Washington University in St. Louis
Brown School
Master of Social Work
Master of Public Health
(Dual Degree)
Field Instructor Handbook
Office of Field Education
2021-2022
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Welcome to the Office of Field Education

Dear Colleague,
Welcome from the Brown School Office of Field Education (OFE)! Field instruction at the Brown School is a required didactic component of the Master of Social Work (MSW) and Masters of Public Health (MPH) program and the responsibility of the Dean and faculty who delegate the implementation of practicum policies to the OFE field faculty.

The purpose of your Field Instructor Handbook is to provide you with information regarding the social work and public health field education requirements, policies and procedures that have been established for practicum students and field instructors affiliated with Brown School. Please read and retain your handbook as a valuable reference and contact the OFE field faculty if assistance or support is needed. Thank you for partnering with the Brown School to provide graduate-level experiences to our students.

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Missions and Policies of the Brown School and Washington University

Mission of Washington University in St. Louis
Washington University’s mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge, and protect the freedom of inquiry through research, teaching, and learning. Washington University creates an environment to encourage and support an ethos of wide-ranging exploration. Washington University’s faculty and staff strive to enhance the lives and livelihoods of students, the people of the greater St. Louis community, the country, and the world.

Vision & Mission of the Brown School
Our Vision – To create positive social change through our path-breaking research and educational excellence.

Our Mission – To educate and prepare future social work and public health leaders in areas of policy, practice, and research; to pioneer research and apply results to impact policy and practice locally, nationally, and internationally; and to collaborate with organizations to use evidence to improve access to and quality of social services and to address social and economic justice.

Evidence-Based Social Work – The Brown School faculty believes that the increasing research base of our professions and the ongoing technological revolution in data management and communication make it possible to move beyond rhetoric about the need for an evidence base for our professions and to teach students about how to consciously and judiciously use evidence in collaborative social work and public health decision making.

Racial Equity in Field Education

Racial Equity: Racial Equity continues to be critical for public health education, especially in light of our current political situation. To support students integrating this knowledge and skill set into their public health practice, we have added content about racial equity to the ELA.

Students are asked to (we will provide examples later in this addendum):

- Identify a racial equity goal with you to practice applying a racial equity lens in practice on the ELA.
- Integrate racial equity into learning goals for key competencies.

The Brown School Office of Field Education commitment to racial equity is guided by the following values and definitions.

Our Values
We embrace diverse people, identities, ideas, and points of view to continually improve our School, region, nation, and world. We are committed to creating internal and external contexts where outcomes are no longer predicted by identity, access to resources, or geography.

How We Define Equity
Equity is realized when the outcomes of individuals, communities and populations are no longer impeded or predicted by identity, access to resources, or geography.

Washington University’s Academy on Diversity, Inclusion & Equity offers these considerations: “Equity is an outcome. Equity is distinct from equality – equality means treating all members of the community the same. However, because of generations of unequal treatment throughout the history of our country, higher education generally, Washington University and the Brown School specifically, supporting equitable outcomes often call for giving different support to different groups.” (p.1)

As the Office of Field Education, we are committed to racial equity, a state in which outcomes are not predicted by race.

Racial Equity in practicum placements requires the process of recognizing and addressing how levels of institutionalized and systemic oppression impact individuals, families, organizations and communities.
We use the following definitions:

**An Anti-racist**: someone who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing antiracist ideas. This includes the expression or ideas that racial groups are equals and do not need developing, and supporting policies that reduce racial inequity.

A racist is an individual supporting racist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea.

SOURCE: Ibram X Kendi, How to be an Antiracist, Random House, 2019

We believe everyone has a role in address racial equity and this work happens on a continuum. We use the Forward through Ferguson continuum to teach students about this and you can refer to this tool as well.

**Overview of the Dual MSW/MPH Practicum**

**Purpose of Practicum**
The practicum experience is an integral part of professional social work and public health education. It is designed to provide authentic practice situations where learning that occurs in the practicum setting complements academic course work through practical application of theories, concepts, and specific practice behaviors for the field experience – thus, the term “practicum.”

The purpose of the graduate-level dual social work and public health practicum at the Brown School is threefold: 1) to provide challenging, innovative and substantive learning experiences to students, 2) to prepare students to assume responsibilities as social work and public health professionals exhibiting ethical and professional behavior, and 3) to ensure skilled supervision by experienced field instructors who have been affiliated with the Brown School based on demonstrated knowledge in the field. Students are required to complete a total of three (3) academic credits (equivalent to 360 hours of field work) in a dual social work and public health practicum to graduate. Additionally, dual MSW/MPH students must complete two (2) academic credits of concentration level social practicum to graduate. Dual students may complete all five (5) required credits (equivalent to 600 hours of field work) at one site.

**Timing of Practicum**
Practicum hours are scheduled based on a student’s educational plan and the organization’s need. Schedules are negotiated between the student and the field instructor. Practicum can be completed on a part-time or full-time basis totaling up to no more than 40 hours per week. Following the Brown School’s academic sequencing, most students begin the dual practicum in the summer after their second year of course work. Dual students are eligible to start their two (2) academic credits of concentration level social work practicum after successful completion of their foundation level practicum. Students entering the dual program with advanced standing status can begin their two credits concentration practicum and/or dual practicum after completion of required course work, typically after their fifth semester or after their second year of course work.

**Practicum Recruitment and Selection**
The OFE does not assign students to practicum organizations. Students follow a process of self- or guided selection, via the process below.

Practicum position descriptions may be created by practicum organizations and posted to the Brown School’s practicum database, called Symplicity, for students to view. All positions must be approved by OFE once submitted for posting. Once they are approved, positions are available for students to search for and view, and students will contact organizations based on their interest and qualification for posted positions. For more information on how to post practicum positions, please email ofe@wustl.edu.

Field Faculty members share the responsibility for assisting students to select field experiences. This model allows each student to consider learning experiences that contribute to professional identity, provide a comprehensive base of theory, knowledge, and skills, and build on their own personal short and long-term career goals.
Required Credits and Practicum Hours
Traditional dual MSW/MPH students (in the 3-year program) are required to complete a total of eight (8) academic credits in practicum, equivalent to 960 hours of field work, with a passing grade to graduate. The eight credits are divided into three practicum levels: three (3) credits for MSW foundation practicum (360 field hours) and two (2) credits for concentration practicum (240 field hours) and three (3) credits for dual MSW/MPH practicum (360 hours) (see “Practicum Levels” section).

Students in Advanced Standing (with a BSW and previous practicum experience) are required to complete two (2) credits of concentration practicum (240 hours) and three (3) credits of dual MSW/MPH practicum (360 hours). Each credit of practicum is equivalent to 120 field hours. Students must complete all three (3) credits of dual MSW/MPH practicum at one site. Students may register for one (1) credit (120 field hours) to a maximum of five (5) credits (600 field hours) per semester. The breakdown of hours worked per week (part-time or full-time) is negotiated between the student and field instructor. However, students may not accumulate more than 40 field hours per week in practicum unless they are in an international setting. Students may continue to volunteer or work at the practicum organization beyond the completion of the contracted practicum hours, as long as the duration and terms of continued service are agreeable to the student, the organization, and approval is granted through the Washington University Office of International Students and Scholars (for international students only). Please note: students will not be covered by the university’s liability insurance after they have completed all of their agreed-upon practicum hours at the organization.

Special Note: Covid-19 Pandemic Practicum Hours Adjustment: See Appendix A for information on the adjustment of practicum hours for students based on their graduation date.

