



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
School of Social Work

Employment Based Internship Agreement

Traditionally, Social Work field placements are educationally focused, unpaid training experiences in Social Work settings which are selected on the basis of the student's level of placement and areas of interest. There are some situations, however, in which paid employment can meet the standards for field placements. The guiding principles for these exceptional decisions is that the field placement experience must offer new and different learning opportunities from those associated with the student's regular employment and also must be educationally directed and professionally supervised by Field Instructor who meets the standards of the Field Education Office.

There are a number of potential problems that may arise when students attempt to combine jobs with field placement:

- The agency may emphasize productivity of the student employee, rather than the student's own learning.
- If job duties change, the position may no longer meet the criteria for social work activities at that student's level of placement.
- Both the student and the agency may be less willing to disclose problems that arise during the field placement, such as inadequate supervision, activities which are incongruent with placement expectations, situations that threaten their employment status, etc. This could lead to a delayed intervention by the Field Education Office, sometimes resulting in an "Unsatisfactory" or "Incomplete" grade for the field placement.

Consequently, paid employment can present many complicating factors that limit students' full utilization of the educational opportunity of field internships and should be weighed carefully by the student and the employer. Therefore, the Field Education Office cautions students about the potential problems of these placement situations and reserves the right to approve paid employment as field placements based on the following guidelines. These guidelines apply to new jobs as well as to existing employment.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT BASED INTERNSHIPS

1. All of the required field hours must take place under the supervision of a Field Instructor who meets the standards of our program (BSW students must receive one hour of supervision per week from someone with a BSW or MSW degree; MSW students must receive one hour of supervision per week from someone with a MSW degree).
2. The activities must be congruent with the student's placement level (BSW, Generalist MSW, or Clinical MSW). Some jobs with the title of "Social Worker" do not meet the expectations of the practice activities for a particular field experience. Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the course objectives for Field Education.
3. The activities themselves must constitute *new* learning for the student: i.e., a new population, utilizing new treatment methodology, and/or in a new field of practice.
4. The student's educational goals should be the primary focus of the position, not simply the needs of the agency.
5. The employment date or date of reassignment within the agency must be no more than 90 days from the first day of the semester in which the student is registered to start the placement, in order to ensure that the field education experience falls in sequence with academic course work as structured by our program of studies and according to the Council on Social Work Education (CWSE).

If the potential internship meets the above criteria, the student can then submit the *Employment Based Internship Proposal* form to the Field Education Office. The purpose of this proposal is to provide the Field Office with evidence that the proposed internship will include sufficient educational objectives and experiences to satisfy the UCF School of Social Work's expectations and will be in compliance with the criteria spelled out in the "Policy Regarding Employment Based Internships" in the *Field Education Manual*.

In order to be considered for this special placement request, the student is responsible for completing and submitting this form to the Field Education Office at least *one month (30 days)* prior to the beginning of the placement. The decision will be made by the Field Education Office and will be communicated directly to the student as soon as possible. *Students should not assume that these placements will be automatically approved.*

This section to be completed by the student:

New Position Title: _____

New Position Start Date: _____
(cannot be more than 90 days before the start date of the semester in which the student is registered in Field)

Proposed Start Date of Field Placement: _____
(cannot be before the start date of the semester in which the student is registered in Field AND must be at least 30 days after this form submitted to the Field Office)

New Position Responsibilities and Tasks *(attach a copy of the Job Description to this form):*

Are there any learning competencies or objectives that cannot be met by the responsibilities of your employment? (Refer to the appropriate Learning Contract form for answering). If so, what are they and how do you plan to meet these in your employment?

Describe what efforts will be made to ensure that your employment is approached as a field placement (i.e, emphasizing your learning needs and meeting the clinical competencies and learning objectives of this level of internship).

Describe what you will do to acquaint your agency supervisor(s) with your classroom learning so that it can be integrated with your practice experiences.

This section to be completed by the MSW/BSW Field Instructor:

Describe supervisory alternatives that will be used to convert the employment to a field placement by expanding the educational component and helping the student integrate classroom theory with practice (e.g., reducing the number of cases, additional one-on-one supervision, agreement that the student will work extra unpaid hours per week in order to add to the educational component, method used to help student integrate social work values and principles, methods of observing the student and giving feedback).

List any special educational assignments that will be given to the student that are not normally required of employees (written assignments, readings, videos, field trips, analyses, process recordings, trainings, special projects, etc.).

MSW Field Instructor Signature: _____

Task Supervisor Signature (if applicable): _____

Agency Executive Director Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Student Phone: _____ Student Email: _____

This section to be completed by the Field Education Office:

Date proposal received: _____

Employment Based Internship approved: Yes / No Field Education Office Signature: _____

Date student notified: _____