours and take place in different academic semesters.

On the form, students will demonstrate the differences in tasks, responsibilities, and supervisors. It is important that student tasks, assignments, and field education supervision differ from the previous placement if they are given permission to participate in a field placement at the same organization. Students must consult with agency staff when drafting this proposal.

Submitting this proposal does not guarantee the student a Repeat Placement. Approval to move forward in pursuing this type of placement will be granted upon thorough review of this proposal by the BSSW Field Team and the BSSW Director of Field Education.

Repeat Placements are considered to be less than ideal for student learning. The strong preference to enhance the student's competency in generalist social work practice is to provide learning opportunities in a variety of settings and/or with a variety of populations.

3. Modified Tasks (Waiver Request Required)

As a response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Department of Social Work made it an option for students to complete some or all of their placement remotely if circumstances deemed it necessary. Please note that all requirements must still be met even in a remote or virtual format.

This includes but is not limited to the requirements for client contact, supervision, documentation necessary for the field seminar course, capacity of tasks to develop all core competencies, and the minimum hours requirement.

This form is required for any tasks to be completed remotely.

Placements including remote aspects are considered an exception, and the submission of a Modified Tasks waiver does not guarantee that the request will be approved.

4. Modified Schedule Proposal (Waiver Request Required)

Students with specific circumstances who wish to deviate from the standard schedule for field placement must submit a waiver request by filling out the Modified Schedule Proposal. Students will propose a schedule including the beginning date, expected completion date, number of weeks in field and any expected gaps. They must describe the reasons for the request, the attempts to address their concerns, and steps they will take to ensure they will meet the requirements of the course in purpose and intent.

Students requesting a modified schedule will still be required to meet all the field placement requirements and all of the Field Seminar course and attendance requirements.

D. Unique Agency Placement Opportunities

D.1 Study Abroad (Junior Field Only)

Students have the opportunity to complete their Junior Field placement (SOWK 370) through LU Send Study Abroad. As a part of this program, students must take general education courses through a local university in addition to their field placement. These placements are a collaborative effort among the student, field staff, and the program staff in-country. Students must complete all of the OCVA field proposal requirements as well as the LU Send Abroad process listed in the LU Send Abroad Handbook.

D.2 Best Semester: Uganda Studies Program

Students spend a semester completing their field hours and taking courses at Uganda Christian University. For more information about the Uganda Studies Program, please go to the [Best Semester](#) website. *Students interested in this program should set up an appointment with the field staff at least a year before they plan to go.*

D.3 International Internships

Students have the opportunity to complete their field placements overseas with partner organizations through the LU Send Abroad internship program. Students are not required to take any additional education courses as a part of this program, but must complete all of the OCVA field proposal requirements as well as the LU Send Abroad process listed in the LU Send Abroad handbook. The BSSW program currently partners with organizations in the Dominican Republic, Greece, Italy, the Philippines, Spain, and more. International placement options are not limited to the current partners. Students interested in completing their placement abroad should set up an appointment with the field staff at least a year (2 semesters) before they plan to go.

D.4 Washington Fellowship (Senior Field Only)

Students have the opportunity to complete their Senior field hours through Liberty University's Washington Fellowship program. The Washington Fellowship program offers the opportunity to secure a semester-long internship in the Washington D.C. area. The program also arranges local housing and hosts various professional development and networking activities.

Students apply for this program through the Washington Fellowship office and work with the staff to seek out opportunities for potential placements in Washington D.C. Students who choose this program apply to many different organizations and agencies as internships in that area are competitive. Once a student has been accepted to one of these placements, they are responsible for working with the field team to process the required paperwork as this would be considered an OCVA placement.

For more information about this program and its requirements, please go to the [Washington Fellowship](#) website. *Students interested in this program should set up an appointment with the field staff at least a year (2 semesters) before they plan to go.*



TASKS: STUDENT INTERN TASKS AND JOB DESCRIPTION

A. Tasks and Assignments

Agencies must be able to offer assignments, activities, and opportunities that help students to extend their classroom learning and further develop knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes. They should have the opportunity to learn a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice and engage in behaviors sufficient to develop all social work competencies in a real-life setting.

Agencies must also be able to provide suitable space and resources necessary to carry out the tasks student(s) are assigned (e.g., desk, computer, telephone, etc.).

Agencies must provide adequate orientation to its client population, the agency, and its policies and practices. It is the expectation of the BSSW program that each agency serving as a field placement will have discrimination and harassment policies in place that guide the expected conduct of agency staff and volunteers.

Students must have opportunity for **sufficient client contact hours** –interpersonal, synchronous, real-life interactions with clients or constituents, totaling **25-30% minimum of total field hours** (Juniors: 25-30 contact hours out of 100 total; Seniors: 100-120 hours out of 400 total.) *See examples in chart below, an excerpt from the BSSW Placement Proposal Form.***

Furthermore, in order to develop practice skills, these hours **may not be limited to observation.**
Junior Field: Students should progress from observing to facilitating/co-facilitating by end of semester

Senior Field: Students **must actively lead or co-facilitate the interaction for at least half of client contact hours** (50-60 hrs.)

Student placement proposals must include specific, social work-related tasks that would be performed at the proposed placement and give clear examples that show how the placement will develop the 10 competencies. Examples may include:

<p>Client/constituent contact**</p> <p><i>Ex- meet with clients, conduct intakes/triage, perform assessments, answer hotline calls, facilitate groups, supervise family visits, conduct home visits, develop service/treatment plans, do evaluations, risk assessment, crisis intervention, provide supportive counseling/ mentoring, support groups, educate, conduct training or public awareness activities, advocate for clients, meet with partner agencies, interact with local or state officials for advocacy or networking purposes</i></p>
<p>Administrative tasks, case management, support</p> <p><i>Ex- schedule client appts, coordinate services, monitor, make referrals, review case records, enter data into client records, research resources and create guide or information materials or online resource, conduct research such as client satisfaction, outcome research</i></p>
<p>Meetings, trainings, conferences</p> <p><i>Ex- staff meetings, case conferences, training</i></p>
<p>Other</p> <p><i>Ex- develop or prepare curriculum content for client meetings/groups, analyze organizational policies and/or legislation, perform program evaluation of agency, develop crisis response plan, research grants/foundations, provide transportation or material goods</i></p>

B. Student Intern Job Description

BSSW students are able to serve in a variety of case management, counseling, and other roles on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Some of the most common tasks for a BSSW intern include:

- Scheduling client appointments;
- Providing support for an intake line and help with the triage of clients coming in for services;
- Utilizing a psychosocial assessment tool to engage clients—and, when appropriate, other members of client systems—in information-gathering and decision-making processes to help clients identify their goals, strengths, and challenges;
- Collaborating with clients and other service providers to develop, implement, monitor, and amend individualized case plans that promote clients' strengths, advance clients' well-being, and help clients achieve their goals;
- Conducting home visits to facilitate case plan development, implementation, and monitoring;
- Identifying appropriate community resources for a client based on review of the client's assessment;
- Offering education, advocacy, referrals, and supportive counseling to clients;
- Documenting case management activities in the appropriate client record system;
- Facilitating groups and designing group activities;
- Participating in or presenting in staff meetings to discuss client cases;

- Supporting the development and implementation of an agency's community education and public awareness efforts;
- Supporting an agency's efforts to engage in policy analysis and policy action to advance social and economic justice; and
- Attending and taking notes during community meetings (e.g., FAPT meetings).

Students will collaborate with the agency to identify tasks that develop and demonstrate skill in each of the Social Work competencies.



SUPERVISION: ROLE REQUIREMENTS

A. Roles of Supervision

Agency Task Supervisor (ATS):

The agency will identify a staff member who would be willing to serve as the student's on-site Agency Task Supervisor. The ATS must have adequate release time from their employer to provide direct supervision for social work students as they complete their required hours of field experience and assignments associated with their field experience course. This person will conduct student orientations and in-service trainings, supervise the student's daily tasks, coordinate assignments and activities, verify timesheets, conduct regular supervision, and provide regular feedback as well as a final formal evaluation of student performance. They also will participate in at least two contacts with the Faculty Field Liaison (one brief conference call to confirm Learning Contract and one site visit or conference call to discuss student performance and evaluation.) If the Agency Task Supervisor meets the requirements for the Field Instructor, they may fulfill both roles.

Field Instructor (FI):

The Council on Social Work Education requires that BSSW students receive instruction from Field Instructors who hold degrees from an accredited program – either a Bachelors of Social Work (BSW or BSSW) or a Master's of Social Work (MSW) with 2 or more years post-graduate social work experience. Licensure (LSW, LISW, LCSW, etc.) is preferred but not required.

This individual will provide a social work perspective and facilitate student learning through ongoing feedback in a minimum of one (1) hour of weekly supervision with the student. The supervision may be provided in-person, by phone, or videoconferencing.