Professional Behavior and Responsibilities of Students in Practicum
Brown School dual MSW/MPH students are preparing to practice as competent social work and public health practitioners. Consistent with the knowledge, values, ethics, and skills of the social work and public health profession, students in practica are expected to adhere to the profession’s values and ethics in all aspects of the field instruction experience. Responsibilities of students in practicum include:

- Adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health
- Compliance with organizational policies and procedures, including adherence to the organization’s dress code
- Maintain professional boundaries and behaviors with respect to the organization’s clients, constituents, and staff
- Attend and actively participate in weekly supervisory sessions, including preparing an agenda for supervision, if requested
- Keep a timesheet of completed practicum hours and notifying the agency in advance when absent
- Fulfill all the learning obligations and expectations set forth in the student’s Educational Learning Agreement, including demonstrating all competencies and practice behaviors through learning activities
- Communicate with the Field Instructor regarding the student’s learning needs and interests, conflicts regarding field instruction, and challenges to developing as a professional public health practitioner
- Participate in the mid-semester site visit
- Consult with the organization about safety and liability
- Contact the Office of Field Education if problems arise in the field that may need support, clarification, and resolution
- Assume responsibility of the submission of the following required practicum documents to the Office of Field Education to receive a practicum grade:
  1. Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance
  2. Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum
  3. OFE’s Practicum Timesheet
  4. Two Portfolio Products (Required for dual degree practicum only)

Additional student responsibilities are discussed in the “Practicum Requirements for Students” section and throughout this handbook.
What Field Instructors Need to Know Before the Start of Practicum

Field Instructor to Student Ratio
It is strongly recommended that field instructors supervise no more than three (3) students in practicum per semester. This field instructor-student ratio (3:1) affords the field instructor the opportunity to effectively engage and supervise a manageable number of students without compromising time needed for the field instructor to attend to his or her own job duties. An exception to this policy may be made for professionals whose primary job is to supervise practicum students, interns, or volunteers.

Educational Learning Agreement (ELA)
The ELA serves as the learning agreement and guide to frame the students' progress towards gaining competency in their field experience. In consultation with the field instructor, students are required to complete the (ELA) specific to their practicum level, MSW concentration and/or MPH specialization. Each behavior listed in the ELA must be addressed during the course of the practicum experience. Completion and submission of the ELA to the OFE within the first 40 hours of practicum is the responsibility of the student, with consultation and support of the field instructor (see “Practicum Requirements for Students” section).

Orientation for Students in Practicum
A successful practicum partnership between a field instructor and student begins with a well-planned orientation process. An effective orientation process can help a student quickly acclimate to their practicum setting, better understand their role in the organization, and clearly define their tasks, duties, and responsibilities in the practicum. The orientation of a student to their practicum organization and/or site should include:

- Adaptation to the culture and environment of the organization – tour of facility, student’s office space, review of dress code, work schedule, holiday/vacation schedules, use of phone, travel reimbursement, resources manuals, and reference materials
- Agreement on the student’s role in practicum, including boundaries of student’s involvement in projects, meetings, or committees, persons with whom the student may consult, and the student’s working title (e.g., research associate intern)
- Review of the history, mission, funding sources, services and organizational chart
- Review of organizational policies and procedures, including the organization’s stance on confidentiality
- Review of the code of ethics followed by the organization or practicum site
- Review of organizational procedures for documentation, record keeping, and reporting work time
- Introduction to key administrators and staff in the organization
- Introduction to key community resources and persons outside of the practicum organization with whom the student is likely to interact
- Review of personal safety issues and training necessary to protect the well-being of the student

Students who will be engaged in practicum tasks and duties off-site from the practicum organization (e.g., in community centers or health clinics) should also be oriented in a similar manner as indicated above to the culture, operations, and policies of the work site.

Site Visit
All practicum students are required to receive one site visit approximately midway through the student’s entire practicum experience as indicated on the face sheet of the ELA. For practica at out-of-state or international locations, an e-mail, phone conference, or video conference may be arranged. The visit is scheduled by a Field Faculty member. The field instructor, student, and field faculty member will meet for approximately 30 minutes to an hour to discuss the student’s progress in practicum; therefore, the field instructor’s participation in this meeting is vital (see “Site Visit” in the “Practicum Requirements for Field Instructors” section).

Professional Liability Insurance
Washington University carries a $2 million insurance policy per person for its various professional fields. This program covers duly registered Brown School students for events that may occur while performing duties in their field practicum. Field instructors and organizations can obtain proof of coverage by contacting the OFE.
Automobile Insurance
The University does not provide automobile liability coverage to students. Students who will be using their personal vehicle or a company vehicle for organizational business should negotiate coverage with the organization prior to the practicum start.

Special Accommodations
Students with disabilities or those requiring special accommodations in the field should discuss those needs with the field instructor and the Washington University Office of Disability Resources so that reasonable accommodations can be identified and planned for accordingly. Reasonable accommodations are tools or arrangements that facilitate or enhance the performance of a student with a disability or special needs.

Criminal Background Checks, Drug Screenings, HIPAA Certification, and Verification of Health Status
Some practicum organizations may require screenings, certification, and verification or vaccinations from students prior to beginning practicum. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to the following: criminal background check, drug screening for illicit drugs, vaccinations, HIPAA training/certification, and/or verification of health status. Washington University does not require or facilitate such requirements of students. The field instructor should communicate directly with the student about these requirements and compliance with organizational standards and policies. Students are individually responsible for obtaining the required background checks, screenings, required trainings/certifications, and all associated costs and fees.

Students’ Activities in Compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics and the Ethical Practice of Public Health
The Brown School supports the policies of affiliated practicum organizations. However, because practicum students are not employees of these organizations, students are encouraged to pay special attention to the requirements of their practicum tasks and duties in order to comply with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health. The Code of Ethics and Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health provides values and beliefs which serve as the foundation for morally responsible, social work and public health practice that should guide students in their professional behavior as agents of the organization while in practicum.

Organizational Policies
Students are required to comply with the rules and policies of the practicum site, insofar as they pertain to students’ activities during practicum. It is the responsibility of the field instructor to ensure that students are well-apprised of the organization’s policies, consequences should violations of such polices occur, and dress and professional comportment aligned with organizational policies. Field instructors should also discuss with the student the potential for conflicts of interest regarding the policies of the organization and principles/ethics of the social work and public health profession, if applicable (see “Students’ Activities in Compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics and the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health” section).

Lobbying Activities
Students who will be engaged in formal lobbying activities as a part of the practicum experience should discuss with the practicum organization and the OFE the issue of registering as a lobbyist with the appropriate governmental entity. If the field instructor and student determine that registration is appropriate, the student must register as a lobbyist with the practicum organization and not with the University. It is the responsibility of the organization and student to comply with all laws and regulations relevant to lobbying.

Sharing Sensitive Information
The OFE will share all practicum-related information, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), with appropriate persons including the student’s academic advisor, the practicum field instructor, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Associate and Assistant Deans for Social Work and Public Health, respectively. Relevant information is defined as information that may have an impact on the student’s learning experience, clients, constituents, the practicum organization, field instructor, or staff. Such information, as appropriate, will be shared to enhance the learning process. Field instructors are also expected to share relevant information with the OFE. The practicum organization may require the student to sign a release of information form for some types of information.

