I. Introduction:
Hello and Welcome to Field Education at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences! I would like to thank you for your interest in joining MSASS as a field placement agency. As a professional social worker, I am sure you can reflect on your own educational experiences and fondly remember the dedicated professionals who took the time and effort to help you along your professional journey. As with the tradition of social work, you are now in a position to contribute to the professional development of future social workers. We look forward to working with you and recognize the strength of the profession cannot be maintained without you.

The mission of the Field Education Department is to partner with community practitioners and MSASS Faculty to provide students with opportunities for academic integration in a dynamically oriented practice arena. Known as the “signature pedagogy” of social work education, field education is an integral component of the MSASS graduate program and actualized through a collaborative and reciprocal relationship between the university, community organizations and institutions and graduate students. This experience offers students field practice opportunities to integrate the core knowledge, skills and values inherent to the profession. The Student, Field Instructor, Field Faculty Advisor and Task Supervisor (when applicable) collaborate in defining and endorsing the learning opportunities that will transform our aspiring students into competent social work professionals.

Field Education affords students opportunities to apply theoretical concepts from the classroom to professional practice sites structured to enhance opportunities for skill demonstration and application. It provides a forum for students to integrate the knowledge, skills and values that comprise the core of the professional social work practice with a self-identity as competent beginning professionals. The practice setting affords students opportunities to apply didactic theory to practice, give and receive feedback regarding skill development, and experience the realities of the social work profession. There is the potential for a mutual exchange of practical and theoretical knowledge that may serve to enhance innovative change in both the clinical and academic venues. The Field Education Department endorses this expansive view of the opportunities that students and Field Instructors share to re-define both social work education and social work practice for the future.

This document is designed to provide you with a basic understanding of our program as well as inform you of the requirement and core responsibilities of field placement agencies. While we believe our students add exponential value to our placement agency sites, we recognize that not all are able to make the long-term commitment to our students’ learning. Therefore, we ask you to carefully consider the information provided.

Scott A. Wilkes, LISW-S, J.D.
Director of Field Education
II. MSASS Mission Statement:
The Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences provides and integrates professional social work education, research, and service to promote social justice and empowerment in communities through social work practice locally, nationally, and internationally.

The Mandel School believes that advanced practitioners are strategists of change, able to mobilize all the resources of the environment on behalf of their clients. To this end, the Mandel School remains dedicated to understanding problems in order to solve problems, and firmly committed to developing leadership in advocacy, enhancing practice, and promoting community self-help.

III. The Field Education Department:

Scott A. Wilkes, LISW-S, J.D. - Mr. Wilkes is the Director of Field Education at MSASS. He joined the Field Education Department in the fall of 2007 as a Field Faculty Advisor. He received his BSW from the CUNY, Lehman College and his MSW from Columbia University. He is also a graduate of the CWRU, School of Law. Currently, he is a PhD candidate at MSASS. 216.368.2240 - saw31@case.edu

Beth Brindo, MSSA, LISW - Ms. Brindo is a Field Faculty Advisor and clinical instructor at MSASSBeth is part of the Child Welfare Training Initiative Fellows project, a five year project that engages graduate students employed with public child welfare agencies to be effective leaders and managers. Innovative aspects of the project include: She has her BA, Social Work from Ursuline College and a MSSA from the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. 216.368.5598 - beth.brindo@case.edu

Kirsten H. Gail, MSSA, LISW - Ms. Gail is a Field Faculty Advisor with a primary focus on community and social development. She has a BA from Kenyon College, a MSSA from the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, and is a Licensed Independent Social Worker in the State of Ohio. 216.368.5879 - khg9@case.edu

Kathi Gant, MSSA, LISW-S - Ms. Gant is a Field Faculty Advisor who graduated from the Intensive Weekend Program at MSASS in 1990. She has over 25 years of experience in the mental health field. She has held multiple positions in the social work and the healthcare field. 216.368.3024 - kxo@case.edu

