

# Bethel University Social Work Program

The mission of the Social Work Program is to prepare students for professional generalist social work practice, equipping students to serve a diverse world through service, scholarship, and leadership.

The mission of the Social Work Program is achieved by meeting the following goals:

- Students will acquire knowledge, values and skills that promote the well being of individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
- Students will demonstrate a commitment to critical thinking, ethical social work practice, and lifelong learning.
- Students will develop leadership abilities that promote reconciliation in local and global context.
- Students will integrate a Christian faith perspective that honors the dignity and worth of all persons.

Field education is central to achieving the mission, goals and educational objectives of the Bethel Social Work Program. Social work field education prepares students for generalist social work practice with a variety of client systems in a range of settings. Under the supervision of an agency Field Instructor, students engage in field experiences working with individuals, families, groups and communities. An on-campus weekly seminar facilitated by a Faculty Liaison reinforces the integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills. A learning contract is developed by Student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Liaison that foster students' ability to meet the ten Field Education Competencies.

## Field Education Competencies

Bethel University Social Work Field Instruction specifies ten learning competencies for students. Field learning is organized to meet the following knowledge and skills.

1. **Professionalism:** Students will identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
2. **Ethical Responsibility:** Students will apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
3. **Critical Thinking:** Students will apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
4. **Diversity:** Student will be able to engage diversity and difference in practice.
5. **Social Justice:** Students will advance human rights and social and economic justice.
6. **Research:** Student will engage in research informed practice and practice informed research.
7. **Person in Environment:** Students will apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
8. **Policy Practice:** Students will engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
9. **Leadership:** Student will respond effectively to organizational, community, societal and global contexts of practice.
10. **Service:** Student will engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

The two-level field practicum requirement is organized to give students the opportunity to meet the 10 Field Competencies and specific sub-competencies.

## Junior Field Practicum

The junior field practicum begins fall semester of the junior year with agency observations, orientation and development of a learning contract. Fall semester the student completes a required 80 hours in the agency as part of a course, plus the field seminar that meets 1.5 hours each week. Spring semester the student completes a required 80 hours in the agency as part of a course, plus the field seminar that meets 1.5 hours each week.

Junior field practicum sites are selected to assure that students can *explore and begin* to develop the ten *Field Education Competencies*. Agency sites also represent multi-service community centers, serving diverse client populations and offer students an opportunity to explore social and agency policies. Eight different agencies provide a placement to a group of 2-4 students in each agency site. Students also have the option of an International Semester during the spring of the junior year as a substitute for the 80 hour field experience in the metro area.

## Senior Field Practicum

The senior field practicum begins the fall semester of the senior year. A course sequence requires 15 hours a week for 30 weeks (minimum 400 hours) in an agency setting under the supervision of an agency-based Field Instructor. An on-campus field seminar meets 1.5 hours weekly to support the integration of student's classroom and field learning. Students also have the option to complete a block placement beginning January.

The senior practicum sites are selected to facilitate student development of the ten *Field Education Competencies* that prepare them for professional generalist social work practice. Students take an active role in all phases of generalist social work practice. In addition to criteria set for all agencies and Field Instructors, the senior field practicum represents a synthesizing opportunity for students to complete all field assignments and a performance evaluation of the ten *Field Education Competencies*.

## Selection of Agencies and Field Instructors

The Social Work Program has developed a process and criteria for selecting agencies and Field Instructors. At the initial contact with prospective agencies, the Field Director assesses the agency's ability to provide a learning experience that meets the standards set forth by CSWE and the Bethel Social Work Program. The Field Director then compiles a list of approved field placement opportunities. Only approved agencies can be used for field instruction. The responsibility for approving agencies rests with the Field Director.

The Field Director gathers information in January each year from agencies as to their interest, type and variety of practice assignments, availability of qualified supervision, and other pertinent data. Each agency has a designated contact person, typically the Field Instructor, who submits to the social work program specific information on an *Agency Information Form*. Upon placement of a student in the agency, the Field Instructor completes a *Field Instructor Information Form*.

The Social Work Program, adhering to CSWE standards for field education, has developed the following criteria for selecting agencies and Field Instructors.

### Agency Criteria

1. The agency has a commitment to service compatible with the values of the social work profession.
2. The agency must operate within social work professional standards and ethics.
3. The agency is involved in social work delivery of services as its primary function or should be recognized as an important auxiliary service.
4. Student learning opportunities are available within the agency to facilitate the student learning of field competencies.
5. Students have opportunity to practice generalist social work with systems of all sizes.
6. The agency has a qualified Field Instructor who is available and committed to the learning process.
7. The agency has an understanding and respect for undergraduate social work education and stated educational objectives of the social work program.
8. Students have opportunity to interact with staff and agency functions such as staff meetings.

### Field Instructor Criteria

The Field Instructor must be licensed as a social worker and meet the following qualifications:

- Hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's social work degree.
- A minimum of one-year social work experience after graduation.

It is expected that the Field Instructor will provide supervision for the student and carry out the following responsibilities:

1. Attend an orientation for Field Instructors at the beginning of the field practicum.
2. Provide an orientation to the agency and student's responsibilities.
3. Provide suitable workspace and support services needed to carry out assigned tasks.
4. Provide weekly supervision to the student for evaluative feedback and serve in an educational role.
5. Advise the student during the formulation of the *Learning Contract*.

6. Consult with Faculty Liaison as needed regarding assignments related to field.
7. Arrange assignments that offer meaningful learning and increase in responsibility as student progress.
8. Participate in three-way conferences with student and Faculty Liaison, two to three per school year.
9. Complete *Evaluation of Student Performance* at the end of each term and sign timesheets.
10. Attend workshops with other Field Instructors and faculty as arranged during the school year.
11. Update or complete *Agency Information Form* and *Field Instructor Information Form*.
12. Communicate with the Faculty Liaison whenever a question, misunderstanding, or problem develops.

### **Senior Field Placement Process**

Students complete a Field Application and the Field Director interviews each student for admission to the Field. Once admitted the Field Director approves the student choices for agency interviews and it becomes the students' responsibility to send a resume to the agency and arrange for an interview. Students obtain information on potential field placements by reviewing the Field Placement Opportunity List that consists of *Agency Information Forms*. They also read agency files kept in the social work office and agency web sites. Students may *NOT* contact agencies directly without approval of the Field Director.

Interviews take place beginning the end of March for the senior field practicum. The practice of the Bethel social work program is for Field Instructors or contact person to communicate *directly* with the student about their decision for accepting the student for a placement. Field Director can be consulted by the agency for input regarding students. Once a mutual decision has been agreed upon by Field Instructor and student, the student informs the Field Director who will follow up with a confirmation letter, field manual, and plan for orientation and training of Field Instructor.

The final placement decision is the responsibility of the Field Director. While students' personal interests are given strong consideration, other factors must be considered. For example, the decision may need to be changed because of an agency request, supervision requirements, or students' skills and maturity at the time of placement.

### **Junior Field Placement Process**

Students complete a Field Application and the Field Director makes a recommendation placement for the students based on students interests, needs and schedule. The Field Director will seek final approval from the Field Instructor of the student. Students obtain information on potential field placements by reviewing the Field Placement Opportunity List that consists of *Agency Information Forms*.

### **Field Instructor Orientation, Training and Support**

A program orientation and training is offered to all Field Instructors to support their educational role. Training on supervision is tailored to meet the individual needs of field instructors. Field Instructors also qualify for certain benefits such as library privileges, discounts on concerts, free continuing education units and an end of year luncheon celebration.