Practicum Deliverables and Work Products
While in practicum, students should operate under the following assumption: a work product produced in the course of a practicum, under the supervision, guidance, and review of a representative(s) of the organization, using the organization’s data and/or resources is considered the property of the organization. An exception may exist when the student is provided with written permission from the organization stating otherwise. Compliance with all federal and state regulations governing copyright, HIPAA, etc. is the standard of conduct.
Remote Practicum/Internship
Generally, remote practicum is not permitted.

During COVID-19 restrictions, remote practicums may be necessary. There are many scenarios that will contribute to remote practicum:

- Organizations are not meeting in person and provide remote learning activities for students
- Shelter in place order is put into place that moves all work to remote work
- Student is not comfortable going to the site in person and requests remote practicum. Please work with your field faculty liaison support in negotiating this request. Not all sites are able to accommodate this request.
- Other factors not yet identified

Students will be asked to identify if the practicum is remote or in person as part of the Educational Learning Agreement. In addition, they will be asked to communicate the plan for in-person practicum.

Mandated Reporting
As emerging social work professionals, our expectation is that students adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and state law and report incidents of suspected neglect or abuse where required by law; however, we encourage students to discuss these situations with their field instructors to gain a full appreciation and knowledge of the reporting process. It is also recommended that students familiarize themselves with individual State Laws (where they are completing practicum and/or where they intend to practice after graduation) that define who is a mandated reporter and provide the circumstances under which you are required to report. The following website may be helpful to you in finding the applicable state laws:
http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm

Safety and Security of Students in Practicum
The safety of students in practicum is a priority for the OFE, and if not addressed, concerns about personal safety can significantly impact learning opportunities in the field. This includes the safety of our students during the Covid-19 pandemic (see Appendix A: Covid-19 and Your Practicum). While the University does not wish students to be protected from the realities of professional practice, immersing students in the realities of practice can also expose them to safety and security risks.** The University and practicum organizations must partner to reduce risks to students in practicum.

*Note: Dual degree MPH/MSW students must also comply with the public health “Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health” while in practicum. Copies of the “Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health” and the “NASW Code of Ethics” are available under the “Community Resource – Field Instructor Resources” menu on the Brown School website (brownschool.wustl.edu).

**Note: Students are expected to follow organizational policies, procedures, and protocols regarding the necessity of home visits, if applicable

Therefore, field instructors and practicum organizations, when applicable should:

- Discuss safety and security matters with the student during the interview and throughout the practicum
- Relay information about the prevalence of or potential for violence while conducting practicum activities to the student
- Explain and enforce organizational safety protocols with the student, including building and office security, emergency procedures, management of violent clients and home visit safety procedures.
- Provide a tour of the surrounding neighborhood/community and address concerns the student may have regarding work in the community or area
- Allow the student to observe staff engaged in the work for which the student is preparing
- Allow the student to be observed while engaged in learning activities
- Provide the student with security resources (i.e., safety training and cellular phones) available from the practicum organization

Examples of activities that warrant special concern and discussion with the student and the Office of Field Education prior to the start of practicum include, but are not limited to:

- Physical restraint of clients
- Transportation of clients in the student's private vehicle or company vehicle
- Transportation of a client with a history of violent behavior
- Practicum work when at times, the student will be alone or in volatile areas where other staff will not be present
In the event that a student is involved in an incident resulting in the risk of or experience of any personal threat or assault to themselves or others during the practicum, they must complete an Incident Reporting Form (see “Incident Reporting” section).

Practicum Levels

Foundation Practicum
The foundation-level practicum is the first practicum experience students are required to complete. Students must complete three (3) practicum credits (360 field hours) at the foundation level, at selected organizations that are approved to provide foundation-level practica.

Site Requirements and Supervision for Foundation Practica – Foundation-level practicum sites must meet all of the following requirements:

- Located in the Greater St. Louis metropolitan area (within a 60-mile radius of St. Louis City)
- Have an approved and affiliated on-site field instructor who has an MSW degree
- Have the capacity to provide students with a minimum of 50 hours of direct client contact, as defined by the practicum organization. Client contact may be in-person, over the phone, or via a web platform

A student must complete the foundation core courses and foundation practicum (i.e., 360 practicum hours with a grade of “PASS”) in order to begin the concentration-level and dual level practicum.

Integrative Foundation Practicum Seminar – The Integrative Foundation Practicum Seminar, a one credit 15-hour course, is taken concurrently with the first semester of the foundation practicum. The seminar integrates theoretical constructs and evidence-based practices with hands-on skill application and exposure to varied professional roles, values, and ethics of the social work profession. In the seminar, students utilize discussion, case presentations, group exercises, writing, and other assignments to process their field work experience, including supervision and client interactions. Students will have the opportunity to debrief practice challenges in a supportive environment; and begin honing professional development skills through a peer-to-peer learning experience. The seminar focuses on generalist social work practice, with an emphasis on issues of diversity, ethics, social advocacy, social change, and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Concentration Practicum
Students must complete two (2) practicum credits (240 field hours) of MSW concentration practicum. Following successful completion of the foundation practicum (or upon the designation of advanced standing status for BSW-degreed students), the concentration practicum must be completed in one of the ten (10) concentration areas:

- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Children, Youth, and Families
- Health
- Individualized
- Mental Health
- Older Adults and Aging Societies
- Social and Economic Development – Domestic
- Social and Economic Development - International
- Social Impact Leadership
- Violence and Injury Prevention

Concentration practicum hours may not be completed concurrently with foundation practicum hours (students are not allowed to register for foundation and concentration practicum hours in the same semester). The OFE does not recommend that students complete both foundation and concentration practicum at the same location. However, an exception to this policy may be made if specific conditions are met. Students must contact the OFE directly to request an exemption to this policy.

Site Requirements and Supervision of Concentration Practicum – Concentration practicum hours can be completed in the Greater St. Louis area, out-of-state, or abroad (internationally), but must be completed under the supervision of an affiliated and on-site field instructor with an MSW or related master’s or higher degree (MPH, MBA, MA, MS, MD, PhD, etc.).

Individualized Practicum – Those students who wish to have a learning focus different from the established concentrations of study may develop and request approval of an individualized program of study from the Associate Dean of Social Work. This may be done by combining two or more concentrations or by focusing on a different population or...
social problem arena. For example:

1. Student interested in health and mental health – In this case, a student might choose an inpatient psychiatric setting for the practicum and select either a health or mental health focus for their general responsibilities.

2. Student interested in women’s issues – In this case, a student might select a practicum in a women’s shelter or areas of reproductive health and counseling with the focus on the theory, policies, ethics, services, etc., of women’s issues.

Students individualizing their concentration area must use the behaviors identified and approved in their Individualized Program of Study Planning Form to develop the Individualized Concentration ELA.

**Dual Practicum (MSW/MPH)**

Students must complete three (3) practicum credits (360 hours) of dual practicum which addresses both the MSW concentration and selected MPH competencies. Following the successful completion of the foundation practicum and foundation MPH coursework, the dual practicum must be completed in one of the ten (10) MSW concentration areas and selected MPH specialization. All three (3) dual practicum credits must be completed at the same site. Students may select to complete their dual practicum and concentration practicum at the same site.

**Site Requirements and Supervision of Dual Practica**

Dual practicum hours can be completed in the Greater St. Louis area, out-of-state, or internationally, but must be completed under the supervision of an affiliated Field Instructor with an MSW and/or MPH or related master’s or higher degree (MBA, MA, MS, MD, PhD, etc.)

**Elective Practicum**

An additional one (1) credit to five (5) credits (for MSW) or one (1) to three (3) credits (for MPH) of practica can be taken as elective courses, once concentration and dual practicum requirements have been completed with a passing grade. One elective practicum credit equals 120 hours in the field and may be completed at the same practicum organization where the concentration practicum was completed or at a different field site. Students may select elective practicum courses from either the MSW or MPH program.

