



A Guide to Locating an Online Field Internship

Graduate students will complete two separate and distinct internships during their study. The **MSW Foundation** Field placement is two consecutive semesters in the same agency for a total of 480 hours. Field internship days will vary among students. The second Field internship is in the **MSW Concentration** year in Advanced Generalist practice. Students will complete 480 Field hours at a new agency.

Internship placements are initiated by the students. Online students are required to research social service agencies in their geographical area and initiate contact with agency personnel to inquire about potential internship opportunities.

This guide is designed to assist online students with the Field Education internship placement process. Please be advised that securing a Student Placement Agreement or an agency affiliation agreement can take **four to six weeks to complete**. Please plan accordingly, as students **cannot** begin an internship until all legal agreements are completed and signed by all required signers. All Field forms can be located on the specific Cohort page in Blackboard.

For All Students:

An Academic Associate is assigned to each student at the beginning of the SWG 540 Online class. The role of the Academic Associate is to assist online students with their search for an internship placement in their community. The Academic Associate works individually with each student to provide support in securing an internship placement. Please refer Field Education questions directly to the designated Academic Associate/Ambassador.

Begin the placement process by submitting an **IPT Student Form** to the Academic Associate via email. The IPT Student Form is available on Blackboard. The Academic Associate will route the completed forms to the Master Instructor for routing to Academic Services for verification of Field eligibility.

Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) is a data management system used by Field Education to monitor internship placements. Students will receive login information by email with instructions on how to access the IPT system along with a tutorial link.

Please read through the following steps before starting the internship search.

1. Searching for an Internship

- If employed in a social service agency, consider the option of a Work Variance Request.
- Network with professional contacts for leads on social work internship opportunities in the community.
- Search the Internet for social service agencies in the area of interest & service population being sought.
- Contact the local NASW chapter to inquire about area social service agencies that offer internships.
- Discuss the top three choices with your assigned Academic Associate. Assure that the top three agencies are viable options before contacting the social worker at the agency to inquire about internship opportunities.

Helpful Hints:

Academic Associates are available to provide coaching for approaching an agency to discuss internships. Read the learning contract to understand the internship requirements of Field Education. Familiarize yourself with all the Field forms that are located in the Cohort page in Blackboard. IPT forms are VERY IMPORTANT, be sure to submit the forms as required.

2. Finding the Right Agency

- Determine if the agency is available to host social work interns:
 1. Will the agency affiliate with the university by signing a Student Placement Agreement (SPA).
If the agency has their own affiliation agreement it needs to be signed by the agency first, then routed to the Academic Associate for processing.
 2. Does the agency employ a professionally trained social worker (MSW) that meets field instruction criteria?
- Is the agency MSW willing and able to complete the [On-line training for Field Instructors?](#)
- Is the agency MSW willing and able to utilize the Intern Placement Management System (IPT) for electronic data management? Field Instructors are required to use electronic systems to access and edit Field evaluation forms.
- Determine if there are pre-placement requirements that must be completed prior to the start of the internship, such as agency orientation, background checks, fingerprint clearance, drug screens, CPR & first aid training, etc.

Helpful Hints:

Prepare for the calls (phone or in-person) by preparing a list of questions ahead of time.

If making personal visits, obtain a business card for future reference and to share with your assigned Academic Associates.

Seek a status update with a follow-up **phone call** to the agency contact within 72 hours.

3. Secure the Internship Placement

- Schedule a formal interview with the agency staff to discuss the possibility of an internship opportunity.
- Bring along the Academic Associate's contact information to share with the agency personnel, if needed.
- Bring the necessary forms to the meeting, including the Student Placement Agreement and the IPT Confirmation form. Initiate the completion of the above 2 forms and route the completed forms to your Academic Associate.
- Assure that the learning environment provides professional guidance suitable for social work.
- Provide the professional social worker(s) with contact information for the Academic Associate so that they can route their resume directly by email, if desired.
- Route the completed IPT Confirmation Form to the assigned Academic Associate via email for delivery to the Field Education Office.

Helpful Hints:

Take the IPT Confirmation Form to the interview for signatures, if the internship is a good fit.

Secure the Student Placement Agreement (SPA) or agency affiliation agreement as soon as possible to avoid a delayed start in Field.

Route the signed agreement to the designated Academic Associate for routing to the Field Education Office.

4. Intern Placement Tracking System (IPT)

All Student Field forms are completed, reviewed, signed and retained on the IPT system as electronic files. Field instructors complete the forms online. Students have their own IPT Student Detail page that must be populated. The required information includes student contact information, emergency contact information, a student photo (student choice) and an uploaded resume.

Agency Detail Pages and Field Instructor Pages are set up in the IPT system for access to the electronic Field forms. Field Instructors complete student evaluation forms on the IPT system where all documents are retained and can be viewed on the Student Detail Page.

Helpful Hints:

View the tutorial and complete all required information on the student IPT page.

Write down your user name and password as it is not retained by ASU School of Social Work.

Check back to see if the internship is confirmed on the IPT system once the Confirmation Form has been completed.

Monitor IPT email notices and respond to the Field forms requiring completion.

Check grade postings for accuracy at the end of each semester.

5. Work Variance Request Form

Submit a **COMPLETE** work variance packet to the Field Education Office.

Partial or incomplete packets will NOT be reviewed.

Packets must include the Student Placement Agreement (SPA) if it is a new agency for ASU School of Social Work.

The **COMPLETED and signed** IPT Confirmation Form must be included in the Work Variance packet.

Packets are due 6 – 8 weeks before the projected start of the internship.

The designated field instructor must complete the [On-line training for Field Instructors](#) prior to the start of the internship.

REMINDER: Students cannot begin an internship until they are confirmed by the Field Education Office.

Helpful Hints:

Read the Work Variance Guiding Principles that are located in the Cohort page in Blackboard to understand the need to demonstrate that the employee duties and intern duties must be separate and distinct.

6. Starting Your Internship

Students will receive a Confirmation email from the Field Education Office announcing that all requirements for the internship have been met (Student Placement Agreement, Field Instructor confirmation, Work Variance Approval, etc).

Students must be registered for the appropriate Field course as indicated on the student's plan of study or academic plan.

Helpful Hints:

Assure that any agency pre-placement requirements (agency orientation, background checks, fingerprint clearance, drug screens, CPR & first aid training) have been met.

Confirm internship start date, schedule and dress code requirement.