Western Kentucky University
ROLE OF FIELD LIAISON

The field liaison serves as a bridge between the practice community and the school, and to insure a valuable field learning experience for the student. The liaison is responsible for:

a) interpreting the curriculum to the individual field instructor,

b) where necessary, training field instructors in supervisory techniques,

c) assuring that the educational focus of the placement is maintained,

d) assuring that time expectations and practice assignments are appropriate, and, where not
appropriate assisting the field instructor in developing additional assignments

e) participating in the development of student field objectives and tasks, and monitoring/revising educational learning plan as needed,

f) evaluating student progress at mid term and end of each semester

g) assessing the communication between the student and field instructor, and, where problematic facilitating problem solving,

h) responding to problems raised by student, field instructor or identified by the liaison,

i) assessing the experience provided by the agency and transmitting that information to the Fieldwork Director via formal or informal mechanisms,

j) reviewing and monitoring the student’s pre field assignments, journals and recordings

k) bringing to the attention of Field Director and Social Work faculty any student who is experiencing difficulty in field,

l) monitoring the final evaluations and assigning a grade for student field work

These roles are implemented through telephone, e-mail, school, and agency visit contacts.
MSW Field Liaisons are expected to have a minimum of two face to face agency visits per semester with the field instructor. The student should be present for at least part of the discussion with the field instructor.

BSW Field Liaisons are expected to have a minimum of one face to face agency visit per semester with the field instructor. The student should be present for at least part of the discussion with the field instructor.

**Suggested Time Frames for Liaison**
Field Instructor Orientation
- Introduce yourself to your field instructors at Field Instructor Orientation, and assist in training.

First three weeks of placement
- Call field instructor, introduce self, and give her/him your telephone, fax, and e-mail numbers

- Make sure that field instructor has received the informational packet and Field Manual and/or has reviewed the Field Webpage

- Determine how the student is settling in.

- Review field instructor’s plans for student orientation.

- Review the potential initial assignments.

- Discuss, assist and approve the Learning Objectives Plan

- Discuss any potential problems raised by field instructor

- Arrange for the first agency visit

- Discuss with student his/her perception of the initial weeks

- Document contacts and submit to Field Director

- Discuss with Field Director if an agency appears to be having a major problem, or seems to be unable to fulfill our expectations

**Agency Visit/Contact**
The purpose of the visit/contact is to determine if the student is settling in suitably, if the student is being assigned appropriate tasks, if there is a positive relationship between the student and field instructor, or to identify potential problems.

Prior to visits, tell students that you are scheduling visits. Tell them the purpose and process of the visit, and their role in the visit. Make sure that their Field Timesheets are available at the agency on the day of the visit. You will want to ask students to tell you if there are any specific issues that should be raised in the agency visit.

Preferably, the visit should be made on a day when the student is at the agency. Since one purpose of the visit is to assess student/field instructor communication and problem solving, and to learn about the student’s perception of their learning experience, it is important for the student to be at least part of the visit. When both are present for part of the interview you will be able to assist in a problem solving process if any have developed.

Time should be set aside to meet with the field instructor alone, and with the student and field instructor together.

**Topics for meeting with field instructor alone**

- Relationship building – you and the field instructor

- Discuss how the student is settling in –ask how the student is beginning to integrate theoretical concepts. If this has not happened in supervisory conferences ask field instructor to begin to ask such questions of the student.

- Questions the field instructor has about the curriculum, Field Manual, expectations, assignments.

- Questions the field instructor has about supervision techniques

- Have field instructor describe assignments and their purpose

- Have the field instructor’s describe the process of a typical supervisory session.

- Discuss necessary changes, particularly if supervisory sessions are not conducted on a regular basis for at least one hour a week.

- Discuss specific strengths and concerns about the student’s work

- Discuss process for completing evaluation form (joint meeting between student and field instructor)

**Topics for meeting with field instructor and student**

- Review Learning Objectives Plan – discuss how student is making progress

- Plans for vacation during breaks

- Have student present to you and the field instructor what her/his assignments are, what skills the student is working on and what the student is learning

- Discuss problematic issues raised by either the student or the field instructor, or items that are of concern to you

- Develop plans for dealing with the problems (call back the agency and check with the student one to two weeks later to determine progress on the changes)

- Discuss future learning needs and additional assignments for the remainder of the semester or for next semester

**Topics for meeting with student at the agency (at school if it is not possible at agency)**

Review and discuss records/reports written by student

Discuss any issues raised by the site visit of concern to your or the student

Write up the visit on the agency contact form and submit to Field Director

Advise Field Director if problems are identified (using Student Concern/Deficiency form)

Present students with significant problems to the social work faculty

**Second Agency Contact**
The second contact should be scheduled about half way through the semester. This is a time to assess where the student is in the learning process and make any needed revisions to the learning contract. This is a time to focus on mid term evaluation.

**Topics for this contact may be**

Discuss changes, new assignments, and new learning plans

Discuss level of skill developed

Discuss problems identified and plans for solving

Review Records and Timesheets

Make sure that you have a current list of student placements, agency names, telephone and addresses, and field instructor names. If the field instructors change, or if you have names of contact persons or field instructors that do not match the list, please let Field Director know of the change. If the student has a task supervisor, please let Field Director know of the changes also.

Write up the visit on the agency contact form and submit to Field Director
Advise Field Director if problems are identified (using Student Concern or Student Deficiency form)

Present students with significant problems to the social work faculty
Write up the visit on the agency contact form and submit to Field Director
Advise Field Director if problems are identified (using Student Concern/Deficiency form)
Present students with significant problems to the social work faculty

**Final Agency Visit**
This visit should occur within three weeks of finals week. During this visit the final evaluation for the semester will be completed. Each objective on the learning plan will be reviewed to determine if tasks have been completed and if the objectives have been met. During the first semester, you may have NA for a few tasks, but for the second semester there will be NO non-applicable tasks for the objectives, since all objectives must be met by the end of the year.

Complete Student Evaluation (first semester) and submit a copy to Field Director, to be placed in the student master file.

Complete Student Evaluation (second semester) and submit original to Field Director, to be placed in the student master file.

Complete Documentation of Hours form to Field Director to be placed in student master file.

Complete other evaluations and submit to Field Director’s office. Write up the visit on the agency contact form and submit to Field Director

Advise Field Director if problems are identified (using Student Concern/Deficiency form)

Present students with significant problems to the social work faculty