**Advanced Standing Students**

**MSW Concentration Practicum**

MSW students admitted to the Brown School with advanced standing and approval of undergraduate practicum hours are exempt from the foundation–level practicum and the integrative foundation practicum seminar. Students are required to complete only the concentration-level practicum for two (2) credits (240 field hours). Advanced Standing students may enroll in either a 12-month or 16-month program track to graduation. Students may select to complete their dual practicum and concentration practicum at the same site.

**Dual Practicum**

Advanced Standing MSW dual degree students must complete three (3) practicum credits (360 hours) of dual practicum which addresses both the MSW concentration and selected MPH competencies. Following the successful completion of the foundation MPH coursework, the dual practicum must address both MSW and MPH competencies. Students may select to complete their dual practicum and concentration practicum at the same site.

**MPH Specializations**

Students in the dual degree program are able to specialize on the MPH side in one of six tracks. Students entering the Brown School during the Fall 2018 semester and after must select a specialization. Each specialization requires a set number of course credits as well as pre-approved practicum experience.

**Please note:** Due to course requirements for both programs, dual degree students typically select the Generalist Specialization for their MPH degree.
Epidemiology and Biostatistics Specialization
An Epidemiology/Biostatistics specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
  - Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies and three (3) specialization-specific competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
  - Epidemiology Methods and Applied Linear Modeling are required courses before starting practicum
  - Practicum project should address a public health issue and involve either data collection and/or data analysis using epidemiology and/or biostatistics methods
  - Must use a statistical software package for projects with a data analysis focus (e.g. SPSS, STATA, SAS, R)
  - Must be supervised by someone with an MPH or specific epidemiology and/or biostatistics training
  - Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to EPI/BIO chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum
  - If a new organization, organization must submit the Affiliation Application and Affiliation Agreement by the semester deadline for approval by the field faculty member.
  - Complete and submit specialization-specific ELA for approval

Generalist Specialization
Students interested in a specific topic area of public health that is not addressed within one of the other specializations, or in combining competencies and skills from more than one specialization area, may select the Generalist specialization. The Generalist specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
  - Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
  - Students must select three (3) specialization competencies from any of the specializations prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum. These competencies are selected from the Generalist Specialization form completed with the student's Academic Advisor.
  - Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to Generalist chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum.
  - If a new organization, organization must submit the Affiliation Application and Affiliation Agreement by the semester deadline for approval by the field faculty member.
  - Complete and submit a specialization-specific ELA for approval.

Global Health Specialization
A Global Health specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum.**
  - Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
  - Global Health is a required course before starting practicum
  - Practicum must take place in a low-or middle-income country outside the United States that is pre-approved by the Global Programs Office
  - Students must submit a pre-application to Global Programs office two semesters prior to the start of practicum
  - Students must attend pre-departure and post-debriefing sessions for information regarding safety, recommended immunizations and health precautions, and other context-specific communications
  - Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to the Global Health chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum
  - If a new organization, organization must submit the Affiliation Application and Affiliation Agreement by the semester deadline for approval by the field faculty member.
  - Complete and submit for approval a specialization-specific ELA for approval.

Health Policy Analysis Specialization
A Health Policy specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
  - Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies and three (3) specialization-specific competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum
  - Health Economics are required prior to enrolling in practicum
  - Practicum project should address health policy issues
Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to Health Policy Analysis chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum

If a new organization, organization must submit the Affiliation Application and Affiliation Agreement by the semester deadline for approval by the field faculty member.

Complete and submit for approval a specialization-specific ELA for approval.

### Mental and Behavioral Health Specialization

A Mental and Behavioral Health specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
- Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies and three (3) specialization-specific competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum.
- Fundamentals of Mental Health for Public Health and Public Mental Health are required courses prior to enrolling in practicum.
- Practicum project should address a public health issue as related to mental and behavioral health issues.
- Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to the Mental and Behavioral Health chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum.
- If a new organization, organization must submit the Affiliation Application and Affiliation Agreement by the semester deadline for approval by the field faculty member.
- Complete and submit a specialization-specific ELA for approval.

### Urban Design Specialization

An Urban Design specialization requires that students meet the following criteria for practicum:

- **Three credits (360 hours) of practicum**
- Students must select three (3) foundational public health competencies and three (3) specialization-specific competencies prior to the start of practicum to address in practicum.
- Transdisciplinary Problem-Solving: From the Inside-Out: Public Health & The Built Environment course is required before enrolling in the program.
- Practicum project should address a public health issue as related to the design of urban communities.
- Must submit a summary of the proposed practicum experience to Urban Design chair for pre-approval at least one month before starting practicum.
- If a new organization, organization must submit the Affiliation Application and Affiliation Agreement by the semester deadline for approval by the field faculty member.
- Complete and submit for approval a specialization-specific ELA for approval.

### Types of Practicum

#### One-Semester and Two-Semester Practica

In consultation with the field instructor, students may elect to complete practicum over a period of one semester or two semesters. In a one-semester practicum or in the first semester of a two-semester practicum, an approved copy of the Educational Learning Agreement (ELA) should be provided to the field instructor by the student. Students are required to submit only one ELA during their practicum experience at any one organization. Students may not complete a one credit practicum at an organization or split practicum credits between two agencies for the dual MSW/MPH practicum (3 credits total).

#### Practicum at Place of Employment

The OFE does not recommend that students complete practicum at their place of employment. However, an exception to this policy may be made to complete one practicum experience if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Student must obtain permission from their current day-to-day work supervisor and identify an affiliated field instructor, (one person may not serve as both work supervisor and field instructor).
2. The field placement must be in an entirely different program/department than the one in which the student is employed.
3. Practicum hours may not be counted as work time, nor can work time be counted as practicum hours.
4. The practicum must be structured solely for the educational benefit of the practicum student and provide training to prepare the student for professional practice. It is not meant to supplant, replace, or substitute for existing employees or organizational structure of an agency.
5. The practicum must be structured to meet the academic program requirements of the Brown School; and structured
to attend to the professional competencies and practice behaviors outlined in the ELA and correspond to the student’s educational level (e.g., foundation, concentration or dual).

a. The student must be evaluated as a learner rather than as an employee.

6) The organization must ensure that the practicum adheres to the US Department of Labor regulations, including the Wage and Hour Division (Fact Sheet #71 (April 2010): Internship Programs under the Fair Labor Standards Act), which is attached hereto: http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm

7) The practicum may provide a stipend. If it does so, the practicum must adhere to all IRS Department of Labor and Wage and Hour Division policies and regulations.

Out-of-State Practica
Upon approval from the OFE, students who have completed the foundation-level practicum with a passing grade can apply to complete a concentration-level practicum outside of the Greater St. Louis metropolitan area in any U.S. city or state. Out-of-state organizations and professionals must meet the same criteria to affiliate as local practicum organizations and field instructors. Students requesting to complete their practicum at an out-of-state location must complete and submit the required application and documents (available on Inside Brown) at least one semester before the practicum is to begin.

International Practica
An international practicum is defined as a field placement that is completed at a Core Affiliated Practicum (CAP) site in a country or U.S. territory outside of the United States. International practicum students are required to comply with all OFE field-related requirements, guidelines and timelines. Students will also be required to attend to mandated competencies and practice behaviors established in the ELA and declared area of specialization or concentration. Students interested in completing an international practicum must receive joint approval from the OFE and the Global Programs Office. The approval for an international practicum involves a multi-step process in which students will work with faculty and staff through a guided selection process.

