



School
of Social Work

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Field Placements in Organizations Where Students Work: Employed Social Work Internship (ESWI) Option

In accordance with Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) standards, the only way a student can do a field placement at their employing organization is through a specially negotiated ESWI arrangement.

The ESWI option was developed to encourage people with established employment positions within social service organizations to pursue education in social work. This option allows the employer to make a substantial contribution to an employee's education. The ESWI must be finalized and approved, following the procedures outlined below, by September 1st.

For students who are CURRENTLY employed in a social service organization, there are different options for how to structure an ESWI placement: Students can propose to use the job duties from their current employment position and/or they can propose and be approved to engage in duties outside of their regular employment position; they can be paid or unpaid internship hours.

When an employer supports the student to engage in a *completely new role/program* within the agency, we strongly encourage them to release the employee from some of their job responsibilities to complete their educational internship hours. Students who are approved for this type of an ESWI may be paid by their employer for their internship hours (negotiated between student and employer). If an employer supports

a student to use their *current employed position as their educational internship*, the student will be paid for their internship hours.

In either case, all requirements set forth below must be met.

Requirements for any ESWI Placement

The student's employer, the School of Social Work, and the student will work together to assure that the following ESWI conditions are met:

- The student must be in good academic standing and in good standing at their employing agency. Good standing typically means that the employee has successfully completed a probationary period because an unsuccessful probationary period is also likely to result in disruption of the student's internship.
- Employment supervisor and BSW or MSW Field instructor must agree that the student's internship performance will not influence their employment evaluation.
- Students who apply for an ESWI are making a commitment to remain in their employment position for the duration of the 9 month educational internship. If a student is approved to complete an ESWI and they choose to leave their employment, and/or are terminated from their employment position during the current academic year, the Field Education Program will not re-match a student to a new internship mid-academic year. Students will develop a new Educational Plan to support continuation in the BSW or MSW program.

Exceptions to ESWI policy may be considered by the Director of Field Education on a case-by-case basis [See Policy in Field Handbook]

- The educational opportunities in the place of employment must permit achievement of the 9 social work competencies and skills compatible with the

student's social work practice classes and course of study, i.e., Generalist, Advanced Clinical Practice (Clinical), or Advanced Macro Practice (Macro).

- Internships provide an opportunity to become exposed to new systems, populations, field instructors and approaches to practice. If an MSW student proposes a second ESWI, their second proposal must demonstrate how this opportunity would provide new, different, and/or deeper learning that aligns with their Advanced concentration in order to be approved. When possible, the proposal would also include a new social work field instructor.
- Field instructors for BSW students must have a BSW or MSW from an accredited social work program plus 2 years post degree social work experience.
- Field instructors for MSW students are required to have an MSW from an accredited social work program plus two years of post-MSW social work experience.
- The field instructor and employment supervisor of a student may be the same person. In such cases, supervision time for field education learning must be separate from supervision time for employment. Our goal is to ensure the role of the student as a learner while they are engaging in their paid employment position.
- If the agency does not have a qualified social work field instructor on staff, they must arrange for an off-site field instructor to provide the required supervision **and** designate an on-site supervisor supervisor to provide daily oversight and support.
- The ESWI agreement may not be altered or amended unless agreed to by all persons (student, employer, and field faculty). Accordingly, if an agency alters the terms of placement without informing the field faculty ESWI placement will be suspended and will not be resumed unless a revised agreement can be arranged in a timely manner. This revised agreement must be written and signed by the Executive Director of the agency (or their designee), the student-employee, and the Director of Field Education (or their designee) and filed with the Field Education Office.

APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

1. The student requests an ESWI application via the ESWI Interest Form on the Student Web Center », by the date that they submit their internship application [dates vary based on which year and concentration the student will be entering]. The Interest Form will indicate the internship they are proposing.
2. The student, in consultation with the employer, completes the ESWI Application by the due date specified by the program. The student must also submit the Field Placement Application.
3. The ESWI application is reviewed and a field coordinator arranges a meeting with the student, the work supervisor, the field instructor, and the site supervisor supervisor (where applicable) to negotiate the terms and structure of the placement and assure that all parties understand and approve the educational arrangement. This meeting must occur by September 1st. The ESWI planning meeting and completion of any items assigned during that meeting must occur before the internship can begin.