Marjory Klein, MSSA, LISW-S - Ms. Klein has been a Field Faculty Advisor at MSASS since 1996. Prior to that time she chaired the MSASS Field Forum Steering Committee and served on a task force to evaluate field education. She is an MSASS alumna and a graduate of the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland. 216.368.0709 - mxk28@case.edu
**Soad Mansour, ACSW, LISW-S - Mrs. Mansour** is a Field Faculty Advisor since 1996. She has worked with Macro and International students. In 1999, she was appointed Director of the Office of International Affairs at MSASS. She received her BSW from Cairo School of Social Work, Egypt and is an MSASS alumna. **216.368.0711-sxm18@case.edu**

**Nancy Neuer, ACSW, LISW-S - Ms. Neuer** has an undergraduate degree in Sociology-Social Work from Elmira College in Elmira, NY and an MSSA from MSASS. She has been a Field Faculty Advisor at MSASS since June, 1997. Prior professional experience includes employment at Metro Health Medical Center, University Hospitals and The Achievement Centers for Children. She has a private practice in the Cleveland area. **216.368.3997 - nxn14@case.edu**

**Lori Longs Painter, ACSW, LISW-S - Ms. Painter** is a Field Faculty Advisor for the Intensive Weekend program. She is an MSASS alumna with over twenty years-experience in private foster care and adoption agencies. She served in clinical and administrative capacities in management, supervision and direct service. **216.368.0047 - ljp14@case.edu**

**Henrietta Jones, Administrative Assistant - Ms. Jones** has been a staff member of MSASS since 1979 and with the Field Education Department since 1990. She is a 1987 graduate of Programming Systems Institute She has attended Dyke College and Cuyahoga Community College. Ms. Jones assisted in school reaccreditations in 1985 and 1993. **216.368.2292 - hpj@case.edu**

### IV. Benefits of Joining MSASS:

By joining our network of field placement agencies, we believe your organization has the opportunity to contribute to the creation of your communities next generation of social workers. In addition to supporting your community, the benefits of collaborating with MSASS include:

- Partnership with a nationally ranked school of social work (#10 U.S. News and World Report);
- Receiving free annual CEU training offered by the Field Education Department;
- Gaining access to all on-campus libraries and electronic resources;
- Working collaboratively with MSASS Faculty;
- Contributing to the professional growth of a new social worker;
- Supporting service delivery with trained social work students;
- Honoring an obligation to the social work profession;
- Energizing your staff and department with new energy and ideas;
- Learning innovative and Evidence-Based Practice Models; and
- Hiring highly qualified and prepared social workers.
V. Agency Selection and Monitoring:

Agencies are selected as field sites and monitored according to the following guidelines:

**AGENCY SELECTION**

- Investment in social work education, including the importance of helping students integrate classroom and field learning
- Evidence of sufficient and appropriate learning opportunities
- Professionals qualified to provide field instruction
- Commitment to provide a minimum of one hour of field instruction per student each week
- Evidence of accreditation by appropriate certifying organizations if applicable

**AGENCY MONITORING**

- The quality of the learning experience
- The quality of communication between agency and school
- Program or personnel changes that would affect student learning
- MSASS curriculum changes that would affect student learning
- Field Instructor attendance at training sessions/field office workshops

Monitoring the quality of field instruction is an ongoing process that is accomplished via personal e-mail and telephone contacts between Field Faculty Advisor and Field Instructor, Field Conferences and an agency evaluation at the conclusion of each academic year. In turn, Field Instructors monitor the program by their feedback to the Field Faculty Advisor and Office of Field Education.

Field Agencies are expected to meet the following qualifications and responsibilities.

**AGENCY QUALIFICATIONS**

- A Master’s degree in Social Work (MSSA/MSW) from an accredited school of social work
- Two years post-master’s social work experience
- If required by the state licensure board, licensure at Licensed Independent Social Worker [LISW] level, license eligible at the LISW level or its equivalent for out-of-state Field Instructors.
**AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Complete a Cooperating Agency Agreement establishing a partnership with Case Western Reserve University.
- Complete a Field Instructor application for each prospective Field Instructor.
- Provide a resume and copy of MSW degree for each prospective Field Instructor.
- Provide the student with sufficient work space and equipment (i.e. desk, phone, computer, etc.) to perform social work related tasks.
- Provide the student with a broad array of assignments.
- Maintain compliance with the policies and procedures of the MSASS Field Education Department.
- Remain current with curricular developments at MSASS.