Paid Practicum
A paid practicum may be offered at the discretion of the practicum organization. While it is appreciated when practicum organizations are able to provide compensation to students in practicum, it is not a requirement for an organization to serve as a practicum site.* There is no minimum or maximum amount of compensation a student may receive. However, under no circumstances may the field instructor or practicum organization alter the agreed upon Educational Learning Agreement, contracted practicum hours, or practicum requirements as a condition of a compensated practicum without the approval of the Assistant Dean, Field Education. In addition to the Practicum Timesheet required by the OFE, field instructors may require students to complete the organization’s timesheet to track and verify practicum hours in compliance with the organization’s protocols.

*Note: For the consideration of offering students compensation for practicum, please note that students do incur a financial expenditure for registering for practicum, as it is a course for which students must pay. Students completing practicum out-of-state do incur additional travel and lodging expenses for which they are financially responsible, as Brown School does not provide stipends or financial support to students for practicum.

Practicum Requirements for Students

Mandatory Foundations of Field Education Course for Students
Prior to entering the field, each student is required to complete the Foundations of Field Education course (S70 SWPR 6000) the semester prior to starting practicum. The mandatory course is designed to help students prepare for field work. During the course, information on practicum requirements, procedures, and practicum selection is provided. In addition to attending the mandatory course, students may consult with OFE to identify which types of practicum experiences may enhance student’s abilities to obtain employment in their desired career field.

Practicum Registration

Course Requirement – Practicum is a course requirement and students must register for the practicum course corresponding to the appropriate practicum level to receive credit for field work. Practicum may be completed in the fall, spring, and summer semesters each academic year.

MPH Specialization Practicum Proposal Form
Students are required to submit a practicum proposal form to be approved by the specialization chair. Students should complete
the form specific to their specialization. Forms should include:

- Information regarding the practicum site including how the organization and practicum is community engaged
- Information regarding the field instructor including any relevant background experience specific to the specialization
- Tasks, long term goals and description of portfolio products
- Specialization competencies to be fulfilled during practicum

This must be completed and approved prior to Symplicity Registration and the start of practicum hours. Approval or denial of the form will be sent to students via e-mail. If denied, students will need to provide further information or choose an alternative practicum site. A student may not accumulate practicum hours if the specialization form is not approved.

**Symplicity Registration** – In addition to registering for practicum as a course through the University’s system, students are required to register their practicum online with the OFE no later than **two weeks prior** to the start of practicum or by the specified due date. Online registration (via Symplicity) is required for every practicum site and will be approved if both the organization and field instructor are currently affiliated. Notification will be sent via email to the student and field instructor regarding non-acceptance of the registration with an explanation for the rejection of the practicum. A student may not accumulate practicum hours with a non-affiliated organization or under the supervision of a non-affiliated field instructor.

**Educational Learning Agreement (ELA)**

The student must meet with the field instructor to develop an ELA. The ELA serves as a contract to guide and monitor the student’s progress toward gaining professional social work competency during the field experience. To receive credit for practicum hours, the student must submit a signed electronic copy of the ELA to the OFE via email for review and approval by the specified due date or before completing 40 hours in practicum, whichever occurs first. Accumulation of practicum hours may continue while the ELA is being reviewed. Students and field instructors will be notified if revisions are required and/or when the ELA is approved. No credit for hours completed during practicum is given if an ELA is not submitted and approved according to practicum guidelines. Specifics of the ELA are described in “Instructions and Overview of the Educational Learning Agreement” in the “Practicum Requirements for Field Instructors” section.

**Portfolio Products – Dual Practicum Only**

**Students enrolled in the Brown School Dual Degree Program in Fall 2018 or after** must complete two (2) portfolio products as part of their practicum experience. These products are required by the MPH Program’s accrediting body, the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) to demonstrate attainment of the six (6) public health competencies that students select to address in practicum. Each student must select three (3) foundational MPH competencies and three (3) specialization competencies that will be addressed in their practicum as well as their portfolio products. Joint degree students with the MPH Generalist Specialization will select four (4) foundational competencies and two (2) specialization competencies to complete in practicum. Generalist specializers must select from the pre-approved list of specialization competencies that they selected to address at the beginning of the MPH program (Generalist Specialization Form).

Students will work in conjunction with their field instructor to determine what types of portfolio products will be mutually beneficial to both the student and the practicum organization. Examples of portfolio products include the following: Written assignments, projects, videos, multi-media presentations, spreadsheets, websites, posters, policy briefs, publications, photos or other digital artifacts of learning.

**Documentation of Portfolio Products**

Students will complete a cover page to be submitted with their portfolio products. This cover page will include the following information:

- Type of products that will be submitted
- Public health issue or problem that the product addresses along with details as to how the product involves community engagement
- Which competencies are addressed and how they are addressed in the product
- How the product will be used by the organization
- E-signature from the field instructor, verifying that they approve of the product and use of the product for reporting purposes to CEPH

**Students will submit their first portfolio product at the time of their mid-practicum site visit via Canvas.**

**Students will submit their final portfolio product via Canvas by the last day of practicum.**
Students’ products will be evaluated by their field faculty member for demonstrating attainment of the stated competencies, and students will not receive a final grade for practicum until their assignments have been approved by the field faculty member.

**Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance**

No later than two weeks prior to the anticipated ending date of the practicum, students should complete the Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance (available on Inside Brown). This completion will trigger an automatic email notification to the field instructor with a link to their final evaluation and the email will include your feedback for their review. The self-evaluation is completed at the end of an entire practicum experience at any one agency. In the self-evaluation, students are asked to evaluate each competency and practice behavior from the ELA based on the following five-point scale:

- 5 = Advanced (Consistently exceeds expectations)
- 4 = Proficient (Consistently demonstrates ability)
- 3 = Developing
- 2 = Beginner
- 1 = Does not demonstrate

N/A= Choose “N/A” if competency or behavior has not been addressed (applicable ONLY in the first semester of a two-semester practicum)

Students must also provide specific examples of their practicum performance in various professional areas as indicated in the evaluation.

**Practicum Timesheet**

Students are expected to document all hours accumulated throughout the practicum on the OFE’s Practicum Timesheet, which is available to students on Inside Brown. Completion of the Practicum Timesheet is governed by Brown School’s policies regarding Academic and Professional Integrity. The timesheet must be monitored by the field instructor, signed by the student and field instructor (after completion and review of the student’s self-evaluation and the field instructor’s evaluation). Next, the timesheet must be submitted to the OFE at the completion of all practicum hours at any one organization that the student is in practicum. Students may not accumulate more than 40 hours per week in practicum. This timesheet does not circumvent the organization’s time reporting mechanism.

**Student Assessment of Practicum Experience (SAPE)**

Students are encouraged to thoughtfully and critically assess their practicum experiences by completing the SAPE survey at the end of their practicum. Field instructors have requested this candid feedback to improve their effectiveness as mentors and to enhance the organization’s practicum experience for future students. Field instructors are periodically provided the results of the survey to use as feedback to evaluate, for example, their personal effectiveness as a supervisor/mentor, the organization as a learning environment, or enhancement of the practicum experience for future students.

**Practicum Requirements for Field Instructors**

The field instructor/student relationship is critical to the development of competent social work professionals. Therefore, field instructors are provided the following resources and training.

**Field Instructor Training**

Field instructors are required to receive field instructor training from the OFE.

