



# Springfield College School of Social Work

## **SELECTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FIELD SUPERVISORS**

### **1. Criteria for the Selection of Field Supervisors**

Established professional competence and three or more years of professional experience beyond the MSW degree are required for Field Supervisors. An LICSW or equivalent is preferred and licensure at a minimum level of LCSW is required by state statute in Massachusetts as of August 2006. Prior experience supervising staff or graduate level social work students and the ability to promote learning in others are also important considerations. Field Supervisors should have the following additional characteristics and qualities:

- The ability to transmit interest in social work to students;
- A commitment to further professional development as a Field Supervisor, including completion of the Seminar in Field Instruction by new Field Supervisors;
- A mature personality with an appreciation of the intellectual and emotional components of the professional educational process and developmental stages of students;
- Respect for individual learning patterns of students;
- An ability to balance the needs of clients and agency with the educational needs of the student;
- An understanding of and appreciation for a professional preparation program with a single concentration I Advanced Generalist Practice; and
- The capacity to advocate effectively for students within the practicum agency.

### **2. Orientation of Field Supervisors**

Orientation of Field Supervisors is provided by the Director and Assistant Director of Field Education during the summer months before the start of the Fall semester. The Springfield College School of Social Work's curriculum in advanced generalist practice and objectives of the program are explained. Policies and procedures, supervisory expectations, and overall objectives of the learning experience are reviewed. Field Supervisors are referred to the *Field Practicum Manual* and Learning Contracts appropriate for the practicum year of the placed student to assist them with designing learning experiences.

All new Field Supervisors who have agreed to provide field supervision for students enrolled in the School of Social Work are required to take the Seminar in Field Instruction (SIFI) offered annually by the School of Social Work. Field Supervisors who have taken (or plan to take during the current academic year) a similar course offered by another accredited School of Social Work meet the Springfield College requirement. Field Supervisors who cannot attend any SIFI course for various legitimate reasons, including distance, will be sent the SIFI materials for self-guided study.

### **3. Responsibilities of Educational Supervision**

The responsibilities of agency Field Supervisors include:

- Meeting with each student for **1.5 hours** of direct supervision each week the student is in practicum, and making up any missed supervision hours; (Direct one-to-one supervision hours may be reduced to one hour per week if group supervision of new employees and/or students is provided on a weekly basis throughout the duration of the internship)



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- Providing the intern with a thorough orientation to the Agency, including training related to personal safety issues appropriate for that setting;
- Completing the Learning Contract with the student;
- Developing specific student assignments (cases, groups, community or administrative projects) necessary to carry out the Learning Contract;
- Promoting the integration of classroom conceptual learning with field practice learning;
- Maintaining communication with the Faculty Advisor regarding student's progress, including taking part in the Faculty Advisor's Site Visits, as well as through telephone and written communication;
- Working with the student, and as needed with the Faculty Advisor (as well as with the Director and/or Assistant Director of Field Education), to address any difficulties that may arise in the student's performance or the agency's capacity to meet the educational needs of the student;
- Preparing, reviewing, and submitting evaluations of the student's performance at the end of each semester;
- Participating in professional development activities related to field supervision, including Field Supervision Seminar (if needed) and orientation;
- Providing ongoing written feedback to the student on each of 12 process recordings per semester and providing concrete observations of the student's professional development; and
- Being a role model to the student on the professional use of self.

#### **4. Supervisor Absence**

If the supervisor misses one or more supervisory sessions, the supervisor is responsible for scheduling make-up hours. Field Supervisors also agree to arrange for back-up supervision if they are absent for more than one week and are unable to make up missed supervisory time. For absences of more than three weeks, supervisors must notify the student's Faculty Advisor and the Director or Assistant Director of Field Education and arrange for a qualified MSW supervisor to take over primary supervisory responsibilities until the assigned supervisor returns. In the event that no qualified MSW supervisor is available, other supervisory arrangements must be made with the assistance of the Faculty Advisor and the Director of Field Education or Assistant Director of Field Education. Students in practicum receive no credit for practicum work that is not supervised, face-to-face, by a qualified MSW after three weeks. Students should inform Faculty Advisors as soon as possible if they are not receiving weekly supervision as required as outlined in this Field Manual.

#### **5. Secondary Supervision**

Field Supervisors may, when appropriate, arrange for a secondary supervisor who has specialized expertise to supervise the student on a specific project, or with particular types of clients, or in work on a particular area of learning. The secondary supervisor need not be an MSW or a social worker, though attainment of a master's level degree in the helping professions is strongly preferred. However, secondary supervision is not a substitute for the primary contracted MSW field supervision and is provided in addition to the required **1.5** hours of primary supervision by the designated MSW supervisor.