**VI. Field Education Roles and Responsibilities:**

Field Education distinguishes itself from employment in several specific ways. We endorse a concurrent learning model where field education and academic course work provide the forum for maximum professional integration. While exposure to various “world of work” experiences enrich the student’s overall field experience, guidelines relevant to issues of liability, accessibility and workload require consideration and reflection. Therefore, to avoid the potential conflict of roles and responsibilities, **FULL TIME AND PART TIME STUDENTS CANNOT BE EMPLOYED BY THEIR FIELD EDUCATION ORGANIZATION IN ANY CAPACITY** during the course of their field placement.

Field Education allows students opportunities to reflect, integrate, develop and implement programs and interventions that will form the foundation of practice upon graduation. Our collective focus is to support the student in defining and maximizing learning needs and goals within the context of their specific field setting. The student, field instructor, task supervisor and field faculty advisor work collaboratively as members of the educational team to provide the student with the tools, resources and opportunities to be successful. Below is a comprehensive listing of the specific roles and responsibilities of each party:
THE STUDENT

- Participate in scheduled agency orientation provided by the field organization. If the orientation is scheduled prior to the official start of the field period there must be an agreement reached collaboratively between the student, field instructor and field faculty advisor addressing potential liability issues and compensation for accumulated field hours.

- A Social Work Trainee License (SWT) or Background Check may be required by certain field organizations. Students need to determine if this is mandated by the field site and obtain the SWT License or Background Check if required. (See Link for directions). The Field Education Office will provide verification of the student’s enrollment in Field Education during each field period in order to maintain the student’s SWT License.

- Respect and articulate the distinction between student learner and agency/organization employee.

- Be attentive to and address and ameliorate dual and/or multiple relationships.

- Practice and demonstrate the MSASS Code of Conduct in all interactions.

- Respect and comply with the protocol of the field organization to support and promote the agency’s mission.

- Provide the Field Instructor with copies of course syllabi to be utilized in the collaborative development of the Learning Contract.

- Be an active participant in field supervision by creating an agenda for meetings and clearly defining learning goals and objectives.

- Arrange the Field Conference with the Field Instructor and Field Faculty Advisor each semester to review and endorse the Learning Contract.

- Perform the identified tasks and activities documented in the Learning Contract by the deadlines agreed upon with the Field Instructor and Field Faculty Advisor.

- Complete the Field Evaluation in its entirety by the established due date indicated in the Field Education calendar and specified in the Learning Contract under the Succeed in the World of Work Ability.

- We discourage students from assuming “on call” responsibilities when physically absent from the field site.

- Retain a copy of all field related documentation.

THE FIELD INSTRUCTOR:

- Provide an orientation to the agency.

- Provide regularly scheduled supervision to the student (a minimum of 60-90 minutes weekly). Monitor and provide ongoing performance feedback as indicated.

- Actively participate in the development of the Learning Contract and the Field Conference each semester.

- Attend Field Instructor Trainings provided by MSASS.

- Maintain an open dialogue with the organization’s Field Faculty Advisor to discuss issues relevant to and impacting the Field Education experience.

- Complete the Field Evaluation collaboratively with the student to meet the specified deadline for submission.
- Respect and articulate the distinction between student learner and agency/organization employee.
- Be attentive to and address and ameliorate dual and/or multiple relationships.