**Field Instructor Certification Program** – The Field Instructor Certification Program is a six-session training program for local field instructors (in the St. Louis metropolitan area) who want to supervise MSW or dual degree MPH/MSW students in practicum. This program is facilitated by the field faculty and directors from the Brown School, Fontbonne University, St. Louis University, and University of Missouri-St. Louis. Each of the six sessions is offered at least once throughout the academic year and field instructors have a two-year time period to complete all six sessions. A field instructor required to participate in the certification program must attend Session 1 and Session 2 of the Collaborative Field Instructor Training before they can begin supervising practicum students. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are offered for each of the six sessions and a certificate will be granted to field instructors upon successful completion of the program.
Instructions and Overview of the Educational Learning Agreement

The ELA is the learning contract developed by the student in consultation with the field instructor. Essentially, the ELA serves as the student’s “job description” for practicum and should be used as a guide for developing and monitoring learning activities, goals, and objectives. A revised copy of the ELA or a written addendum specifying new tasks and duties for the student must be submitted to the OFE if substantive changes are made in the student’s primary assignments. Details and instructions on completing the ELA are following.

ELA Face Sheet – The ELA Face Sheet serves as the cover page for the ELA and provides the student, field instructor, and OFE with specific information related to the practicum, contact information for the student and field instructor, the number of credits (corresponding to contracted work hours) to be completed, the number of semesters the student intends to be in practicum at the organization, and additional information helpful to the OFE. The bottom half of the Face Sheet provides a place for signatures, which are required. Once the ELA is completed and signed, the student is responsible for emailing it to their field faculty for final approval. Students and field instructors are notified via e-mail when the ELA is approved or if revisions are required.

ELA Part I: Field Experience Overview – The Field Experience Overview is to be completed by the student in consultation with their field instructor. First, students are asked to provide a general, but thorough, description of the organization, including the structure and mission of the organization, as well as the population(s) being served. Next, students are asked to identify goals and objectives for the practicum, as well as projects or deliverables that will be created in practicum. Students are then asked to check off specific items covered during orientation to the organization.

Students are also required to create a racial equity statement that explains how their specific projects and/or work and tasks will contribute to racial equity and anti-racist practices at their site. This statement should incorporate specific objectives and goals related to student’s racial equity goals and statement. This statement should be created in conjunction with the field instructor.

ELA Part II: Competencies – The Competencies section allows the student and Field Instructor to identify 1-5 specific learning activities related to each of the nine (9) social work competencies and for the dual practicum, nine (9) social work competencies and six (6) public health competencies. Lists of these competencies can be found in the ELA. Students and Field Instructors should generate the list of activities together. Field Instructors will then identify methods of evaluating the student on each of the competencies.

For dual practicum only, Generalist specializers must select from the pre-approved list of specialization competencies that they selected to address at the beginning of the dual degree program.

Weekly Supervision

Field instructors are required to provide one hour of weekly, individualized supervision to each student in practicum. The weekly meeting should include an agenda of topics prepared by the student to discuss. Topics may include:

- Updates on the student’s progress with tasks and projects
- Challenges/problems faced by the student
- Accomplishments/goals the student has achieved
- Issues of cultural competency and diversity (within the organization and with clients/constituents)
- Processing of the organizational culture
- Identification of training opportunities for the student
- Discussion and mentoring regarding the student’s professional development and career goals
- Discussion of news and information impacting the social work field, and that is relevant to the organization’s field of service, the student’s tasks/projects, etc.

Group Supervision – Organizations hosting more than one practicum student or other interns may choose to offer group supervision to students as a supplement to (but not in lieu of) individual supervision. Group supervision may be used to orient a group of students to the organization, allow students the opportunity to meet other interns and coordinate student projects, or provide a forum for guest speakers and professional development for students that enhance their practicum experience.

Task Supervisor – The Brown School differentiates between an affiliated field instructor and an organizational task supervisor. A task supervisor is often a staff member who assumes specific responsibilities for the student’s practicum

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learning as delegated and monitored by the field instructor. A task supervisor does not replace the field instructor nor can the task supervisor substitute for the field instructor in weekly supervision.* Therefore, the task supervisor is not expected to meet Brown School’s criteria for supervision and evaluation, but should be informed of Brown School’s practicum requirements and procedures. It is the responsibility of the field instructor to help the student integrate the task supervisor’s contribution into the overall learning experience.

*Note: The OFE recognizes that on occasion, a field instructor may be unavailable to meet with the student for weekly supervision (e.g., field instructor is on vacation or at an out-of-town conference/meeting). In these instances a task supervisor may meet with the student to monitor their progress and address any concerns or issues. However, this substitution is only acceptable for short-term situations. Field instructors who will be absent for supervision over an extended period of time must notify the OFE to discuss a plan for continuing supervision.

Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum
After reviewing the student's self-evaluation, the field instructor completes the Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum, available online through a link that will be emailed to the field instructor, along with instructions on how to complete the evaluation. The field instructor will receive notification to complete their evaluation of the student after the student’s self-evaluation has been completed. In the evaluation, the field instructor evaluates the student’s performance of each practice behavior and each competency area using the five-point scale below. The field instructor also evaluates the student’s overall performance of the practicum experience, rates aspects of the student’s professionalism, and suggests a grade for the student. Field instructors should print their final evaluations for review with students. The field instructor’s signature on the Practicum Timesheet verifies that the field instructor has reviewed their evaluation with the student.

- 5 = Advanced (Consistently exceeds expectations)
- 4 = Proficient (Consistently demonstrates ability)
- 3 = Developing
- 2 = Beginner
- 1 = Does not demonstrate
- N/A= Choose “N/A” if competency or behavior has not been addressed (applicable ONLY in the first semester of a two-semester practicum)

Monitoring, Evaluations, and Practicum Grades

Site Visit
An OFE field faculty member or another Brown School professional will monitor the student’s progress in the field and conduct one site visit approximately midway through the student’s entire practicum experience indicated on the face sheet of the Educational Learning Agreement (ELA). As implied the “site visit” is to occur on-site at the practicum organization or field site (unless the practicum location is out-of-state or international). The student and field instructor facilitate the scheduling of the site visit by suggesting a time for the visit. The objectives of the site visit include:

- Ensuring weekly, well-organized supervision meetings are occurring
- Facilitating productive educational relationships between the student and field instructor
- Monitoring competencies through student activities, learning, and practice behaviors
- Monitoring and facilitating integration of course and field learning
- Identifying needs and curriculum development trends from a field perspective
- Strengthening Brown School and community relationships
- Implementing or evaluating a “Practicum Support Plan,” if applicable (see “Practicum Support Plan” in “Problems in the Field” section)

Evaluations
Evaluation is viewed as a continuous process occurring throughout the course of the practicum experience, a necessary aspect of public accountability and, hence, a necessary part of social work practices. The Student Self-Evaluation of Competencies and Performance is completed by the student and provided to the field instructor two weeks prior to the completion of all practicum hours at any one organization that the student is in practicum. Following the
review of the student’s self-evaluation during supervision, the field instructor must complete and submit [online] their evaluation of the students’ performance using the **Field Instructor Evaluation of Practicum** by the last day of practicum. Both of these evaluations provide important feedback regarding the student’s progress and professional aptitude in the practicum.

**Practicum Grades**

Practicum grades are based on the demonstration of professional competencies, and through the application of knowledge, skills, and abilities in the field. The Office of Field Education uses the following assessment tools to assign your final grade.

