

**School of Social Work, Salem State College**  
**MSW Field Placement**

**Social Work Placement Field Education Portfolio**

The Social Work Graduate student's Field Portfolio is a mechanism to both organize and present assignments and written projects that reflect the student's progress through graduate social work field placement. The Portfolio provides a focus for student, field faculty site supervisors and field education faculty liaison to jointly review major accomplishments and areas of learning. It also provides a focus to present a comprehensive review of the student's adult learning development, identifies areas of strength, and identifies areas requiring further attention or developmental gaps in student learning. This then becomes a basis for further recommendations resulting from field placement performance in addition to the Student Field Performance evaluation. The Field Portfolio includes:

1. **Student Teaching-Learning Agreement:** this is a collaboratively developed plan with both student and field site supervisor to establish learning objectives and to target accomplishments which are to be achieved during the Field Placement. This Contract is formalized, signed and presented to the Faculty Liaison and Field Office for review by the Faculty Liaison within the first few weeks of placement. In the event there are significant changes, it is updated and reflects changes at the beginning of the second semester. This forms the basis for the student's self-assessment and Semester evaluation.
2. **Reflective Field Education Log:** The field log is a running account by dated weeks of major activities and experiences identified by category. This is particularly helpful in start-up periods early in the first Semester and in placements where non-traditional "caseloads" are established and field activity is accounted for in other than direct service hours. This is an excellent way for students, field supervisors and faculty liaisons to review learning experiences and exposure to varied activities. This also becomes a planning document to assure exposure to generalist activities in a balanced and comprehensive way. Reflective logs include a brief summary of activities in which the student has engaged, assigned cases/projects, the students reflections on those experiences in terms of their stated learning goals, professional ethics, development of self-awareness and critical analysis.
3. **Process Recordings:** Process recordings are primary learning tools that reflect dynamic interaction between the student and clients. The recording includes a chronological account of both verbal and non-verbal content. This tool enables the student to develop self-awareness and self-observation skills and becomes a vehicle for raising questions and discussions in field supervision. It is also a tool for the field site supervisor to assist the student in developing analytic and strategic thinking, identify manifest and latent themes and content, and becomes a tool for planning future intervention as well as practice evaluation. Process Recordings should be organized and included in the Portfolio, dated by date and week and serve as a review of practice development. A student's Portfolio should include 6(six) process recordings per semester: 2(two) in early weeks, 2 in mid-Semester, and 2 in late semester. Total at end of field placement would be 12 (twelve). If possible, one set should follow a student's work with one client/client group/family throughout Semester or semesters.
4. **Bio-Psycho Social Assessment:** The bio-psycho-social assessment is a comprehensive assessment of client-in-situation which reflects the student's competencies to assess the

history, stresses, strengths, resources and intervention needs for clients and their support systems. The School provides a comprehensive outline for both student and field supervisor to utilize as a tool for the comprehensive assessment. For macro-placed students a primary project outline is substituted for this requirement with a protocol outline provided. (See Field Education Guide).

5. **“Macro” Change Experience:** As a School that promotes and teaches an advanced generalist curriculum, we address assessment and intervention in multiple systems perspective. The School of Social Work requires all students to plan, execute and evaluate a major project which involves placement-long involvement in a community-involved change project (Foundation Year) or in an organizational change project (Concentration Year). In the portfolio, this is reflected by inclusion of the student’s Macro-Project proposal, which is developed with their field site supervisor and is reviewed in early first semester with the Faculty Liaison for course requirement approval. At completion of Field placement, it includes a summary of the learning accomplished by the project and may include summary “products” or formally developed outcomes, which reflect the Project’s accomplishments. When possible, students in MSW I and MSW II are encouraged to gear Projects to papers or areas of inquiry which they may further develop in respective “Macro” Practice Courses, i.e. Practice II and Practice IV; however not all experiences may meet the full requirements of these courses.
6. **“Micro” Experience:** For students who are in a primarily macro placement, the student and field instructor are expected to identify some experience in which the student has ongoing person-to-person involvement with the clients affected by the programs, policies, or legislation with which the agency is involved. This may be, e.g. focus groups with clientele, working with a client advocacy group, participating in an ongoing client support or self-help group, etc. As with the student’s macro projects, a summary of this learning experience is included in the Portfolio in the format provided. (See Field Education Guide).
7. **Student Field Performance Evaluation** by Semester: The student performance evaluation reflects the semester outcome of learning achievements, reflective of the learning objectives as set out in the student’s Teaching-Learning Agreement. This Evaluation is to reflect a collaborative review by Agency Supervisor and student and becomes the official record upon which student grading and performance evaluation is based.