If the on-site Agency Task Supervisor does not meet the qualifications of a Field Instructor, the student will need a third-party External Field Instructor upon whom the parties shall mutually agree. Options to fulfill this requirement are as follows:

- ***Field Instructor identified by the agency:*** If the agency has a degreed social worker affiliated with the agency who meets the education and experience requirements to serve as a Field Instructor, this is often ideal as that social worker is familiar with the agency.
- ***External Field Instructor:*** If the agency does not have a staff member who meets the requirements for Field Instructor, they agree to having a third-party external field instructor provide external supervision to the student for 1 hour a week during the placement.

B. Duties of Supervision

AGENCY TASK SUPERVISOR (ATS)	FIELD INSTRUCTOR (FI)
Agency Orientation, Intern Onboarding	n/a
Supervise daily tasks, ensuring that students engage in activities to develop all competencies	Provide feedback and assistance to ensure students engage in activities to develop all competencies
Support and mentor student, sharing from own expertise in the field	Support and mentor student, with special emphasis on competencies, self-awareness & correction, and social work perspective and values of the profession
Provide regular supervision and feedback	Provide weekly supervision and feedback
Approve weekly timesheets	n/a
Approve weekly supervisory agendas	Approve weekly supervisory agendas
Learning Contract – conference & approve, with FI & Faculty	Learning Contract – conference & approve, with ATS & Faculty

Site visit and mid-semester evaluation to provide feedback on performance & revisit learning contract goals, with FI	Site visit and mid-semester evaluation to provide feedback on performance & revisit learning contract goals, with ATS
Final Field Evaluation meeting with student and FI	Final Field Evaluation meeting with student and ATS
Notify faculty field liaison of any concerns	Notify faculty field liaison of any concerns

The Agency Task Supervisor and the Field Instructor will collaborate in the development of the Learning Contract, Mid-semester Evaluation, and Final Student Performance Evaluation. Both of these supervisors will communicate as needed with each other and with the Faculty Field Liaison to discuss the student's progress and any challenges that arise.

C. Additional Roles of the Agency Task Supervisor

- Complete agency onboarding process by communicating with the Field Team and completing needed documentation such as Form 2: BSSW Placement Proposal Form, Form 4: Affiliation Agreement (if applicable), etc.
- Interview potential students and provide feedback on whether they would be a good fit.
- Ensure that all the agency's required onboarding procedures and documentation for the student(s) to begin their hours at the agency are completed.
- If agency is CVA, attend a Field Orientation Training at Liberty University with the student(s). If agency is OCVA, participate in the Online Field Orientation Training.
- Ensure that the student receives an orientation to the agency and is trained as needed.
- Supervise daily tasks, collaborate on assignments, and coordinate activities and learning opportunities.
- Provide regular feedback and conduct regular supervision.
- Verify and sign weekly timesheets presented by student(s).
- Participate in a Learning Contract meeting or call (online/phone conference/in-person) with student(s), Faculty Field Liaison, and the External Field Instructor (if applicable). Sign the contract forms.
- Collaborate with the student(s) to develop and structure assignments and activities to help them:
 - Learn a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice.
 - Engage in activities that allow students to demonstrate the social work competencies.

- Collaborate with the Field Instructor to review a mid-semester evaluation of the students' progress in completing the Learning Contract goals and students' performance in applying the behaviors associated with the core competencies.
- Participate in a site visit with the Faculty Field Liaison, the student, and External Field Instructor (if applicable). If the student is at an OCVA placement, this will be conducted via phone call.
- Collaborate with the Field Instructor to complete a final formal evaluation of student performance and review this with the student in-person.
- Notify Faculty Field Liaison promptly if problems arise with student(s) during placement or in the case of an unanticipated, extended leave of absence. Work with the faculty member to explore alternative plans for supervision of students.
- Notify the Faculty Field Liaison of any concerns as soon as they become evident.

D. Additional Roles of the Field Instructor

- Complete the Form 5: External Field Instructor Form or the Form 2: BSSW Placement Proposal Form to verify that the individual meets the educational and vocational requirements and standards set by Council on Social Work Education.
- External Field Instructors who are not employed by the agency will need to sign an Independent Contractor Agreement prior to the start of the student's field experience. Although this is a volunteer position, the agreement defines the legal partnership between the external field instructor and the University and outlines the requirements.
- Collaborate with the student(s) and Agency Task Supervisor to develop a Learning Contract ensuring that the student has assignments and activities to help them:
 - Learn a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice.
 - Engage in activities that allow students to demonstrate the social work competencies.
- Participate in a Learning Contract call (online/phone conference/in-person) meeting with student(s), Faculty Field Liaison, and the Agency Task Supervisor. Sign the contract forms.
- Provide a minimum of one (1) hour a week in supervisory conference with student(s) in order to provide feedback and fulfill the following:
 - Process the field experience with the student, aiding the student(s) in developing self-awareness and self-correction. Provide discussion to supplement student(s) learning and development of skills and competencies.
 - Evaluate agency assignments and activities to ensure student(s) learn a broad range of social work interventions common to generalist social work practice and engage in behaviors associated with the social work competencies.
 - Evaluate the students' progress toward fulfilling the requirements of the Learning Contract.

- Collaborate with the Agency Task Supervisor to review a mid-semester evaluation of the students' progress in completing the Learning Contract goals and students' performance in applying the practice behaviors associated with the core competencies.
- Participate in a site visit with the Faculty Field Liaison, the student(s), and Agency Task Supervisor. If the student is at an OCVA placement, this will be conducted via online/phone call.
- Collaborate with the Agency Task Supervisor to complete a final formal evaluation of student performance and review this with the student in an in-person meeting or conference call.
- Notify the Faculty Field Liaison of any concerns as soon as they become evident.
- Notify Faculty Field Liaison promptly in the case of an unanticipated, extended leave of absence. Work with the faculty member to explore alternative plans for supervision of students.
- Be available to student(s) for consultation in emergency situations.

To learn more about mutual roles and responsibilities, please see page 19.



SCHEDULE: HOUR REQUIREMENTS

<u>JUNIOR FIELD</u>	<u>SENIOR FIELD</u>
SOWK 370	SOWK 470
3-4 credit hours	9-11 credit hours
One full work-day (or 2 half-days)	Four full work-days
Minimum 8 hours/week, 14 weeks**	Minimum 32 hours/week, 14 weeks**
Minimum 100 hours	Minimum 400 hours

***Students are committed to the agency for the entire 14 weeks regardless of whether the required minimum of hours is exceeded.*

A. Scheduling Hours

Students will collaborate with their Agency Task Supervisor to develop a schedule for field hours which will be documented in the BSSW Placement Proposal. Students must ensure that their schedule does not conflict with any other course requirements. Students must schedule their field hours around their field seminar class time. The field seminar class time does not count toward student's required field hours.

Students should arrange their academic course load and personal responsibilities to allow for field experience to be scheduled in half-day/full-day segments. Students have the flexibility to determine with their agency which days they complete their full and/or half day segments, provided they complete the minimum hours per week.

Students may want to attend educational events during field placement hours, such as workshops and conferences. Students must request prior approval from their Agency Task Supervisor to attend these events. The ATS will determine whether attending the event aligns with the student's Learning Contract.

If there is an unexpected delay in the start of field experience, or a subsequent interruption, it is the student's responsibility to increase their number of hours per week in order to complete the required minimum hours by the end of the semester and to communicate this adjustment with the BSSW program Field Staff (bsswfield@liberty.edu) and their Faculty Field Liaison.

Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to complete the minimum number of client contact hours (see page 16) in order to receive credit for the course.

During the placement proposal process housed in SOWK 365 (Gate 2) & SOWK 465 (Gate 3), students are able to submit a waiver to request approval for a schedule that deviates from the standard. **Submitting a waiver request does not guarantee the student the schedule they are proposing.** Approval to move forward in pursuing this alternate schedule will be granted upon thorough review of this proposal by the BSSW Field Team and the BSSW Director of Field Education.

Additionally, any permanent change to the schedule once students are enrolled in the field experience and seminar must be approved by the agency, Faculty Field Liaison, and the BSSW Field Team (bsswfield@liberty.edu).

B. Holidays and Inclement Weather

Students are responsible for collaborating with their Agency Task Supervisor regarding schedules and vacation plans. This should be handled in a professional manner similar to the process with an employer, with consideration given to the impact on the clients and the agency. The BSSW program does not require students to complete field hours during breaks (e.g., University holidays, Spring break, and reading days). However, depending on the nature of the

work, an Agency Task Supervisor may request that a student work during these times. Students should clarify these expectations during their agency interviews.

Students must make up all missed hours, regardless of the reason, including illness, inclement weather, vacation, holidays, University or agency-sanctioned absences. In all cases, the student must ensure the total number of required hours are completed.

C. Personal or Medical Leave

In addition to following all agency procedures, students are expected to notify their Agency Task Supervisor and Faculty Field Liaison in advance of any absence or late arrival. This should be handled in a professional manner similar to the process with an employer, with consideration given to the impact on the clients and agency. If students miss scheduled hours in field for any reason, including illness or other special circumstances, they must make up the hours.

Any significant change that alters the schedule more than 1-2 weeks must be approved by the agency, Faculty Field Liaison, and the BSSW Field Team.