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<td>Students)</td>
<td>Students)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Self-Evaluation</td>
<td>Two weeks before</td>
<td>Fall: November 22</td>
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<td>the last day of</td>
<td>Spring: April 18</td>
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<td>practicum</td>
<td>Summer: July 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Instructor Evaluation</td>
<td>On the last day</td>
<td>Fall: December 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Will be mailed to field instructor</td>
<td>of practicum</td>
<td>Spring: May 1</td>
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<td>Summer: August 1</td>
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<td>timesheet</td>
<td>On the last day</td>
<td>Fall: December 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To be completed by the student</td>
<td>of practicum</td>
<td>Spring: May 1</td>
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<td>Summer: August 1</td>
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The Grading Scale is:

- Pass with distinction (High Pass)
- Pass
- Fail

Final grades are determined by the field faculty. The following will be taken into account:

1) Educational Learning Agreement (ELA)
   a. Timely submission of the ELA
   b. Quality of the ELA
      i. ELA is thorough and reflects a substantive practicum experience
      ii. ELA describes students’ work as it relates to Social Work and/or Public Health competencies
2) Student Self Evaluation
   a. Timely submission of the Student Self Evaluation
   b. Quality of reflection in Student Self Evaluation
      i. Student describes their work in their practicum and how it ties to the competencies
      ii. Student ties their practicum work to the mission of the organization
      iii. Depth of student reflection on communication, leadership, and professional growth
3) Two Portfolio Products (dual practicum level only)
4) Field Instructor Evaluation: Grade suggested by Field Instructor
5) Timesheet: Timely submission of complete timesheet

**Problems in the Field**

There are occasions when problems arise during the practicum involving the student or that affect their practicum experience. It is crucial that any problems or concerns associated with a student’s performance in the field, with a field instructor, or with the practicum organization are brought to the attention of the OFE as soon as they become apparent. Only in this way will the student and field instructor have full opportunity to initiate timely, corrective steps to remedy a resolution, as described below.

**Student Behavior**

All Brown School students are expected to practice professionally, ethically, and morally during practicum. This expectation is expounded throughout the academic year in various trainings and coursework, and is mandated within the practice behaviors
and professional competencies and the Educational Learning Agreement. Yet, there may be times when a student’s behavior (intentional or unintentional) impeded successful performance in the practicum or is detrimental to the mission and/or operations of the practicum organization.

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness – excused or unexcused
- Failure to provide reasonable notice of an unscheduled absence from the practicum
- A single gross violation or repeated violations of the Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health
- Gross or repeated violations of the organization’s policies and/or procedures
- A sustained low level of performance that is unresponsive to corrective action
- Reporting to the practicum site under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Evidence of severe, personal behavior problems that impeded completion of work tasks or projects
- Maintaining, after it has been addressed, a hostile, negative attitude incompatible with the values of the profession of public health, manifested in behaviors towards clients, constituents, instructors, peers, organization staff, and/or University staff
- Failure to maintain professional boundaries and behaviors in respect to the organization’s clients, constituents, and staff
- Any sexual or inappropriate relationship with a client, constituent, or staff member

When such behaviors occur, field instructors have several courses of action to remedy the situation:

Practicum Support Plan (PSP) – When challenges arise in the field on the part of the student, field instructor or both, OFE may recommend the use of the Practicum Support Plan (PSP) to assist with addressing these challenges. The support plan can be initiated by the student, field instructor, and/or field faculty member and completed by the field instructor and student. The Practicum Support Plan can be done in conjunction with the field faculty member, and should be signed by the student, field instructor, and field faculty member, and must contain the following information:

- Narrative of identified concern/behavior
- Description of previous attempts to address the concern, including educational feedback, increased supervision, changes in the Educational Learning Agreement, or other interventions
- Plan for resolution, including specified deadlines, clearly stated objectives for all involved parties (i.e., student, field instructor, task supervisor, etc.) and their subsequent responsibilities, and what measures of success will be utilized to determine if the support plan is successful

A copy of the plan must be provided to the student, the field instructor, and the student’s field faculty. The field faculty member must be kept informed of any field-related challenges involving the student and field instructor, and may become directly involved at any point in the process. If the student’s performance remains unsatisfactory following the implementation of the PSP and it appears that a failing grade will be the resulting occurrence, communication and/or a meeting between the student, field instructor, and field faculty member will be scheduled. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, the Assistant Dean of Field Education may be included on the resulting communication and/or meeting.

Student Termination from Practicum – If the objectives of a Practicum Support Plan (as summarized above) cannot be achieved and the student’s behavior does not improve, after consultation between the student, field instructor, and field faculty, a student may be terminated from practicum. The field faculty member will consult with the student and the field instructor regarding the specifics and requirements of the termination and initiate the process. A student may also be removed or terminated from practicum for the following reasons:

- Failure to meet academic and behavioral standards of the policies and procedures of practicum (as outlined in the OFE “Dual MSW/MPH Field Education Student Handbook”)
- Failure to disclose critical background information on application forms or in pre-practicum and practicum interviews

Unanticipated Circumstances

Some problems that occur during practicum are due to changes beyond the student’s or field instructor’s control such as changes with the field instructor (e.g., field instructor leaves or is terminated), changes within the organization (e.g., internal restructuring or loss of funding), or changes with the student other than behavioral problems (student illness or death in the family). The field instructor or organizational representative is required to notify the OFE as soon as possible when circumstances necessitate change in supervision or if a practicum must be terminated. A student may also be removed from the field due to:

- Decision of the OFE and/or recommendation of the site visitor that the organization is not meeting the outlined learning objectives of the Educational Learning Agreement
The practicum organization or field instructor fails to demonstrate commitment to the Brown School field program requirements

Failure of the field instructor in providing consistent supervision over the student’s learning experiences and activities

Student’s personal safety is jeopardized by continuing in practicum

Change in Field Instructor – Whenever possible, the field instructor or organizational representative (in the event that the field instructor is no longer employed by the organization or otherwise incapacitated) is encouraged to explore all options that might allow the student to remain at the practicum site under different, pre-approved, supervision. If another professional from the organization is available to replace the field instructor, students may complete a “Petition to Change Field Instructor Form”. The OFE will only approve a supplemental supervisor in this case if the proposed professional is able to meet the requirements for affiliation. On a case-by-case basis, the OFE will work with the practicum organization to determine an alternative plan for supervision.

Student Requested Termination of Practicum – Students may request to terminate a practicum by completing the “Petition to Terminate Practicum Form” which must be signed by the student, field instructor, and OFE. A review of the practicum situation is completed by the field faculty member. A review does not end a practicum experience until approval is granted. If the approval for termination is granted, the student may receive a grade for hours completed, if they are equal to at least one credit (120 field hours). If the student has accumulated less than 120 practicum hours, they will forfeit the hours invested and be expected to complete all required hours in his or her next practicum.

Incident Reporting

Washington University is not in a position to take action against incidents involving students that occur off site, but the School will assist students in documenting any incidences in which a student is involved (see “Safety and Security of Students in Practicum” section). Students, field instructors, and/or advisors can use the Practicum Incident Reporting Form to document the details of the incident and to assist in determining the action needed to be taken. The form is available for students through Brown School and available to field instructors upon request from OFE. This form should be completed in addition to reporting documents required by the practicum organization, field site, Washington University, Brown School, or other investigating officials, and in no way substitutes for the forms, policies, or procedures that are required by any parties affected by or responding to the incident. Completed forms should be returned to the OFE.

