**APPLICATION TO BSW PLACEMENT**

**AND SENIOR YEAR CURRICULUM**

University of Vermont

Undergraduate Social Work Program

**Directions:** Please add your text to the gray boxes throughout. To use check boxes, click on the box you would like to select. When the “Check Box Form Field Options” dialog box opens, select “checked” under “Default Value” and hit “OK”. To uncheck the box, do the same, but select “unchecked” instead.

Name:       Cell Phone:       UVM Email:

**BSW Placement Readiness Checkpoints**

All statements below should either be checked indicating the statement is correct or marked with an asterisk (\*) indicating that an explanation can be found in the comment section below.

[ ]  I have attended and participated in the Practicum Readiness discussions in my SWSS 3630 class.

[ ]  I have thoroughly reviewed my transcript and my Degree Audit online, and therefore:

[ ]  I am confident that I will have achieved Senior Standing (**90 or more credits**) **by the beginning of my Senior Year** and the Field Experience (Fall).

[ ]  I am confident that I will have achieved the social work grades commensurate with the BSW Program policies (**No more than two grades below a B in required SWSS courses with neither being below a C *and* a 3.0 Social Work GPA**).

[ ]  I am confident that I will have completed **all general education and program requirements** prior to entering the Field Experience in the senior year.

[ ]  I have reviewed the sample ***Resume***, created my own following the template of the sample, and attached it here.

[ ]  I understand that for my **Senior year courses**, I have to enroll in SWSS 4710/4720 (Fall/Spring Field Experience Seminar I & II), SWSS 4680/4690 (Fall/Spring Social Work Practice I & II), *and* SWSS 4730/4740 (Fall/Spring Field Experience) *concurrently*.

[ ]  I understand that I need to ask my **faculty advisor to review and sign off** on this form indicating their agreement with my statements

Comments/Planning re: summer agreements and exceptions:

Student's Signature Date

Academic Advisor’s Signature Date

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**Primary Objective of BSW Field Education**

The primary objective of the undergraduate placement education curriculum in an accredited undergraduate program is to provide a foundation in **generalist social work practice**. Specific course objectives will be met through your work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities from a person-in-situation perspective and developing broad service coordination skills. All students entering into their practicum as a BSW are expected to move along a continuum from beginning to increasingly complex social work practice skills. The successful completion of this indicates a student’s ability to apply for Advanced Standing Master’s Degree in Social Work programs.

*You may find that your placement may not be in the area of social work practice that you hope to practice in after earning your degree. Keep in mind that the goal is to develop skills in generalist practice; specialties and concentrations are developed in the second year of MSW graduate programs.*

**Matching Process**

Once you return this application, the Field Education Coordinator will match you with a Field Instructor in an agency approved as a practicum site for undergraduate students. The matches will be shared and the rest of the process outlined in a specific SWSS 3630 class session. After that meeting, students are expected to contact their Field Instructor in order to set up a time to meet so that the match can be confirmed. Students formally confirm their placements in writing by the end of Spring semester. A sample letter of confirmation can be found on the UVM Department of Social Work Field Education [website](https://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/field) under the “Forms” link.

**Hours**

Getting an undergraduate or graduate degree in social work requires extensive time in placement in order to earn credit. Social work faculty in BSW and MSW programs across the world understand the commitment this requires from our students. Therefore, we suggest students begin thinking and planning ahead of time about the demands of the addition of **15/16 hours/week** to students’ academic schedules required for successful completion of their Field Experience, which is 450 hours by the end of the school year.

Field Experience is a year-long academic course (September through May). Therefore, the student’s “time in the course” looks and feels different from a traditionally structured class taken on campus. When students start in the Fall semester, they remain in the same placement until the end of the academic year (the completion of the Spring semester). This means that there is no “course ending” in December or “course beginning” in January (though students are expected to completed all Fall semester assignments by the end of classes in December, and Spring semester assignments by the end of classes in May; see syllabus on the UVM Department of Social Work Field Education [website](https://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/field) under the “Syllabi” link).

To manage the required hours and course length, students and Field Instructors are expected to work together to set both a weekly schedule and a broader one for the full academic year. The weekly schedule reflects which days of the week and what hours the student is expected to be in the placement, including supervisory meetings and regularly scheduled agency meetings students are expected to attend (e.g., staff or treatment team meetings, etc.). The full academic year schedule reflects which weeks the student will begin, end, and have planned time away from the work.