D. Completing Field Hours Past the Deadline

There may be some extenuating circumstances that hinder students from completing their hours in one semester. If extenuating circumstances occur, students may contact the Faculty Field Liaison to request approval to receive additional time to complete their required field hours. Students must receive approval prior to continuing to complete field hours beyond the current semester.

If approved, this accommodation will require the establishment of a written contract that includes the following: 1) the number of remaining hours to be completed, 2) the anticipated date by which the hours will be completed, 3) the day established for weekly agency supervision, and 4) the day and time to meet with the Faculty Field Liaison (or other assigned faculty member) to turn in weekly paperwork and to discuss any field issues.

E. Additional Hours

Students are welcome to complete more than the minimum recommended hours per week, but in all cases, students will need to continue engaging in field work for the specified number of weeks until the designated end date noted for the particular Field Experience and Seminar course. If students have completed their field experience and would like to continue at the agency in a volunteer capacity, they are welcome to do so. However, for liability purposes, students are required to secure written agreement from the agency of the effective date of the shift from intern to volunteer. Any additional hours accumulated after students reach the minimum hours required for their Junior Field Experience may not be used toward the hours required for their Senior Field Experience. Students must also keep in mind that they must satisfy any agency-specific requirements prior to ending their field work.

VI. ADDITIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Field education requires the ongoing cooperation and involvement of various professionals to provide students with a comprehensive and quality learning experience in the social work field. The various roles and responsibilities of each key player, in addition to the Agency Task Supervisor and Field Instructor already mentioned, are described below.

A. Students

Students' roles and responsibilities include the following:

- Communicate in a timely and professional manner with faculty and staff in the department as well as agency and community members.

A.1 Proposal Process

- Complete all required field proposal assignments in Canvas by the set deadlines in the course.
- Submit written requests prior to the deadline for any extension needed for set deadlines.
- Complete any waiver requests needed for unique placements or requests.
- CVA students interview with assigned agencies at the Interview Day or on-site at the potential placement.
- OCVA students will, with the support of the field team, interview with potential agencies.
- Finalizing placement: After the placement has been approved by the field team, finalize details with the agency and submit confirmation prior to course registration deadline set by the BSSW program.
- Onboarding: Complete any agency on-boarding requirements (e.g., drug test, agency specific paperwork, additional background check, etc.) by the deadlines set by the agency.
- Complete the Field Orientation Training before beginning field hours.

A.2 At Placement: Meetings and Documentation

- Participate in regular supervision with the Agency Task Supervisor.
- Participate in weekly, one (1) hour supervisory meetings with the Field Instructor (separate from required placement hours).
- Arrange and participate in required meetings and phone conferences during the field experience as assigned with the Faculty Field Liaison, Agency Task Supervisor, and Field Instructor.
- Learning Contract: Collaborate, by phone or in person, with the Agency Task Supervisor, Faculty Field Liaison, and Field Instructor to develop a Learning Contract.
- Learning Contract meeting: Arrange and participate in meeting to review Contract with above parties.

- Site Visit/Mid-Semester Evaluation: Arrange and participate in a site visit or videoconference with the Faculty Field Liaison, the Agency Task Supervisor, and the Field Instructor.
- Be teachable and receptive to feedback given by the Faculty Field Liaison, Agency Task Supervisor, Field Instructor, and any other agency personnel.
- Complete tasks assigned by the agency and all field experience requirements by assigned deadlines in order to satisfactorily complete the course.
- Seek opportunities to engage in activities that relate to the social work competencies.
- Final Evaluation: Complete a self-evaluation of their performance in applying the behaviors associated with the core competencies. Participate in a meeting with the Agency Task Supervisor and Field Instructor to review a final, formal evaluation of student performance.

A.3 Seminar

- Attend field seminar class weekly and actively participate in class activities and discussions.
- Complete all seminar assignments by assigned due dates, including weekly timesheets and supervisory agendas, Learning Contract, Evaluations, and others as assigned.

For more information about seminar, please see page 39.

A.4 Performance in Field

- Perform in a responsible and professional manner. Conduct should reflect those of the social work profession and be in accordance with agency policies and procedures.
- Apply principles of social work learned in the classroom to the field and strive continuously to improve skills through periodic self-evaluation.
- Apply principles according to the *Code of Ethics* of the social work profession in their field experience at all times.
- Keep commitments to the agency, the clients, and the BSSW program.
- Abide by both the agency and Liberty University's policies around sexual harassment and discrimination while at their field placement and any other location performing field activities.
- In accordance with the BSSW Student Handbook, uphold the following Professional Performance Skills and Expectations. These standards apply to class and field placement:
 - Adherence to the BSSW program Attendance Policy both in class and field;
 - Adhere to BSSW program and class or program-specific policies regarding dress code and professional dress;
 - Punctuality;
 - Come to seminar class and/or field responsibilities prepared (readings and assignments completed);
 - Actively participate in seminar class discussions and activities and field work;
 - Demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the essential values and ethical standards of social work specified in the NASW Code of Ethics and the NACSW Statement of Faith and Practice;
 - Demonstrate use of critical thinking skills;

- Exhibit knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences affect thinking, behavior, and relationships;
- Use self-disclosure appropriately;
- Demonstrate ability to assess own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice;
- Clearly articulate ideas, thoughts, and concepts through effective oral communication;
- Manage constructive feedback;
- Demonstrate a willingness to understand and respect diversity regarding race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation;
- Advocate for oneself through the proper channels of authority;
- Work collaboratively and cooperatively with others;
- Demonstrate respect for others' opinions;
- Communicate with the BSSW program faculty, staff, and classmates in a professional and respectful manner; and
- Communicate with community members in a professional and respectful manner.
 - Attend Social Work events in professional dress, unless otherwise specified.

B. Faculty Field Liaisons

Faculty Field Liaisons teach the field experience and seminar courses and work directly with students and agencies during the field experience. Their roles and responsibilities include the following:

- Teach weekly field seminar course for junior and senior students engaged in field experience.
- Keep records of students' time spent in field through the receipt and review of weekly timesheets.
- Keep records of students' supervision experiences through the receipt and review of completed supervisory agenda forms.
- Conduct a Learning Contract conference call with each student, Agency Task Supervisor, and Field Instructor to discuss the Learning Contract draft, tasks, and assignments.
- Conduct a mid-semester evaluation visit, either on-site or by conference call, to discuss with the student, the Agency Task Supervisor, and Field Instructor the student's progress in Learning Contract tasks, goals and development of competencies.
- Provide consultation and assistance to students, Agency Task Supervisors, Field Instructors, and other agency personnel as necessary.
- Monitor and evaluate students' field experiences to ensure optimal learning and professional development through conference calls, on-site visits, and assignment submissions.
- Review and ensure completion and accuracy of several evaluation forms: Student Self-Evaluation, Field Instructor Evaluation of Student, and Student Feedback on Field Experience.
- Provide guidance to agency staff as they work with students on-site at international field placement settings that are not affiliated with a specific study-abroad program.
- Promptly notify the Director of Field Education of any problems that arise with field students or field placement staff.

C. BSSW Field Staff

The BSSW Field Coordinator supervises the Field Support staff team and oversees the field proposal and enrollment process for students securing agency placements.

Field Support staff members exist to support both residential and online students throughout the field proposal process. All documentation is processed through the field staff, who also review and approve placements. Tasks include:

- Develop relationships with community agencies locally and assist in relationships across the United States and overseas to enlist their support in serving as potential field placements.
- Confirm eligibility of agencies to serve as field placements.
- Confirm eligibility of individual professionals to serve as Agency Task Supervisors, Field Instructors, or External Field Instructors for social work students.
- Assist and provide support to OCVA students in the field proposal process of securing a placement.
- Match CVA students with CVA partnering agencies based on interests and skills.
- Review completed Placement Proposals and render approval decisions in consultation with the Field Coordinator and the Director of Field Education.
- Facilitate the execution of legal agreements between the agencies and the Contracts Department of University.

For more information about the field proposal process, please see pages 29-33.

D. BSSW Director of Field Education

The roles and responsibilities of the BSSW Director of Field Education, with the support of the other field staff, include the following:

- Development, oversight, and continuity of the field education programs and policies.
- Lead Field Orientation Trainings for students, Agency Task Supervisors, and Field Instructors as well as workshops on field-related topics.
- Monitor the performance of Agency Task Supervisors, Field Instructors, and partnering agencies for quality assurance and field program improvement purposes.
- Provide training and ongoing support to Faculty Field Liaisons.
- Disseminate field-related literature and materials to Field Instructors to facilitate continued education.
- Develop relationships with community agencies locally, across the United States, and overseas to enlist their support in serving as potential field placements.
- Confirm eligibility of agencies to serve as field placements.
- Confirm eligibility of individual professionals to serve as Field Instructors for BSSW students.
- Negotiate and facilitate the execution of legal agreements between the agencies and the University.
- Review and approve waiver requests and unique placement proposals.

- Serve as the contact for reporting incidents of discrimination, harassment, assault, and/or other safety issues.