### THE TASK SUPERVISOR:
- Task Supervision utilizes staff with professional competence in the learning activities the student is to undertake.
- The Task Supervisors may be qualified field instructors, other social workers, or members of other disciplines.
- The Task Supervisor does not replace the field instructor but does need to be well informed of educational objectives and understand his/her role in the student’s learning.
- Task Supervisor is used, the following guidelines apply:
  - The Field Instructor must continue to meet with the student in formal weekly individual conferences; Task Supervisor will meet with the student individually or in groups for a minimum of one-half to one hour per week.
  - Task Supervisor and Field Instructor maintain communication to administer student’s overall assignment and shared teaching issues.
  - Task Supervisor participates in field conference(s) and provides oral/written input to evaluate the student’s performance.
  - If the Task Supervisor is not a social worker, the Field Instructor should identify professional issues and differences between the social work profession and other disciplines and help the student integrate the task supervisor’s contribution into the overall educational experience.
  - When the Field Instructor is off-site, and the Task Supervisor assumes the primary role of daily interaction and supervision of the student, weekly communication regarding assigned tasks, student concerns/problems, and progress on or changes to learning contract is critical.
- Respect and articulate the distinction between student learner and agency/organization employee.
- Be attentive to and address and ameliorate dual and/or multiple relationships.

### THE FIELD FACULTY ADVISOR:
- Develop working relationships with students and field organizations.
- Participate in the Field Conference with the student and Field Instructor during each field period.
- Explore and develop new field sites.
- Maintain accessibility to students and field organizations.
- Facilitate and offer consultation in all aspects of the field placement process.
- Teach the Field Seminar course.
- Review field evaluations and assign grades for field performance.
- Provide written feedback to students relative to field performance and the implementation and utilization of field documentation.
- Provide written feedback to students, field instructors and task supervisors following the field conference.
Respect and articulate the distinction between student learner and agency/organization employee.

MSASS encourages new Field Instructors and Task Supervisors to attend training sessions. Offered in the fall and spring, these training seminars are approved for continuing education credits for re-licensure. The training includes specific information about the school's philosophy, curriculum, and current issues relating to Field Education. Participants are also instructed in the use of the field education learning contract, field education guidelines, and the student evaluation. Approval as a Field Instructor carries with it an Adjunct Instructor appointment and MSASS library privileges.

VII. Credentialing:

LIABILITY INSURANCE
The primary goal of the field education is to allow the student to fully integrate theory into practice. This necessitates students having “real life” practical experience with client populations. To this end, Case Western Reserve University extends professional liability protection to students while acting on behalf of the University in the good faith performance of their assigned educational duties. Case Western Reserve University is responsible for the educational component of the field site while the field site is responsible for client care.

In addition, all students enrolled at MSASS will automatically obtain membership to the National Association of Social Workers. Students may elect to apply for professional liability insurance through NASW. Individual coverage protects the student directly as the policyholder.

LICENSURE
The Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board has added ‘Social Worker trainee” (SWT) to matrices as approved providers with appropriate supervision. A "Social Worker trainee" is defined as a graduate student seeking licensure as a social worker who is currently enrolled in a practicum, internship or fieldwork course in a social work education program accredited by the "Council on Social Work Education” (CSWE). Students seeking the SWT designation must complete an application for each semester.

VIII. The Learning Contract:

The Learning Contract/Evaluation is the cornerstone of the field education experience. It is completed by the student, Field Instructor and/or Task Supervisor for each field period. The Learning Contract/Evaluation is a working document that allows the parties to structure field learning opportunities to maximize the student's access to diverse areas of practice offered by the field agency. The Learning Contract guides the definition and implementation of tasks necessary to fulfill the students' learning needs. Specificity is important for clearly communicating field education goals. Implementation plans require concrete, measurable and quantifiable elements.
One of the benefits of The Learning Contract/Evaluation is that it serves as an outline for skill acquisition in developing a professional resume upon graduation. Moreover, each individual Learning Contract/Evaluation becomes a part of the student’s official transcript upon completion of the program. Therefore, it is important to have this document reflect the student’s professionalism and investment in the field education experience. The Learning Contract/Evaluation needs to be a complete and accurate representation of the diverse learning opportunities available at the field organization. It is helpful to have evidence of personal and professional insights and growth integrated throughout the content of the contract.