Because each agency has unique needs, provides unique services, and has unique hours of service delivery, these scheduling agreements will differ from student to student. Above all, the most important scheduling decisions consider the professional manner in which students begin, take time away from, and put closure to their placement experiences. In other words, the relationship and services to those who receive support from a student’s placement agency
(“clients”) must always be a priority. Practically speaking, this means that a student should not assume that they have no placement responsibilities during school breaks (especially the longer winter break) unless this arrangement has been *explicitly* made during the scheduling process. The scheduling process is a required component of the co-creation, by students and Field Instructors, of the Learning Agreement (contract) assignment for the year.

Additionally, students will participate in monthly seminars with their Faculty Field Liaisons (in this case, the liaisons “visit” students’ existing SWSS 4710/4720 course once per month during the academic year). These dates are included in the syllabi for both SWSS 4710/4720 and SWSS 4730/4740. The seminars are 1½ hours each and can be counted as a part of a student’s total minimum required hours for each semester.

More specific guidance (from the “Student Hours” policy on the UVM Department of Social Work Field Education [website](http://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/field)):

1. Undergraduate students complete a minimum of 450 hours in their practicum between September and May each academic year.
2. Some placement sites may require more hours than our Field Education program’s minimum. In these cases, students must be made aware of this prior to accepting the placement.
3. Students schedule consistent blocks of time in their agency each week so as to complete their hours within 2-3 days.
4. Student hours reflect the “normal business hours” of the agency. Evening and weekend hours are an exception, not the rule, and must be approved by the Faculty Field Liaison and Field Education Coordinator. The rationale for this expectation is that the student’s experience as “member of the agency community” is significant to social work practice skill development. Therefore, it follows that if the student is not consistently interacting with other agency personnel within the agency culture, they are missing integral learning opportunities.
5. Students either develop their own way to document their hours on a weekly basis or use an agency-directed process to do so. Regardless of the mechanism used, it is students’ responsibility to track the number of hours completed for the duration of their time in placement.
6. Students make up any regularly-scheduled time that they miss. In other words, there is no built-in allowance for sick or vacation time—students must complete the required hours regardless of the reason for missing. In case of illness or unavoidable absence, the student informs the agency as soon as possible. If the student has an absence of three or more consecutive days from placement, the student and Field Instructor immediately notify their Faculty Field Liaison. Unless otherwise approved by the Field Education Coordinator, students make up any missed time within the same semester. If a student misses considerable lengths of time, they can make arrangements to make up time before the beginning of the next semester, but only as a result of a meeting that leads to a written plan and approval by the Field Instructor, Faculty Field Liaison and student.
7. There may be occasions when it is necessary for students to perform overtime work. When these situations do arise, students will plan for and take compensatory time off in a balanced and professional manner.
8. Any on-call or crisis duty must be pre-approved by the Faculty Field Liaison and the Field Education Coordinator. No student is to be on call during class time.
9. While occasionally there will be important learning opportunities related to placement that take place during a student’s regularly scheduled classes, students may not be required to miss class in order to attend placement-related meetings or events.
10. Students must complete their hours no later than the Friday after the last day of classes in May and students are expected to be working in the agency at least until the last day of classes (also in May). If a student finds that they “have enough hours” and would like to end early, they must make a formal request which must then be approved by the Field Instructor and the Faculty Field Liaison. In other words, students may not “work ahead” of their approved schedule just so they can finish their placement weeks ahead of time.
11. That said, students should not be discouraged from working additional hours for the purposes of planning for unexpected absences; students should only be aware that they may not need to use these hours for successful completion of their Field Experience/ Practicum. For example, some students choose to carry a balance of 15-20 hours with them throughout the year as a back-up, knowing (and accepting) the fact that they may not ever need to use these hours.
12. Students may not count commuting time to/from their placement sites towards their overall required hours.