E. Liberty University

Liberty University is responsible for the following:

- Maintain CSWE standards and a continual quality improvement process to ensure continued accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education for the university's BSSW program.
- Employ leadership that have graduate degrees in social work to oversee the administration of the BSSW program and Field Education.
- Employ faculty who have graduate degrees in social work and the practice experience essential for facilitating learning of social work theory, skills, and values.
- Oversee faculty and staff adherence to the NASW and NACSW Codes of Ethics and CSWE Education and Policy Accreditation Standards.
- Provide liability insurance coverage of a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence and \$3 million aggregate for students.

For additional liability insurance information please see page 32.

VII. FIELD PROPOSAL

The field proposal process, which is housed in SOWK 365 (Gate 2) and SOWK 465 (Gate 3), is managed and guided by the field staff. All documentation is processed through the field staff, who also review and approve placements. Students in the BSSW program assist in identifying their own field placements. Field proposal is the process of the students finding and securing an agency placement, and submitting a placement proposal for the field support staff to review and make an approval decision. During this process, each student interviews with one or more placements then submits documentation to the Field Team for review. Once reviewed, and if accepted and finalized, students are registered for the Field Experience and Seminar course. If Gate approval is denied in SOWK 365 (Gate 2) or SOWK 465 (Gate 3), the field proposal process will be discontinued.

A. Canvas Courses

All documentation is now submitted through a Canvas course taken the semester before a student hopes to complete their field placement. Each course is a 16-week, 0-credit course and is Pass/Fail. Enrollment in these gate courses does not impact the number of credit hours students can take in a semester and does not have any associated tuition costs.

There will be assignments due for each course like any other course and assignments must be submitted correctly by the deadline. All forms should be completely filled out and signed, scanned,

and uploaded into Canvas in pdf format (.jpg files are not accepted). Forms emailed directly to the BSSW program Field inbox will not be accepted.

SOWK 365 (Gate 2)

Gate 2 (SOWK 365) includes the Gate 2 application process and field proposal process for Junior Field Experience. SOWK 365 must be successfully completed the semester immediately before students plan to complete Junior Field (SOWK 370). Approval through Gate 2 is contingent on meeting the eligibility requirements for Gate 2, demonstrating levels of competency in behaviors expected for field readiness in an initial experience, and successful completion of the field proposal process which includes finalizing an approved agency placement. If Gate 2 approval is denied, the student will need to retake the course in a later semester to complete the field proposal process. This also provides opportunity for students to address any identified growth areas.

SOWK 465 (Gate 3)

Gate 3 (SOWK 465) includes the Gate 3 application process and field proposal process for Senior Field Experience. SOWK 465 must be successfully completed the semester immediately before students hope to complete Senior Field (SOWK 470). Approval through Gate 3 is contingent on meeting the eligibility requirements for Gate 2, demonstrating levels of competency in behaviors expected for field readiness in an advanced experience, and successful completion of the field proposal process, finalizing an approved agency placement. If Gate 3 approval is denied, the student will need to retake the course in a later semester to complete the field proposal process.

If students are removed from the course due to ineligibility, inactivity, or because they have decided to defer their field experience to a later semester, they must re-enroll in the course in a later semester.

Progression through Gate 2 or Gate 3 may be halted if, by the end of each course, students demonstrate a significant need for growth in levels of competency in behaviors expected for field readiness. This may include but is not limited to professionalism concerns or insufficient self-regulation resulting in personal experiences and affective reactions influencing their professional judgment and behavior. In these cases, a competency-based individual growth plan is established with the student. Additional support and follow-up on this growth plan is provided when the student enrolls in their next Gate course in a future semester.

Field Advisor: In SOWK 365 (Gate 2) and SOWK 465 (Gate 3), each student will be assigned to a member of the field team as their designated field advisor. Their field advisor will be their primary point of contact during the field proposal process. Each student will work together with their field advisor to secure their placement for field.

Please note: There is no guarantee that a proposed agency will be eligible to serve as a field placement. The BSSW field staff will review the paperwork submitted by the agency to confirm that they meet the department's required criteria for field placement agencies. Additionally, an Affiliation Agreement must be completed with authorized signatures from both the agency and the University.

The BSSW program strongly recommends that all students seeking a field experience that requires a new partnership identify a second potential placement agency as an alternative. On occasion, agencies are not able to fulfill all the requirements or secure needed approvals to proceed.

B. Finalizing Placements

B.1 OCVA Placements

Students are encouraged to submit forms as early as possible. Students who meet the deadlines set by the BSSW program will be given priority in processing proposals for approval. Approvals occur on a "rolling basis," meaning the Field Team will review completed proposals as they are submitted and make the student aware of acceptance or requests for adjustments.

B.2 CVA Placements

The BSSW program Field Staff will match CVA students and agencies based on several factors. Student and agency feedback forms, the timeliness of the submission, and the needs of the student and agency are all considered when placing students. Although the desire is to place all students in the agency that meets their preferences, this may not always be possible. Students and agency representatives will be notified by the field team of their placement decision.

The agency and student are given an opportunity to confirm through the interview process. Unless there is a reason that either party is not comfortable proceeding, the agency and student are considered committed to each other pending the confirmation interview. Ultimately, each agency will approve the finalization of the placement.

Students are responsible for collaborating with their assigned agencies to begin onboarding requirements such as background checks, etc. and to complete a BSSW Placement Proposal Form.

C. Registration for Field Course

The Field Team registers all students for both Junior and Senior Field Experience and Seminar courses (SOWK 370 and SOWK 470). Each section will correspond with a designated seminar time that students will be required to attend weekly. Students will be given the opportunity to indicate a preferred seminar time; however, these are processed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Once agency placements are finalized and all field proposal documentation has been submitted and approved, the field team will inform the student that they are cleared for registration and will proceed with providing the student's information to Liberty University's Registrar office. This process can take 3-4 business days or longer, based on the Registrar's load, before it appears in the student's ASIST account and on the Course Registration Tool (CRT). *Please keep in mind that the Registrar will not enroll students with any holds on their accounts.*

D. Recommended Liability Insurance

All students are required to have professional liability insurance while engaging in field work. Professional liability insurance provides legal defense and coverage for settlements or damages from legal action brought against students due to negligent acts, omissions, and errors while practicing at their field placement setting. Although it is not common for students to have legal action brought against them, it is still important to have this protection in place.

Liberty University provides insurance coverage of a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence and \$3 million aggregate for students.

The BSSW program also recommends that students purchase additional professional liability insurance. The coverage for liability insurance typically lasts 1 full year from the date of purchase.

Students may be able to obtain this insurance through: 1) the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) or 2) American Professional Agency Inc., the organization recommended by the North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW) or 3) an organization recommended by the specific agency where they are completing their placement.

- **NASW:** Students can purchase liability insurance through the NASW Insurance Company at <https://getinsured.naswassurance.org/professional-liability-insurance-nasw/> or 888-278-0038. The cost of the insurance that meets the minimum requirements of the Department is less than \$50 for one year. Please be aware that NASW requires that students become NASW members prior to purchasing the insurance. Students can purchase NASW membership at <https://www.socialworkers.org/nasw/join>.
 - **American Professional Agency Inc.:** Students can purchase liability insurance through American Professional Agency Inc. by going to the following link: http://www.americanprofessional.com/wp-content/uploads/STUDENT_BROCHURE.pdf. The cost of the insurance that meets the minimum requirements of the BSSW program is less than \$50 for one year. Students do not have to become a member of NACSW in order to purchase this insurance.
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VIII. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR FIELD

Students must meet the following eligibility requirements prior to engaging in fieldwork:

1. Successfully pass the first of several BSSW program Gates (SOWK 294) by receiving formal approval into the BSSW program via Gate 1 approval. (For details on the Gate Process, go to <https://www.liberty.edu/behavioral-sciences/social-work/gate-courses/>.)
2. Be in good standing with the BSSW program, which includes the following:
 - a. Have a “C” or higher in all social work classes and Gate prerequisite courses.
 - b. Maintain satisfactory citizenship and ethical behavior.
 - c. Consistently demonstrate the values of the profession: integrity, service, the value of human relationships, dignity and worth of a person, competence, and social justice.
3. Successful completion (C or higher) of all Gate 1 and Gate 2 prerequisite courses (prior to Junior Field) and successful completion (C or higher) of all Gate 1, 2, and 3 prerequisite courses (prior to Senior Field);
4. Maintaining a minimum GPA of 2.5;
5. Successful completion of the field proposal process, including reviewing the BSSW Field Manual;
6. Successful completion of Junior Field (SOWK 370) with a C or higher prior to Senior Field (SOWK 470); and
7. Attendance in Field Orientation Training.

Students must also demonstrate appropriate levels of competency in behaviors expected for field readiness prior to being approved to engage in a field experience course. This includes professionalism behaviors in addition to the demonstrating knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes consistent with the purpose of the profession.

A. The Gate Process

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires that all social work programs have a gatekeeping process to ensure that students have a thorough understanding of the profession of social work and will be a good fit for the program and profession. Gates 1, 2 and 3 are critical in assessing student readiness for field.