IX. Field Education Sequencing:
Students who have been granted Advanced Standing Status hold a bachelor’s degree in social work (BSW) from an accredited program. They are exempted from Field Education 601. These students begin their classroom and Field Education (602) in the fall semester and generally complete three semesters of field placement in the same setting related to their area of concentration. Advanced Standing students complete the program in either 12 or 18 months. Field placements for the 12-month students are in the fall, spring and summer. Field placements for the 18 month students are in the fall, spring and fall.

Full-Time Students must enroll in foundation courses, including the Field Education Seminar and Field Education 601. All regular full-time students need to complete four semesters of field education. The first field period provides foundation content and the second field period provides advanced content. The third and fourth semesters serve as advanced placements in areas that correspond with their selected area of concentration.

The Intensive Weekend Program allows students to obtain their MSSA while remaining employed full-time in a social work setting. The uniqueness of this program is that courses are offered in a weekend format and the field placement is in the same agency in which the student is employed.

The Part-Time Program affords students flexibility for completing the requirements for the degree. The schedule for field placement varies and is coordinated by the student and the Field Faculty Advisor.

NOTE: For students in the full-time program, a “field period” equals one semester. For students in the Intensive Weekend Program the “field period” for 601 is one semester but the “field period” for 602, 603 and 604 is two consecutive semesters.

X. Ability-Based Learning Environment:
Students at MSASS participate in an innovative curricular and instructional program: the Ability Based Learning Environment (ABLE). To establish student outcomes for the program, community stakeholders, students, alumni, adjunct faculty, employers, and clients were asked to determine those abilities most critical to effective social work practice. A content analysis of the data resulted in the formulation of eight core Abilities. The MSASS
Ability-Based Learning Environment serves as the current educational platform and provides the structure for the curriculum and Learning Contract. The Eight Abilities include:

1. **Identify as a Reflective Professional Social Worker**
   
   Learning a set of skills and techniques is vital to social work as in other fields, but the professional social worker blends those techniques with a heightened awareness of human dynamics. Social workers do not necessarily utilize the sophisticated tools of our late century as much as they use a keen sense of self as a major tool.

   The professional social worker serves as a role model, a guide, a coach, an advocate and/or a partner with client systems, and, therefore, needs to understand strengths and weaknesses in each of those roles. Professional social workers need to possess the humility to recognize weaknesses as well as the confidence to utilize strengths. Social workers must seek out opportunities for personal and professional growth, understanding that only through that growth will they be able to assist on an ever-broadening range.

2. **Advocate for Social, Economic and Environmental Justice**
   
   Valuing advocating for social justice involves first understanding the many ways in which “social justice” can be defined depending upon the economic, social and political ideologies of those who do the defining. From that understanding then comes the ability to understand the implications of policies developed according to the various perspectives. It also involves a deep sensitivity to the needs of all people but most especially to the needs of the poor, oppressed and disenfranchised. It embraces a global perspective, believing that an injustice to one is an injustice to all. We believe that a vital aspect of the social worker’s education, both in graduate school and beyond, is immersion in the values of social justice, equality and empowerment.

3. **Apply Social Work Methods**
   
   The ability to engage in effective, advanced, social work practice requires the application of abilities in the areas of valuing a diverse world, integrating values and ethics, advocating for social justice, succeeding in the world of work, critical thinking, communication, and professional use of self. It also involves the capacity to engage, assess, plan, intervene, and evaluate. Graduates of the MSASS master’s program are prepared to function as advanced practitioners in a changing arena of social work and social welfare.

   Graduates of the master’s program at MSASS are advanced practitioners in a social work environment that is undergoing major transformation. In part, these changes reflect external forces, such as devolution, privatization, welfare reform, and managed care. They also reflect the creative efforts of social workers themselves to redesign services and reshape practice to make services less fragmented and reactive, more comprehensive, integrated, flexible, and responsive.
Social work in this environment requires a revitalization of the profession’s tradition of community-oriented practice. Social workers need to analyze and apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior. Community-based social work practice sees lasting solutions to problems as arising from the strengths of the community and culture of the individuals and families concerned. It recognizes that clients are involved in larger patterns of formal and informal helping that may involve social networks, including family, church or temple, friends, neighbors, or community organizations, as well as other professionals.