Criteria for Affiliation and Continuation of Affiliation Partnerships

Affiliation partnerships between Brown School, field instructors and organizations are the hallmark of successful practicum experiences for our students. To ensure the synergism of the partnership is supported, the OFE requires field instructors and practicum organizations to continue to meet the criteria of the affiliation as outlined in the affiliation application process below. Partnerships of affiliation are granted for a period of three years and must be renewed every three years. However, the OFE, the field instructor, or the organization may request to terminate or suspend an affiliation partnership at any time. Such requests should be made in writing.

Criteria for Field Instructors

The following are criteria for the selection of Field Instructors:

- A social work or public health professional with an MSW or MPH, or master’s or higher degree, with at least two years of experience, demonstrated expertise in the field, and employed for a minimum of one year at the practicum organization is required.
  - A social work professional supervising foundation-level students must have an MSW
  - Field instructors supervising Epidemiology/Biostatistics specializers must have an MPH or an extensive background/experience in Epidemiology and/or Biostatistics as approved by the OFE and Epi/Bio Specialization Chair.
- Ability to provide a minimum of one hour per week individual supervision
- Attendance of required Social Work Field Education Collaborative Trainings
- Willingness to participate in meetings and consultation with Brown School representatives who monitor the student’s progress and administer the practicum program
- Willingness to consult with the student in the development of an ELA and complete the Field Instructor section of the ELA
Commitment to graduate-level professional field education as evidenced by providing attention to individual student needs, supporting and mentoring the student’s professional development, and willingness to share expertise and time with student as needed
- Willingness to complete and submit required practicum evaluations and documents in a timely manner, and provide feedback to the student about evaluations
- Submission of a Field Instructor application, the semester prior to any anticipated practicum start date
- Completion, submission, and routine updating of a Field Instructor’s application (every three years)
- Out-of-state and International Field Instructors: Special consideration will be made on a case-by-case basis for affiliation of out-of-state and international agencies (through Global Programs Office) and potential Field Instructors

Criteria for Continuation as an Affiliated Practicum Organization

- Currently employ an affiliated field instructor
- Commitment in philosophy, policies, values, ethics, and practice of the social work profession and services (and the public health profession and services for dual MPH/MSW sites)
- Ability to provide graduate level learning opportunities that are consistent with the student’s educational development and the organization’s social work mission and services
- Competent staff (including at least one affiliated field instructor) sufficient to maintain program services without relying on students’ contributions
- The ability to provide the resources necessary for students to carry out assignments, (e.g. telephone, desk, computer, administrative support, etc.)
- Willingness to invest necessary resources in student learning, including adequate release time for field instructors to attend School-sponsored meetings and to supervise students (defined as sufficient time for adequate review of the student assignments and learning goals; the requirement is at least one hour of individual supervision per student per week)
- Commitment to social work education, ability to provide quality learning opportunities for students as measured by quality and scope of assignments, diversity of clients/partners, service to underserved populations, and other appropriate criteria
- Clear differentiation between the student’s role as employee and the student’s role as a graduate-level learner if student is employed at the organization
- Organization must have existed for a minimum of one year and have received an affiliation site visit by an OFE field faculty member, when feasible
- For dual practicum only: If the organization is part of a university, organization must provide opportunities for community and/or constituent engagement

Criteria for Continuation as an Affiliated Field Instructor

- Demonstrated competence in supervision
- Provision of one hour per week (per student) regularly scheduled supervision meetings
- Provision of graduate-level practice experiences in keeping with individual student needs/abilities
- Demonstrated commitment to the construction of the Educational Learning Agreement
- Willingness to share expertise, time, and professional experiences with student(s)
- Willingness to meet with student(s) informally via unscheduled conferences and meetings (as needed)
- Participation in site visit during student’s practicum experience
- A pattern of positive interactions with students, advisors, and OFE field faculty
- Timely and appropriate communications with the OFE as needed
- Timely submission of evaluations and other practicum documents
- Submission of updated Field Instructor Application as requested periodically by the OFE
- Continued employment in “good standing” with the practicum organization
- Demonstrated professionalism in conduct and character

Field Instructor Benefits
Brown School field instructors are provided the following benefits:
- Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
  - Three CEUs are granted each academic year to active field instructors
- Continuing Education and Professional Development Events (at a reduced cost)
  - Access to the Professional Development Series
• Opportunity to Audit Brown School Courses
  - Ability to audit courses, with instructor approval, at the Brown School
• Evidence-Based Resources
  - Access to online Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Resource Area

For more information regarding field instructor benefits, please contact ofe@wustl.edu.

**Communications with the Office of Field Education**

When situations arise that necessitate the need for consultation or sharing information, field instructors should initiate communication with the OFE. Timely communication is critical. Circumstances may include but are not limited to:

• Outstanding student performance in practicum
• Inquiries regarding policies and procedures
• Student behavioral issues or concerns in practicum
• Requests to terminate practicum
• Requests to terminate or suspend the practicum affiliation
• Incident reporting
• Organizational changes (downsizing, restructuring, facility closing, address, telephone number, email address, etc.)
• Changes in contact information for the field instructor or organization
Appendix A: COVID-19 and Practicum

COVID-19: Field Education Information & Resources
Field education information is rapidly changing to adapt to the current situations in St. Louis City, County and Illinois. Throughout all these changes, the health of students and of the community is of utmost importance.

Practicum site vs. Remote Work
As the spread and risk of COVID-19 exists, students and field sites are expected to discuss and agree upon proper safety and public health precautions for in person field activities. Students may return to in person field activities if the following conditions have been met:

- The student and field instructor agree in person activity is necessary to meet the needs of the client population and the learning of the student.
- The student has received a COVID-19 vaccine per Washington University and Brown School guidelines
- The student has met with their Field Faculty Liaison to assess:
  - The scope and nature of the learning activities you will be involved in in-person and if it is essential.
  - The organizations plan to minimize the spread of COVID-19
    - Provision and proper use of PPE
    - Social distancing at the site
    - Other preventative measures as stated by the organization

The student will take the following precautions to minimize the spread of COVID-19:

- Monitoring symptoms daily using the most up-to-date symptom monitoring checklist provided by the Brown School and staying home, if you have symptoms
- Reporting exposure at the site to the school
- Reporting exposure at the school to the site
- Limiting activities that expose you to COVID-19 where required by law or university or organization policy.
- Adhering to any organizational, local, state, or federal public health policies or recommendations, including those regarding masking, physical distancing, gatherings, and travel.

Adjustments in Practicum Hours
The Council for Social Work Education (CSWE) has reduced the number of hours required for students until May 2022.

Field Education Hours Needed by MSW Program

**MSW Practicum Hours Reduction:** The Covid-19 hours reduction has been extended to May of 2022.

- If you have a MSW practicum in progress **before May 31, 2022**, you need to complete the following hours:
  - **Foundation:** 300 hours
  - **Concentration:** 510 hours – if you are mental health or school social work please talk to your field faculty about completing 600 hours to prepare for licensure.
- If you begin a MSW practicum June 1, 2022, or later you will need to complete (based on information available as of March 2, 2021):
  - **Foundation:** 360 hours
  - **Concentration:** 600 hours

*If you are an Advanced standing MSW/MPH Dual Degree Students, please reach out to the Office of Field Education.

MSW/MPH Dual

Student-Client Interface and Professional Liability Insurance

Students seeing clients over secure video platforms are covered by Washington University’s professional liability coverage as long as they are:

- Seeing clients as part of their practicum;
- In alignment with the site’s virtual client interaction and video platform policy; and
- Registered for practicum in the semester