SOWK 294 (Gate 1): This includes the Gate 1 Application process for approval into the BSSW program. The Gate 1 application process includes a minimum GPA, completion of pre-requisite courses, a comprehensive background check, three required recommendations, and an autobiographical statement. The Gate 1 outcome may be full or provisional approval into the program or denied approval into the program. Students who do not successfully pass the course

to gain approval into the program are able to re-take the course, reapplying for Gate 1 by re-enrolling in SOWK 294, in future terms.

SOWK 365 (Gate 2): This includes the Gate 2 Application Process and Field Proposal Process for Junior Field. Approval through Gate 2 is contingent on meeting the eligibility requirement for Gate 2 and successful completion of the field proposal process. If Gate 2 approval is denied, the student will need to retake the course in a later semester to complete the field proposal process.

SOWK 465 (Gate 3): This includes the Gate 3 Application Process and Field Proposal Process for Senior Field. Approval through Gate 3 is contingent on meeting the eligibility requirement for Gate 3 and successful completion of the field proposal process. If Gate 3 approval is denied, the student will need to retake the course in a later semester to complete the field proposal process.

SOWK 494 (Gate 4): This includes preparation for graduation, the Comprehensive Exam, and gathering student feedback. Successful completion of this Gate approves the student for graduation from the program.

B. SOWK 294: Gate 1 Application Components

B.1 Background Check Results and Fingerprints Results

All students are required to submit a criminal background check results and fingerprint results as part the approval process into the BSSW program. The results of these checks are submitted to the BSSW program during Gate 1 (SOWK 294).

B.2 Disclosure Statement Form

All students must also complete a Disclosure Statement Form. The form requests disclosure of charges or convictions of any misdemeanor or felony charge and disclosure of being named as a perpetrator of an indicated or founded report of child/elder/dependent abuse or neglect. Answering in the affirmative will not necessarily prevent students from being able to secure a field placement but may limit the options for field placement as well as impact the ability of students to secure personal liability insurance. Ultimately, field agencies must give approval for students to be placed at their agency, and those agencies may have their own criteria and process for making such determinations.

The form also requests disclosure of any personal or family issues, illnesses or addictions that could impair students' abilities to function well in a social work capacity for a particular agency or with a particular population. Depending on the nature and severity of the issue, the BSSW field staff can assist students in determining whether certain field placements would not be suitable for

them. The goal of this effort is to secure field placements for students that would not compromise the well-being of the students and their potential clients.

If students fail to disclose any of the information requested, it cannot be guaranteed that they will be placed in a field setting or complete the field education requirements for the BSSW degree.

Signing the Disclosure Form also indicates that students agree to immediately inform their Faculty Field Liaison if they are charged with a felony or a misdemeanor during their junior or senior field experience, or if there are any updates that need to be made to the disclosure form. The Faculty Field Liaison will consult with the Director of Field Education upon notification of this information.

B.2.a Additional Disclosure Statement Forms

An additional Disclosure Form is required at Gate 2 (SOWK 365) and Gate 3 (SOWK 465) to verify if there have been any changes of being named as a perpetrator of an indicated or founded report of child/elder/dependent abuse or neglect since they were approved through Gate 1. Answering in the affirmative will not necessarily prevent students from being able to secure a field placement but may limit the options for field placement as well as impact the ability of students to secure personal liability insurance. Information from this Disclosure Form may be shared with potential placements. Ultimately, field agencies must give approval for students to be placed at their agency, and those agencies may have their own criteria and process for making such determinations.

C. Social Work Pre-Requisite Courses

Students must complete several prerequisite courses meant to provide the foundational knowledge and theory essential for engaging in field work from the generalist perspective. Students must complete these social work courses with a minimum grade of “C”.

SOWK 101: Introduction to Social Work is a course that gives an overview of the field of social work practice. Topics regarding the ecclesiastical beginnings of the profession, additional historical components, the integration of faith and practice, as well as social work values and ethics will be explored.

SOWK 135: Social Work Field Exploration and Observation is the study of social work practice and settings of practice. Topics in the course are centered on social work practice in places such as child welfare, schools, domestic violence shelters, hospice, hospitals, mental health clinics, assisted living facilities, and early intervention programs. Interviewing a social worker, touring a social service agency, and developing a community resource database are key components of this course.

SOWK 250: Health of the Social Worker is a course that emphasizes the personal health and self-care of the social worker.

SOWK 260: Chemical Dependency is a course that presents an overview of the concepts associated with the use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs. Topics in the course are the various perspectives on screening, treatment and prevention options; each topic is evaluated through a biblical worldview.

SOWK 270: Ethics in Professional Helping is a course on the study of values and principles of ethical decision making. Topics in the course are ethical dilemmas, critical thinking, professional codes of ethics, and common morality; each topic is evaluated through a biblical worldview.

SOWK 300: Human Behavior and the Social Environment is a course that utilizes a life course perspective and additional theoretical perspectives as tools for understanding human behavior and development across the life span. Particular focus is placed on the inter-relatedness of biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects with a “person-in-environment” framework.

SOWK 355: Social Work Practice with Groups provides the student with the opportunity to develop an understanding of theories, methods, and skills in relation to generalist practice with social work groups. This course also provides the forum for students to gain an understanding of cultural values of individuals and the impact of those values on the group process. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of being a culturally-sensitive group leader. Online students will take SOWK 355 as a required virtual intensive. Residential students take SOWK 355 as a residential semester-long course.

D. Expectations of Professionalism

As emerging professionals, students will be held to a standard of professionalism that reflects the values of social work and are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. All communication with faculty, University staff, and agency staff should be conducted in an ethical manner, demonstrating professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, oral, written, and electronic communication. Additionally, they will use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in all agency and University matters.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner throughout all interactions with BSSW program faculty, staff, and peers, as well as with all agency staff members and clients. Although this is not an exhaustive list, professional conduct in class, in-person or virtually, and during one’s internship should reflect excellence in all of the following areas:

1. Integrity

Students are expected to provide high quality work that reflects their best efforts. They must exhibit positive, proactive behavior and always adhere to class, BSSW program, and University academic honesty policies. The use of non-approved, academic resources (i.e., internet search engines, any online study/resource aid sites) is strictly prohibited.¹

2. Respect

Students maintain professional demeanor even when stressed and are not verbally hostile, abusive, dismissive or inappropriately angry. They are careful not to distract others through socializing, sleeping, leaving class/internship early, reading unrelated material during class, doing homework for another class, or wearing inappropriate attire to class or internships. Students are not to use unapproved electronic devices in class. Students are respectful toward peers and respectful of learning environments both in and out of class.

3. Communication

All student communication through email, Canvas, phone calls, etc. must follow appropriate lines of communication and convey respect to the recipient in tone and verbiage. Students are responsible for considering grammar, punctuation, and time of day when sending correspondence. Professional response time for communication is 24-48 business hours. In order to make communication more efficient, please send communication to only necessary recipients rather than sending multiple copies of the same or similar message to multiple recipients. Students are to resolve conflict with others (student, colleague, professor, staff, etc.) by addressing the issue directly with the person first, rather than gossiping or complaining unproductively.

4. Time Management

Students submit projects, assignments, or other documentation on or before the deadline. They should always take responsibility for missing work or deadlines. Punctuality and providing advance notice, when possible, for absences or tardiness is expected.

5. Professional Interactions

Students are expected to regularly participate in class and internship discussions and reflect good preparation. Students assume and complete professional responsibilities conscientiously. This includes responsibly presenting oneself on social networking sites and maintaining appropriate boundaries in accordance with professional ethical guidelines. Students must refrain from posts that address someone with whom they have an issue. It is important to recognize that actions

¹ The posting or utilizing of resources from non-approved, external resources (i.e. Course Hero, Quizlet, etc.) is considered academic misconduct. The Honor Codes of the university would consider posting course work online as aiding in academic misconduct, and using resources/sites like these would fall under "using unauthorized aids of any kind". If a student is found to have utilized resources like these, they will be reported to the University for disciplinary action. Additionally, use of such resources is also grounds for immediate denial of a student's current Gate and potential for dismissal from the program.

and content posted online may negatively affect their reputations among instructors, colleagues, future employers, and clients and may have consequences for their social work careers.

6. Attire

Students must adhere to agency guidelines for attire during field experiences and [University guidelines](#) when in class. It is expected that students dress in business casual for all agency interactions, including interviews.

IX. STUDENT FIELD RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Seminar: Weekly, Synchronous, Face-to-Face (in-person or video conference)

The primary purpose of the seminar is for students to have the opportunity to share their field experiences, receive support and challenge by their peers and faculty, and discuss how these experiences relate to the theories and practices learned in the classroom. Students should come to class prepared to learn from others and to share their own experiences as well to foster a climate that encourages mutual growth.

