CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF AGENCIES AND FIELD INSTRUCTORS

Field education succeeds because of the ongoing collaboration of agencies, field instructors, the NCSSS Office of Field Education (OFE) and students. Through the affiliation process, OFE staff and the internship coordinator discuss agency practice and opportunities for our students, as well as NCSSS requirements related to internship experiences. The affiliation process sets up a collaborative relationship, one in which the internship coordinator and prospective field instructor(s) can support our educational objectives, and feel confident that we are available to provide support and assistance at any time.

Criteria for Approval of Field Agencies

1. The agency has a positive attitude toward professional social work education.
2. The agency supports the field instructor by permitting him/her time to supervise student(s), to attend required trainings at NCSSS, and to meet with the field liaison, etc.
3. The agency’s commitment to service should be compatible with the values and ethics of the social work profession.
4. Agency practice should adhere to the ethical standards of the social work profession.
5. The agency must be able to provide a variety and depth of learning experiences as well as necessary resources for the student(s) throughout the academic year.
6. The agency has and observes nondiscriminatory policies on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and physical disability.
7. The agency agrees to follow the university’s guidelines on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The agency cooperates with CUA in providing reasonable accommodations that will allow qualified students with disabilities to fully participate in field education.

Criteria for Approval of Field instructors

1. Academic Qualifications: Field instructors supervising bachelor’s level students and foundation-level MSW students must have a Masters of Social Work degree earned from a CSWE-accredited college or university.
2. Licensing Qualifications: Field instructors supervising undergraduate seniors and foundation-level MSW students must have at least an LGSW-level license, or the level license required by the local jurisdiction. Field instructors supervising (1) advanced year clinical or clinical health students and (2) the clinical work of advanced year combined students must have clinical licensure (LICSW, LCSW-C, etc.). Field instructors supervising advanced Social Change students do not need to have licensure, unless required by the local jurisdiction.
3. Practice Experience: Field instructors must have a minimum of 2 - 3 years of post-MSW professional experience, as well as demonstrated competence in an area of practice. The field instructor’s supervisor must feel that the social worker is ready to assume a supervisory/teaching role.
4. Employment Qualifications: The field instructor must have been employed at the agency for a minimum of 12 months prior to supervising a student intern.
5. The field instructor should have an interest in the education and training of students preparing to become social workers.
6. The field instructor agrees to attend one of the School’s fall semester Field Education Orientation/Trainings if at all possible. When it is not, the field instructor will review PowerPoint slides from past trainings (http://ncsss.cua.edu/field/Orientation.cfm).
7. The field instructor agrees to meet for at least one hour per week for supervisory conferences with the student intern. When meeting for an uninterrupted hour is not possible, the field instructor will arrange to find appropriate blocks of time to meet with the intern for supervision.
8. The field instructor agrees to be in the agency regularly during the academic year. When absent, arrangements must be made for supervision of the student intern; these arrangements must be conveyed to the student, who should share the information with his/her liaison. If there is to be an extended absence, we ask that the student’s field liaison and the Office of Field Education be notified.
9. The field instructor must be in good standing with the appropriate jurisdiction’s social work licensing board.
Award of Title of CUA Clinical Associate to Field Instructors

Field instructors who meet the requirements listed below will receive a letter from Dean James Zabora appointing them as CUA Clinical Associates. These appointments will be made on an annual basis to NCSSS field instructors meeting our requirements:

1. Attendance at an NCSSS Field Instructor Training Program at least once every 3 years
2. Submission of required paperwork, i.e. Field Instructor Profile and CV or resume
3. Assignment as field instructor or co-field instructor for NCSSS student intern
4. MSW degree required, though exceptions may be made for non-MSW co-supervising an intern