### Portfolio Format

Your Portfolio reflects your work in field education placements and should be in formation throughout your placement experience. It represents both the process as well as the products of your field education course learning. It should be clearly labeled and identified by the Sub Areas noted above and ready to be presented at each Semester’s evaluation meeting for review with your Field Instructor and Faculty Field Liaison. Loose-leaf binders or other organizational tools are appropriate to use for Portfolio presentation, and students are encouraged to include unique outcomes of their learning, e.g. pamphlets prepared, training attended or offered, outcomes of the macro or micro experiences and anything that is a visual representation of your field education learning.

**MSW Field Placement: Macro Experience**  
**School of Social Work**  
**Salem State College**

The purpose of the ***MACRO EXPERIENCE IN FIELD EDUCATION*** is to assure that the Graduate Social Work student has some live, “laboratory” experience with the planning, process, implementation and evaluation of change as practiced in a real social service environment.

Students work with their Field Center Instructors to design and propose the Project in the initial weeks of Semester I. The proposal is discussed and reviewed with the Faculty Field Instructor and formalized as an ongoing part of the Student Learning Contract. The Field Faculty Liaison as well as other staff at the Field Learning Center can be called upon as resources in the continuing development and implementation of the Project. Progress in the Project is discussed at each Field meeting with the student, field instructor and faculty liaison. In Semester II of *concurrent placement* years (placement occurring during the academic year), the Project may become integrated in to the student’s class requirements for Practice II and Practice IV, respectively when the Project meets course requirements.

***First years students*** design and conduct their Macro Project Field as a **Community Change Experience**:

◆ ***COMMUNITY CHANGE EXPERIENCE***:

A community change experience is designed to facilitate a students’ learning about the development and implementation of a change process and product that involves interaction with the Field Learning Center and the larger community. The focus in this project is usually around a ***specific, identified community problem, issue, or need***. It involves significant learning about inter-system issues, community needs and resources, involving community residents and representatives in the process, and the intersection between the agency and community culture, populations, and community change.

***Examples*** that afford this opportunity would include:

- Interagency tasks forces addressing identified community service gaps such as housing needs or adolescent substance abuse
- Community collaboration to develop needed programs and seek funding for identified needs
- Staffing or actively participating in Community Coalition Groups
- Providing needed educational presentations and materials to community groups and other agencies on critical service areas. The outcome is to promote agency-community relationships and improve service provision to the community.
- Developing legislation to address significant community or inter-community problems or needs

### ***Some Project Examples: Community Change Examples***

1. A student staffed an interagency task force in an inner city Latino neighborhood providing research, technical assistance and co-ordination. This task force was working to develop a community Family Support Center which could be used as a client resource for all agencies and a “one stop shopping” open referral source and linking resource for families in the Community.
2. A student worked with DSS’s Community Collaboration Initiative, “Community Connections” to establish a priority needs assessment for community service gaps and to establish funding initiative plans with the Coalition and a grant-writing consultant.
3. Students placed in a group within a large agency worked with the local state representative and the representative’s staff to canvass area residents regarding social service support needs for elder adults and for family members of elder adults in the community. The group went on to work with older adult service agencies in the area to address these needs and establish some creative service initiatives. Including “support families” for isolated elder adults living in the community.
4. A student in an adolescent residential treatment center worked with local non-profit and profit businesses to establish a variety of volunteer and work site placements which served to greatly enrich the program’s independent living curriculum and service planning with clients. It also established increased community awareness of the Program and its residents and greatly increased the reciprocal participation of clients and community settings. This became the basis for a business and professional “Mentoring” project that another student helped develop the following year.