A.1 Attendance

Students are required to attend all weekly seminars as scheduled. Students in placement in the Central Virginia area will participate in-person during scheduled class time as assigned. Students outside the Central Virginia area will attend all weekly synchronous seminars through Microsoft Teams. As a key part of the learning process, attendance is required at ALL seminars. Only ONE elective absence is permitted. Unexcused and/or excessive tardiness or absences from the seminar sessions will negatively impact the student's final grade in field. Each absence after the first will result in a loss of 100 points.

A.2 Videoconference Seminars

Both video and audio participation during the entire seminar is required. It is the student's responsibility to select a location that provides adequate internet connectivity and that visual and auditory distractions are kept to a minimum. As client information may be discussed, it is also essential that privacy is sufficient and that student contributions cannot be overheard by someone outside the class. Professional presentation and behaviors are expected during all seminars. Web Etiquette will be discussed during the pre-field meeting and the first week of seminar.

A.3 Quality of Seminar Participation

Students will have the weekly opportunity to share their field experiences and discuss how these experiences relate to the theories and practices learned in the classroom. Students are expected to be on time to class and actively participate in order to earn full points. An active participant is

one who actively listens, responds to information, asks pertinent questions, shows signs of understanding, shares relevant insights, and contributes to the general learning of the class.

A.4 Confidentiality

Students should come to class prepared to share their field experiences and how they are applying what they learned in the classroom in their field placement. For the purpose of maintaining client confidentiality, students should refrain from disclosing names or other identifying information about clients during discussions and on any written assignments. To help facilitate the discussion, students should be aware of guidelines in the *NASW Code of Ethics*.

Every week, students must complete a participation quiz which includes submitting a paragraph describing the extent of their seminar participation (active, inactive, level of contribution to discussion, etc.) and confirming that they were on time and present for the entire length of the seminar class. Students in online seminars must also confirm that they had video and audio on during the entire seminar time, while observing appropriate web etiquette and minimal distractions.

B. Assignments

B.1 Agency Orientation Checklist

Students will cover the items in the checklist with their Agency Task Supervisor as part of the student's orientation to the agency.

B.2 Confirmation of Field Experience as Proposed

This quiz is intended to confirm that agency, tasks, supervision, and schedule for the placement will be consistent with that submitted and approved during the Placement Proposal process. Students may only receive credit for a placement as proposed and approved. *It is important to alert the Faculty Field Liaison if any changes have occurred since the first submission.* Please note that permission from the BSSW Director of Field Education and BSSW Field Team (bsswfield@liberty.edu) must be obtained for any deviation from the original plan regarding hours or duration of the placement, and proposal forms will need to be updated.

B.3 Weekly Timesheet of Field Experience

Students will document the hours completed during their field experience by completing the Field Experience Timesheet each week and securing the appropriate signatures prior to submission. Students must document all activities including the required one hour of supervision each week.

B.4 Weekly Supervisory Agenda

Students will complete the Supervisory Agenda form each week to document the weekly supervision session with their Field Instructor. The supervisory agenda form is meant to serve as

a guide for the weekly, hour-long supervision time between students and their Field Instructor. Students will prepare a minimum of three agenda items **prior** to the supervisory meeting. This facilitates a substantive meeting with maximum learning opportunity. Items could include ethical decision-making, problem solving, interactions with clients, learning objectives from previous supervision, specific questions/topics for discussion about policy or practice, etc. Students may desire to include case studies or process recordings to aid in the development of behaviors and competency. Students will document the discussion of agenda items and any additional aspects indicated by their Field Instructor or Agency Task Supervisor. Students should include behaviors associated with core competencies in their discussion.

Students must bring a copy of this agenda to each weekly supervision meeting with the topics for discussion identified. The Field Instructor may also add to the agenda items in order to address specific issues related to the placement or student's performance such as items listed in the paragraph above. They also may initiate other activities to guide learning (i.e., case studies, process recordings).

Students will complete the remaining sections of the form to document the discussion that occurs during the meeting.

Since students will be evaluated at the end of their field experience on how well they demonstrated the behaviors associated with the core competencies, it is recommended that these behaviors be incorporated into the discussion during the supervisory time.

If students meet with a separate Agency Task Supervisor, they are highly encouraged to develop a written agenda for those supervisions as well, as this facilitates best practice in supervision.

For more information regarding the evaluation/grade of Field, please see page 50.

B.5 Weekly Journal of Field Experience

Weekly journal summaries offer students the opportunity to reflect on the field activities in which they participated, their experience and learning, and how they observed or applied the core competencies. The summaries also offer students the opportunity to engage in a process of self-assessment and self-correction and support the integration of theory and practice, as students are encouraged to reference previous learning, courses, and texts in specified prompts. Students should use the journal template provided in the course. To receive full credit, a complete response must be made for each prompt.

B.6 Learning Contract for Field Experience

Students develop a Learning Contract in collaboration with the Agency Task Supervisor and the Field Instructor that will identify tasks and projects to complete during placement that correspond to the Social Work Competencies and behaviors as specified by the Council on Social Work

Education to equip students for the profession. The student will complete a draft of the Learning Contract with input and support from their Agency Task Supervisor, Field Instructor, and Faculty Field Liaison.

The student will arrange and participate in a videoconference with his or her Agency Task Supervisor, Field Instructor, and Faculty Field Liaison, to discuss the Learning Contract draft. The student will make revisions according to input received at the conference, secure the appropriate signatures on the form prior to submission, and resubmit their Learning Contract in finalized form.

B.7 Agency & Case Presentation

Students will make a professional presentation to the seminar class that facilitates application of key social work competencies. This presentation will provide the substance for a significant portion of the designated class time. Students will prepare a PowerPoint presentation according to the format provided in the course and will be responsible for facilitating class discussion addressing the pertinent issues. Professional attire is required. To support the integration of theory and practice, students will incorporate into each presentation at least one academic reference. Please note that this differs from the sharing that students might typically do in the seminar which is often geared towards gaining support or insight into your experience, or to that of others.

In this assignment, students are acting as teacher/facilitator to advance the other students' learning. It is not simply sharing their personal experience. They may select an individual, family, or group as the topic of the presentation, according to the level of intervention typical of the field agency. For example, if the student's agency serves individuals or families, one can be selected that will be a good illustration of the agency's approach. In order to collect the information needed, students may use their own work or observations with the specific client, review of the client's written record, interview of an agency member who does direct work with the client, etc. Discussion questions should highlight 3-4 specific topics that would advance their peers' learning. Students are not expected to address all the topics in depth. Students may focus on any of the following: intervention approach, application of theory, diversity issues, boundary challenges, ethical dilemmas, macro implications, etc. As presenters, students must be prepared to offer additional insight or information on those areas as the discussion unfolds.

B.8 Mid-Semester Evaluation & Site Visit Participation

Students will schedule and participate in an on-site meeting with the Agency Task Supervisor, Field Instructor, and Faculty Field Liaison to discuss their progress at their field placement sites. If the student is completing the field experience outside of Central Virginia, the site visit will occur by videoconference. The student will prepare for the meeting by reviewing the Learning Contract and will come prepared to share responses to each item on the Mid-Semester Evaluation form. Student will provide all parties with a copy of the Learning Contract for review and will participate in discussion with Field Instructor, Agency Task Supervisor, and Faculty Field Liaison in order to

address tasks, responsibilities, supervision, and development of competencies in all areas included in the Learning Contract.

Students will participate in this discussion, reviewing past and current tasks/responsibilities, strengths and areas for growth, progress towards Learning Contract goals, and soliciting feedback from the supervisor(s) and faculty liaison. Student strengths and areas for growth will be discussed. Additions or adjustments to responsibilities should also be discussed to address any need for additional breadth or depth of experience and to address areas for growth.

The Learning Contract should be carefully reviewed, and revisions made, in order to fulfill the Contract and provide additional breadth or depth of experience to address all competencies.

The Director of Field Education will be notified and a corrective action plan will be discussed as needed for any significant areas of concern identified during the meeting.

X. CHALLENGES IN FIELD

A. Changes in Field Instructors or Agency Task Supervisors

Students are expected to remain with their assigned Agency Task Supervisor (ATS) and Field Instructor over the course of a semester to complete their field hours. However, in the case of extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary to change. The Director of Field Education, Faculty Field Liaison, Agency Task Supervisor, Field Instructor, or student may initiate a change. If students feel their ATS or Field Instructor needs to be changed for any reason, they must discuss this first with their Faculty Field Liaison. The Faculty Field Liaison will consult with Director of Field Education, and if approved, the Faculty Field Liaison will begin the process of changing the Field Instructor and/or Agency Task Supervisor.

B. Terminating a Placement

Students are expected to remain at the assigned agency over the course of a semester to complete their field hours. If students are unable to complete the placement at the assigned agency **for any reason**, they should assume it will be necessary to defer placement until a future semester.

Any placements that end prematurely must be reviewed by the Faculty Field Liaison and Director of Field Education. The Faculty Field Liaison will contact the field agency to discuss the student's performance thus far and the circumstances which necessitated the termination of the placement. The student's eligibility to continue in the program will be assessed at that time and the Director of Field Education will inform the Program Support Coordinator (gate) team and Field Coordinator of the results. In some cases, this may result in a growth plan being established for the student, which will be required in order to resume field in the future. If the student remains eligible to continue in the program, the student and field team will work together

to arrange for a substitute placement for a future semester when the student retakes the appropriate Gate course (SOWK 365 or SOWK 465).