**COVID-19**

While all remote assignments in placements do count towards students’ required minimum hours in placement, students should assume their internships will be in-person unless otherwise noted, and consequently will be required to adhere to their placement organization’s COVID safety precautions. **Students should make the Field Education Coordinator aware of any limitations to or concerns about providing in-person services due to COVID-19 at the time of Field Application submission.**

**Transportation**

**Most placement sites require some form of transportation**—not only to and from the site, but they may also require the use of a car during the work day. Our “Placement Location and Distance from Campus” policy (on the UVM Department of Social Work Field Education [website](http://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/field)) states that we will not place you more than 1 (one) hour of driving distance away from campus unless you request that. **Please let the Field Education Coordinator know if transportation will present a problem for you**, but *please note that without transportation your options for placement will be extremely limited*.

[**Criminal Records**](https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/media/Criminal_Records.pdf)

Students may be required by their placement agency to complete a criminal record or background check with both state and federal law enforcement. If requested to do so, students will need to complete this check to have their placement confirmed. Most agencies pay for this process. However, some do not, and if this is the case, the student will be expected to incur the expense.

It is quite possible that students who have a criminal record will not be accepted for an internship with some, if not most—or even any—of our approved placements. Students who do have a record are, therefore, encouraged to talk with the Field Education Coordinator *as soon as they begin their placement application process*. This allows the student to consider how they may enter ethically into the placement matching process regarding past convictions. **Please note that ALL students with a criminal record are required to discuss this with their matched placement personnel prior to accepting and formally confirming any placement offer.** Therefore, this must happen no later than the last day of Spring classes prior to Fall enrollment in Field Experience.

The Field Coordinator will make reasonable efforts to match the student successfully with a placement agency. However; the Department of Social Work cannot guarantee that students with a criminal record will be able to enroll in the required Field Experience course, which will prevent students from being able to complete their BSW degree.

**Resume**

*Please attach an up-to-date resume, including all social work-related employment, internship, or volunteer experiences*. This resume will be sent ahead of time to potential Field Instructors. More specific guidance about the matching process can be found above.

For the specific purposes of an undergraduate placement, a sample resume is attached to the end of this packet. *Please use this as a template.*

**Inquiry**

**A. Your Current Experience:**

1. Briefly describe any social work-related employment (paid) experience. Identify setting and population served.
2. Briefly describe any previous internship and/or volunteer experiences. Identify number of hours completed, setting and population served.
3. Are there any other experience that you have had that you believe will positively impact your placement work experience?

What and how?

**B. Self-Reflection and Reflexivity:**

1. Social work preparation and development depends on self-assessment as an essential tool for balanced and effective practice. In order to prepare students for their practicum, it is important to explore how the knowledge and skills you have learned and modeled in your courses and in volunteer (and/or other related experiences) are fundamental to your readiness to participate in placement. Therefore, please take some time to carefully reflect on each statement and attach a typed response to each question.

Knowing how important it is for social workers to find their voice and to use that voice in a balanced manner, comment on your relationship with your voice. Think about this in terms of how you imagine talking with your Field Instructor in supervision, talking with clients or colleagues, and participating in meetings (staff, clinical, community). What do you see as your strengths and where are your opportunities for growth?

1. Social work values and ethics guide our work as social workers every day. Share the three ethical principles you feel will most guide your work. Why? How?
2. Moving from a ‘student’ culture to that of ‘practitioner’ may be an interesting shift for you. As you think about yourself as a beginning social worker in a community agency, what is your assessment of your ability to *show up* as someone from whom much can be expected?

If there is a shift you think needs to happen, what do you think this will specifically look like?

1. Agencies and organizations are busy and dynamic environments. While your placement will be in one where your education is the primary goal, when you think about your ability to take initiative in order to help people or situations (or even to ensure your own learning is rich and meaningful), what comes to mind?

What is your relationship with taking initiative and taking risks?

Share some examples of this.

**C. Future Experience:**

1. What kind of work would you like to do this year in your placement?

An inexhaustive list of various fields of social work practice is below. Please **read the entirelist first, and then check the 3-5 that you think is the best fit.**

The intent of this list is to help the Field Coordinator generate ideas on your behalf.

**Please note:** do feel free to select the options on this list that are crossed out, but note that ***it is unlikely that these fields of practice will be available to students at the BSW level***(This may be due to a lack of availability of these kinds of placements within the larger community and/or a Specialized Practice requirement; see note about Primary Objective of BSW Field Education on page 2). Student selections of crossed-out fields do help the Field Coordinator get a better sense of where to focus outreach efforts on students’ behalf and could (but not definitely) result in new placement sites becoming available.