***Second year students*** design and conduct their Macro Field Experience as an **Organizational Change Project**:

#### **◆ ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE EXPERIENCE:**

This area is designed to facilitate a students’ learning about the overall and internal functioning of the Field Learning Center. This involves learning in depth about the agency’s mission, structure, policies, programs and funding sources. This enables the student to view and study the agency in the context of organizational and administrative change. It promotes the student’s experience with agencies continually striving to renew and adjust the implementation of the agency’s mission and interaction with the community of clients as well as broader community and macro influences.

***Examples*** that afford this opportunity would include:

- Staffing and working with a subcommittee of Administrative staff and Board of Directors in strategic or change planning

- Conducting a thorough needs assessment of an agency's client group or underserved population which the agency plans to serve with ensuing recommendations for program development and implementation
- Studying barriers to service provision and developing a well-designed plan to make specific services more accessible to client groups
- Joining agency quality improvement projects toward a significant contribution to agency service initiatives and service improvement.
- Developing, field-testing and refining consumer or program evaluation instruments, which serve to provide the agency client feedback and directions for service improvement.

Each project should have a formally developed report and be presented to the Agency Management Team upon completion.

***Some Project Examples: Organizational Change Examples***

1. A bilingual student developed, implemented and evaluated conflict-resolution groups of adolescents addressing cultural differences and addressing individual and group change issues. This student presented this work to Agency Staff with an accompanying group curricula and resource guide.
2. Two students placed in a public child welfare agency designed and implemented a specialized Foster Care Recruitment campaign which involved assessing the agency's pattern of recruitment and retention and successful national recruitment models. This project led to agency changes in strategies for on-going recruitment, including media use, and retention of foster parents.
3. A student placed in a residential treatment center for emotionally challenged children worked with a group of parent consumers to develop a helpful orientation manual which was "field-tested" and refined for parents of children newly placed in the center. This parent group went on to become an ongoing "parent Advisory Board" for the Center. The student also co-presented this project and process at a conference for residential treatment centers.
4. A student in an intensive family-based service agency developed an evaluation instrument for family consumers. The instrument is now used by the agency as families terminate in order to assure effectiveness of service and provide quality consumer assessment and feedback regarding services and recommendations.
5. A student placed in a large child welfare agency staffed the agency's domestic violence Response to Proposals task force and simultaneously participated in NASW Committees on Domestic Violence.

### ***GROUP PROJECTS AS COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES:***

Students who may be placed in a student Unit in a large agency, or who are placed in agencies within the same community or in the same service area, can propose to work as a group in what would be expected to be an expanded Macro project proposal. In these situations, students would formulate the Project Proposal in conjunction with their Field Instructors and Faculty Liaisons, and would consult as well with Practice II or Practice IV Faculty.

***Examples of this*** would be students within the same agency working with Management and Board members on strategic planning projects or in major program evaluation projects.

From time to time, the School in partnership with a public service initiative may invite students to join as partners in a large Macro Project endeavor. The same protocol is followed as described above.

***Examples of this*** would be the large Project undertaken in 1997-1998 in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to educate communities about the Children's Insurance Plan (CHIP) and to promote enrollment of children and families entitled to State sponsored children's medical insurance.

### **OUTLINES FOR WRITTEN REPORTS ON STUDENT'S MACRO EXPERIENCES**

At the close of the second semester (in either mid April or mid August depending on concurrent or summer block placement cycle) a summary report is submitted on the Macro Project, as described in the Teaching-Learning Contract. The student reviews the summary with the Field Instructor and submits the report to the Field Faculty Liaison as part of the student's completion of Field Work requirements and in order to complete student evaluation for grading.

Reports should be outlined in the following manner and address each area:

- Student's name, field learning center and brief description of the Center.
- Summary description of the project, it's purpose and summarized intended outcome
- Rationale for choice of this Project
- Project Goals
- Steps involved in completing the Project
- Barriers and obstacles encountered as part of the Project
- Outcomes of the Project
- Factors which influenced the Project Outcome
- Impact which the Project had on the client population, the agency, the community
- Summary statement of evaluation of the Project's effectiveness, specifically addressing the original intended change focus
- Student's learning as a result of this Project