In rare circumstances, it may be possible to change to a different agency during the same semester. The BSSW Director of Field Education, Faculty Field Liaison, Agency Task Supervisor, Field Instructor, or student may initiate a change. If students believe their placement needs to be changed for any reason, they must discuss this first with their Faculty Field Liaison. The Faculty Field Liaison will consult with the BSSW Director of Field Education. The same review process as described in the paragraph above will be initiated. If approved, the student and field team will work together to arrange for a substitute placement for the semester.

If a student must be removed from their field experience, no hours accrued at a previous placement will be “rolled over” into a subsequent placement or credited to students. Students who successfully complete a growth plan and are allowed to retake the course will need to start over in completing the minimum number of field hours as well.

Students are required to fulfill their field contract with the site. If students make the decision to withdraw from a Field Experience and Seminar course, they forfeit all field hours earned for the semester and will need to reapply in a future semester by successfully recompleting the field proposal process in SOWK 365 (Gate 2) or SOWK 465 (Gate 3) to be eligible for registration in the Field Experience and Seminar course.

B. Growth Plans

Liberty University Faculty and Field Instructors have a professional and ethical responsibility to evaluate students on the social work competencies and associated practice behaviors.

There is no guarantee that the BSSW program will approve program completion for students who demonstrate the need for continued growth which may interfere with future professional competence. Instead, an individualized growth plan will be formulated in conjunction with the BSSW program, student, and the Field Instructor/Agency Task Supervisor. The purpose of the growth plan is to assist students in obtaining competency in the social work skills or personal, interpersonal, or ethical problems witnessed so that students may successfully continue in the program. Depending on the severity and nature of the situation, students may be subject to academic dismissal from the BSSW program or Liberty University.

Students who interview and are denied placement at an agency due to inappropriate behaviors or demonstrating poor interviewing skills will be referred for additional support through the Career Center. Students who interview at and are denied placement at multiple agencies due to inappropriate behaviors may be given a failing grade and/or deferred placement and a growth plan will be established with the student.

In these cases, a competency-based individual growth plan is established with the student in their current Gate course. Feedback from professors and relevant field agency partners is also considered as appropriate. Additional support and follow-up on this growth (restoration) plan is provided when the student enrolls in their next Gate course in a future semester. If satisfactory growth on the established plan is not demonstrated, the student's progression through the program will be halted, up to the extent of being dismissed from the BSSW program.

These growth plan procedures can include, but are not limited to, such actions as repeating particular courses, obtaining personal counseling or other support services, completing additional assignments, participating in mentoring sessions with faculty, participating in scheduled Gate Check-in meetings, participating in tutoring, using services at the Writing Center, and/or meeting with Career Services. Growth plan stipulations can also include requiring a pause for a period of time in advancing through the program or into a field experience, in order to allow time to further practice and demonstrate professional behaviors expected for field readiness, prior to being eligible to reengage in future field courses.

Students enrolled in a Field Experience and Seminar course may be given a growth plan or a failing grade and/or delayed in the program and if any of the following apply:

1. Unprofessional or unethical conduct either at the field agency or in an interaction with Liberty University faculty and staff;
2. If the Agency Task Supervisor, Field Instructor and/or Liberty University faculty, or other professional involved in the student's care (i.e., physician, counselor, etc.), determines that the student's current emotional, mental, or physical well-being compromises the integrity of the field experience or potentially places the student, or others, in harm's way or an unduly vulnerable position.
3. The student demonstrates a failure to demonstrate growing competency in required areas, and an accompanying failure to demonstrate self-awareness and self-correction to facilitate growth in that area.

The program evaluates a student's progress on the established growth plan through scheduled Check-In meetings directly with the student, faculty and staff feedback submitted via the program's internal Student Updates and Concerns Form, and academic and behavioral performance across the student's current courses. The BSSW Leadership Team, including the Director of Field Education, Associate Director of Gate, BSSW Field Coordinator, and Department Chair, in conjunction with relevant Field Faculty Liaisons, will determine whether the student is eligible to retake the field experience and seminar course.

At the designated next juncture, most often when the student is enrolled in their next Gate course, the BSSW Leadership Team will meet to decide if the student is ready to continue. The outcome of this decision is based on whether or not and to what extent the student has fulfilled the

stipulations of the growth plan and the student's demonstration of satisfactory growth, consistently and over time, in the identified behaviors and competency areas.

If, at the re-evaluation of the student's progress at the designated juncture, the student has not developed and demonstrated levels of competency and behaviors indicating readiness for field experience, the BSSW Leadership Team will again meet with the student to discuss the best course of action. This could include any of the following:

1. A continued pause in program advancement or into field experience courses, with continuations and/or adjustments in the growth plan and a new date for re-evaluating student progress
2. Exploring with the student alternative majors for consideration (with this, the student retains the option to continue with the BSSW program, contingent on growth plan progress); or
3. Dismissal from the BSSW program altogether. In this case, students have the opportunity to appeal in written format the outcome decision with the Department Chair.

When student misconduct constitutes a violation of the university's Honor Code/Liberty Way, the Faculty Field Liaison will fill out an Honor Code Violation form. The Office of Student Conduct and the Faculty Field Liaison will investigate the situation with support from the Director of Field Education. The incident will be shared with the Chair of the Department of Social and, if warranted, the Department Chair will bring the issue to the BSSW core faculty. An individualized growth plan will be formulated in conjunction with the program, student, and Field Instructor/Agency Task Supervisor if appropriate.

In cases involving the Honor Code Violation, students will have an opportunity to appeal. Students seeking to appeal should follow the protocols described in the Student Honor Code. The appeal deadlines must be observed. Written appeals are always required.

C. Disciplinary Action/Termination from Field Placement

The Agency Task Supervisor and/or Field Instructor must promptly notify the Faculty Field Liaison if it is anticipated that students will receive failing evaluations or be dismissed from their field placement. The Faculty Field Liaison will write an incident report to the Director of Field Education which will be discussed with the BSSW Leadership Team. The BSSW Leadership will examine the nature and reason for the failed evaluations and/or dismissal.

Students who are unsuccessful in demonstrating competency development in the Field Experience and Seminar course and consequently receive negative evaluations, or students who are dismissed from their field placement, will receive final grades reflective of their performance and may either be placed on hold in their progression through the program, in order to fulfill restoration procedures aimed to enhance competency development, or be dismissed from the BSSW program, depending on the severity and nature of the situation. When student misconduct constitutes a violation of the

university's Honor Code/Liberty Way, the Faculty Field Liaison will also fill out an Honor Code Violation form.

There may be times when School of Behavioral Sciences (SBS) faculty determines that a student's behavior is so concerning and/or non-professional, regardless of whether the student is making satisfactory academic progress, that prompt protective action is required. This is especially true when students are interacting with clients in a clinical setting. In such situations, the program director will place the student on Administrative Review for Behavioral Intervention. The full policy for Administrative Review for Behavioral Intervention for the School of Behavioral Sciences is available [here](#).

At this point the students may receive a final grade of "F" for their field experience and their progress through the program will be deferred in order to allow time to address the areas of needed growth. These growth plan procedures can include, but are not limited to, such actions as obtaining personal counseling or other support services, completing additional assignments, participating in mentoring sessions with faculty, participating in scheduled Gate Check-in meetings, participating in tutoring, etc. Growth plan stipulations can also include requiring a pause for a period of time in advancing through the program or into a field experience, in order to allow time to further practice and demonstrate professional behaviors expected for field readiness, prior to being eligible to reengage in future field courses. The BSSW Leadership Team will determine whether the students are eligible to retake the Field Experience and Seminar course in the future.

If, at the re-evaluation of the student's progress at the designated juncture, the student has not developed and demonstrated levels of competency and behaviors indicating readiness for field experience, the BSSW Leadership Team will again meet with the student to discuss the best course of action, up to and including removal from the program.

If the dismissal involves a violation of the University's Honor Code, the Faculty Field Liaison will fill out an Honor Code Violation form, which will be investigated by the Student Affairs Office and the Faculty Field Liaison with support from the Director of Field Education. The incident will be shared with the Department of Social Work Leadership as well as faculty and staff who are involved in the student's educational process.

Students have the opportunity to appeal. The final decision regarding any accrued field hours is at the discretion of the BSSW Leadership Team based on a thorough evaluation of the incident.

XI. SAFETY AND RESPECT IN FIELD

A. Safety Policy and Procedures

Students may experience a situation that compromises their personal safety while at their field placement agency or while performing field activities off-site. These situations may include threat

or personal injury by violent clients or other persons, exposure to or contraction of infectious disease, or damage to personal property. If students or Agency Task Supervisors have questions about whether a particular incident is reportable, they may contact the Director of Field Education. Students will need to follow a specific protocol in the event that any of these situations occur:

1. Students should immediately seek safety and/or medical treatment as necessary, report the incident to their Agency Task Supervisor and Field Instructor, and follow any additional agency policies for reporting and addressing the situation.
2. Students notify their Faculty Field Liaison and should call the Director of Field Education to report the incident within 24 hours of its occurrence.
3. Students are required to complete an Incident Report Form (located in the field course) and submit the form within five (5) days of the incident.