[ ]  Adoption/ Foster Care

[ ]  After School Programming (Elementary)

[ ]  After School Programming (Middle)

[ ]  After School Programming (High school)

[ ]  ~~Arts~~

[ ]  Case Management

[ ]  Childcare/Early Childhood

Education

[ ]  ~~Child Welfare/Abuse and Neglect~~

[ ]  Community Center

[ ]  ~~Criminal Justice/Incarceration~~

[ ]  ~~Environmental~~

[ ]  Family-specific

[ ]  Gerontology (Aging/Older adults)

[ ]  ~~Hospice/Palliative care~~

[ ]  ~~Hospital social work~~

[ ]  Housing/Homelessness

[ ]  Immigrant/Refugee/Migrant

[ ]  Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

[ ]  Intimate Partner/Domestic/ Sexual Violence

[ ]  LGBTQHIA+

[ ]  Macro—Community Organizing

[ ]  Macro—Policy/Legislative Advocacy

[ ]  ~~Macro—Political Organizing~~

[ ]  ~~Macro—Research~~

[ ]  ~~Medical social work (general)~~

[ ]  ~~Mental Health/Clinical~~

[ ]  ~~Racial Justice~~

[ ]  Restorative Justice

[ ]  ~~School SW (Elementary)~~

[ ]  ~~School SW (Middle)~~

[ ]  ~~School SW (High school)~~

[ ]  Substance Use/Harm Reduction/Recovery

[ ]  Youth/adolescents

[ ]  ~~Veterans~~

[ ]  ~~Veterinary~~

[ ]  Other (list)

[ ]  Other (list)

[ ]  Other (list)

1. Of the fields of practice you’ve indicated above as of interest to you, please **clarify which are of *greatest* priority to you and why**. Please keep your answer brief.

(You may also indicate here, with a brief explanation, if there are other factors that feel equally or more relevant to you, such as Field Instructor supervision style, work culture/environment, placement location, schedule, etc.)

1. What is your transportation situation?
2. Do you have any special skills, talents, certifications/training, relevant life experience that could in the placement matching process? If so, please list them briefly here.
3. Please list any specific concerns you might have about criminal record, COVID risk, fields of practice or populations that might *not* be a good fit, etc.)
4. What other information would you want the Field Education Coordinator to consider when planning for your placement?

**Release of Information**

I agree that the information I provide in this application and my current resume is a true and accurate representation of myself and my experiences. This application and current resume may be shared as needed with UVM Social Work faculty and prospective Field Instructors to facilitate placement planning and matching.

Student Signature Date

**Student’s Name Slightly Larger and Bolded**

Address

Cell Phone Number

UVM E-mail Address

**Education**

**High School Name, City and State Date of Graduation**

Any honors, awesome GPA, etc. are optional here

**University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont**

Bachelors of Social Work **Anticipated Date of Graduation: May YEAR**

Honors or Dean's list semesters are optional here

**Other Colleges/Universities attended, City, State, Country Dates**

**(including abroad ones anticipated)**

If you have other degrees, enter them here. If you just attended, you can leave as is

If you are studying something special, you can also put that here.

**Social Work Experience**

You will notice that I suggest that social work experience be listed first. Everything counts here. Most students underestimate their experience in social work and end up hiding it in their resumes. It is important for an internship that they see any and all social work-type experience you have—whether it has been for four hours or 104 hours, paid or unpaid, etc. So even if you babysat for three summers, or helped clean graffiti off walls downtown, or did a project for an agency, include it. If you were involved with human service, social justice, social change organizations or activities, put it down here. This is the part of your resume that is most interesting to prospective supervisors.

**Agency that Makes a Difference, City, State** **Dates (Month/Year-Month/Year)**

Worked with people who have been marginalized by the system and helped them find their voice and power in advocating for themselves

**Another Agency that Makes a Difference, City, State Dates (Month/Year-Month/Year)**

Helped build a home for a homeless family

**Other Work Experience**

This is where you list any non-social work experience.

**Tasty Restaurant, City, State Dates (Month/Year-Month/Year)**

Prepared and served tasty food to hungry customers

**Extracurricular Activities and Affiliations**

President of the UVM Student Kayak and Canoe Club August 2021–present

Member of the Volunteer Task Force August 2018-August 2021

Snowboarding

**References Available Upon Request**