4. **Uphold Social Work Values and Ethics**

A historic and defining feature of social work is its focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Thus, its mission is rooted in a set of core values that are the foundation of social work’s unique purpose and perspective. These values are as follows: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These core values are reflected in the NASW Code of Ethics, which establishes a set of specific ethical standards to guide social work practice.

The focus of the ability, Integrating Social work Ethics and Values, is to enable students to understand the process of ethical decision making. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships; specific applications of the code must take into account social, professional, and personal context. Reasonable differences of opinion may exist among social workers with respect to the ways in which values, ethical principles and ethical standards should be rank-ordered when they conflict.

5. **Integrate Cultural, Economic and Global Diversity**

From its inception, social work has dealt with diverse people. Historically, social workers served the poor and oppressed, and those who were discriminated against by the larger society on the basis of race, gender, religion, behavior or other factors. Although today social work serves persons from all classes and walks of life, it retains a special mission to serve the poor, oppressed and disenfranchised as reflected in the School’s mission.

Diversity is reflected also in the increasingly global connections among peoples throughout the world. Political, socioeconomic, and technological changes are bringing us all closer together, such that events in our country impact people throughout the world just as events in other parts of the world impact us. Thus, we take valuing a diverse world quite literally to mean that we must be competent to deal with diversity throughout the global community.

6. **Think Critically About Theory and Research Knowledge**

For social workers the aim of learning to think critically is quite simple and practical, namely, it is to assist clients. Clients can include individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities. Do clients benefit from our policies and programs?
Critical thinking is an approach to existing knowledge, knowledge development and knowledge utilization. As an approach to knowledge, it examines the evidence and the assumptions upon which claims are based. As an approach to knowledge development, it is empirical and accumulative, building on what we know and do not know. As an approach to knowledge utilization, it is parsimonious and efficient, in other words, what works.

The critical thinker operates with a healthy skepticism; knowledge claims, regardless of who makes them, are weighed exclusively against the evidence to support them. The critical thinker scrutinizes the legitimacy and utility of ideas, facts and opinions. Critical thinkers are neither deterred by ambiguity and complexity nor are they distracted by authority, dogma, popularity, jargon, tradition or any of the many other impediments to problem-solving.

7. **Communicate Effectively**

Communication is the linchpin of the social work profession. It is the vehicle that is used to empower clients or communities, to advocate for social change, and to maintain the integrity of an organization. It is the premise of the work of the profession in that communication is key to fostering understanding of self and others.

All levels of human communication are involved in the work of a social worker. One must know how to compose articulate and cohesive case notes and reports. A social worker must possess keen presentation skills, whether used in presenting a case, in explaining to a family or community a proposed intervention, or in delivering testimony. Social workers need to be cognizant of the messages, positive and negative, sent through body language, eye contact, and other nonverbal forms of communication. Computer technology and audiovisual skills are also a necessary component of a social worker’s communication abilities.

8. **Develop as a Social Work Leader**

In our present society of rapid change and constantly shifting priorities, it is estimated that individuals can expect to change careers approximately 4 to 6 times throughout their work lives. Yet within those career positions, an individual’s values, skills, and knowledge are constant and transportable, enabling the individual to be successful in the world of work in general.

The field of social work practice reflects the larger society with political and social changes defining the appropriate skills of today and tomorrow’s professional social worker. Therefore, we see that the more successful social worker possesses a wide breadth of skills. As always, the social work professional must understand the individual client, but he must now also understand the impact of the local, national, and global environment in which that individual functions.
XI. Conclusion:
On behalf of the MSASS Field Education Department, I again thank you for your commitment to our students. We know that we could not continue to provide a quality educational experience without you. In addition to the educational benefit received by our students as a result of their field placements, Field Education provides an invaluable service to the many communities in which are students are placed. Each year, our students provide more 117,000 hours of service to individuals, families, and communities. These kind of numbers suggest that field education is definitely a win…win…win proposition.

Should you have any additional questions regarding the MSASS Field Education Department, please feel free to contact me or any one of our Field faculty members. We look forward to working with you.