As appropriate, the Director of Field Education will contact students and their Agency Task Supervisors and/or Field Instructors to discuss any incidents which have been filed with the BSSW program and determine if additional action is necessary.

B. Discrimination, Harassment and Assault

Liberty University does not engage in unlawful discrimination or harassment because of race, color, ancestry, religion, age, sex, national origin, pregnancy or childbirth, disability, or military veteran status in its educational programs and activities. The following persons have been designated to coordinate Liberty University's compliance with certain anti-discrimination laws: Director of Disability Academic Support at odas@liberty.edu; Executive Director of Title IX at TitleIX@liberty.edu. If a discrimination, harassment, or assault incident occurs while the student is engaged in field placement activities or at the field site, the student should complete the Incident Report Form (located in field course).

C. Racial Discrimination and Harassment

Liberty University insists that all members of the University community are entitled to and shall be afforded an environment free of racism—whether overt or subtle. Therefore, members of the University community will not tolerate racial discrimination or harassment of any kind. Behavior that constitutes racial discrimination or harassment is prohibited by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This includes, but is not limited to racial/ethnic slurs, coarse jesting with racial/ethnic overtones, and other forms of communication resulting in disparagement or intimidation based on race or ethnicity.

It is the expectation of the BSSW program that each agency serving as a field placement will have racial discrimination and harassment policies in place that guide the expected conduct of agency staff and volunteers. Students are expected to abide by both the agency and Liberty University's policies while at their field placement and any other location performing field activities.

Reporting Process: There is a specific protocol that students must follow in the event that any of these situations occur:

- | |
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| 1. Students should immediately report the incident to their Agency Task Supervisor and Field Instructor and follow any additional agency policies for reporting and addressing the situation. If the supervisor is the perpetrator of the harassment or discrimination, students should report the incident to the alternative staff member indicated in the agency's policy. |
| 2. Students must call the Director of Field Education to report the incident within 24 hours of its occurrence. |
| 3. Students are required to complete an Incident Report Form (located in the field course) and submit the form within five (5) days of the incident. |

As appropriate, the Director of Field Education will contact students and their Field Instructors to discuss incidents filed with the BSSW program and to determine if additional corrective action is necessary.

D. Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Assault

Liberty University is committed to providing a safe and nondiscriminatory learning, living, and working environment for all members of the University community. Liberty University expects all members of its community to treat everyone with a spirit of Christian love, mutual respect, and individual dignity.

The University does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education or employment programs and activities, nor does Liberty University tolerate sex discrimination or sexual harassment. This policy prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, intimate partner violence, and retaliation, as those terms are defined in more detail below (collectively, those terms are referred to in this policy as "Prohibited Conduct"). These forms of Prohibited Conduct are harmful to the well-being of the University community and its members, the learning and working environment, and collegial relationships amongst students, faculty, and employees.

All forms of Prohibited Conduct under this policy are regarded as serious University offenses, and violations of this policy will result in discipline, including potential separation from the University. Some forms of Prohibited Conduct may also violate state or federal laws, and criminal prosecution may occur independently of any disciplinary action imposed by the University.

It is the expectation of BSSW program that each agency serving as a field placement will have sexual harassment and discrimination policies in place that guide the expected conduct of agency staff and volunteers. Students are expected to abide by both the agency and Liberty University's policies around sexual harassment and discrimination while at their field placement and any other location performing field activities.

Reporting Process: Students who believe that they have been the subject of sexual harassment, discrimination, or assault in any form while at their field placement or while performing field work at another location should take the following steps described below:

<p>1. Students should immediately report the incident to their Agency Task Supervisor and Field Instructor and follow any additional agency policies for reporting and addressing the situation. If the ATS or Field Instructor is the perpetrator of the harassment or discrimination, students should report the incident to the alternative staff member indicated in the agency's policy.</p>
<p>2. Students should immediately report the incident to the Title IX Office. Director of Title IX University Title IX Office (434) 592-4999 TitleIX@liberty.edu</p>
<p>3. Students should call the Director of Field Education to report the incident within 24 hours of its occurrence. Students will be given the option of changing their field experience placement.</p>
<p>4. Students are required to complete an Incident Report Form (located in the field course) and submit the form within five (5) days of the incident.</p>

For more information on Liberty University's sexual harassment policies and procedures for students, please see the [Discrimination Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

E. Addressing Grievances

If students have a grievance related to their field experience, they must follow the successive steps below and thoroughly document their proceedings:

<p>1. The student must discuss the matter with the person immediately involved, unless safety concerns would dictate otherwise. Seeking support and consultation from the Faculty Field Liaison may be helpful in preparing the student for this discussion as they seek to handle it in a professional manner. Additionally, the ATS and/or Field Instructor may be helpful. If the Agency Task Supervisor or Field Instructor is the person with which the student has a grievance, students should report the incident to an alternative staff member indicated in the agency's policy.</p>
<p>2. If the grievance remains unsolved or the student is dissatisfied with the resolution, they should request additional assistance of the Faculty Field Liaison, Agency Task Supervisor, and/or Field Instructor. Mediation may be advisable.</p>
<p>3. If the issue remains unresolved, the student should then contact the Director of Field Education.</p>
<p>4. If after all of the above steps have been taken and the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of these discussions, they can then bring their grievance to the Chair of the Department of Social Work.</p>

F. Incident Reports

The student should complete the Incident Report Form if any of the following have occurred during the field placement: sexual discrimination or harassment, racial discrimination or harassment, personal injury by violent clients or other persons, animal injury, exposure to or contraction of infectious disease, or damage to personal property. If students are unsure about completing this form, contact the Director of Field Education for advisement.

XII. EVALUATION AND GRADE

A. Evaluation of Field

A.1 Professional Behavior and Adherence to Field Manual Policies/Procedures

As emerging professionals, students are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. All communication with faculty, University staff, and agency staff should be conducted in an ethical manner, demonstrating professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and oral, written, and electronic communication. Additionally, they will use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in all agency and university matters.

A.2 Final Field Evaluations of Learning and Performance in the Field

The field evaluation is a highly valuable exercise in each student's education. It provides critical feedback to individual students to assist in their development as professionals. It also provides helpful information for the BSSW program as we serve students individually and as we seek to continually improve our program content and methods to equip our students to become excellent, compassionate social workers.

A.2.a Final Student Self-Evaluation of Learning and Performance in the Field

Students will complete a self-evaluation of their performance of behaviors associated with the social work core competencies. As an opportunity for self-reflection and self-correction, the student will complete this evaluation, identifying both strengths and areas for future development. A completed evaluation is one that has a rating for each behavior and includes justification of student ratings. To receive full credit this should demonstrate thoughtful consideration and differentiation between strengths and concerns.

A.2.b Final Field Instructor Evaluation of Student Learning and Performance in the Field

The Agency Task Supervisor and Field Instructor will collaborate and complete a final field evaluation to assess the student's demonstration of the behaviors associated with the core competencies identified by the Council on Social Work Education as essential to

generalist social work practice, to determine whether the student has met their Learning Contract goals, and to provide a suggested grade for the field experience part of the course.

Once complete, the ATS and/or FI will meet with the student in-person to provide verbal feedback on their evaluation of student performance and discuss the student's progress, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvements as well as recommendations for further development. The Faculty Field Liaison will review the evaluation, participate in the meeting as needed, and will assign a grade based on the evaluation.

A.2.c Rating Scales

Junior field placement interns should be rated according to expectations of an undergraduate student intern completing Junior Field placement and preparing for an intensive Senior Field placement experience.

Senior field placement interns should be rated according to a reasonable standard of professional readiness to enter the field as entry level social workers. This would reflect knowledge and skill desired for a social worker entering the work force and fully prepared to be trained in functions specific to a position or field of practice.

A.3 Student Feedback on Field Agency & Experience

Students will complete an evaluation of their placement, seminar course, and the field experience as a whole. Completing this evaluation will assist the BSSW program in assessing the quality of the field experience provided. Field staff may follow up with agencies to develop a plan to address any concerns noted in these evaluations.

B. Grade in Field

30%	SEMINAR This includes Weekly Seminar Participation and the Agency & Case Presentation.
25%	DOCUMENTATION AND REFLECTION Assignments include the Weekly Timesheet of Field Experience, Weekly Supervisory Agenda, Weekly Journal of Field Experience, and Student Feedback on Field Agency & Experience.
45%	FIELD PLACEMENT Assignments include the Learning Contract, Agency Orientation Checklist, Mid-Semester Evaluation & Site Visit, Final Student Self-Evaluation of Learning and Performance in the Field, Final Field Instructor Evaluation of Student Learning and Performance in the Field, and Professional Behavior and Adherence to Field Manual Policies/Procedures.