

MSW Field Orientation

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MSW Practicum I - SOWK 5606
Foundation Year
Winter Term 2022

Presented by: Vanessa Bascelli, MSW, RSW



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MSW Practicum Coordinator

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Practicum Administrator

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Your Practicum Team

- ▶ You are assigned a **Faculty Liaison** who facilitates your seminar and follows you on placement
- ▶ This is a faculty member who is responsible for your grading on placement and assembling all documentation for your file.

Your Practicum Team (cont'd)



YOUR **FIELD SUPERVISOR** PROVIDES SUPERVISION AND COMPLETES ALL YOUR EVALUATIONS



YOUR **FACULTY LIAISON** IS YOUR FIRST POINT OF CONTACT, THE LINK BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND AGENCY, AND MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GRADING



PRACTICUM COORDINATOR OVERSEES THE PROCESS AND INTERVENES IF DIFFICULTIES ARISE

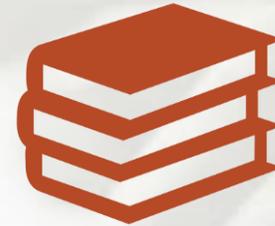
Where to Find Information



MSW Practicum Hub

• <https://carleton.ca/socialwork/msw-practicum/>

Student Forms and Manuals



MSW Practicum Manual

Field education policies and protocols

Practicum courses & course components

Sample learning contract

SOWK 5606: The Practicum Course

- 2.0 full credits of your 11 credit program
- **338 hours - 450 hours** in the setting
- 5 seminars - 2 hours each (Friday mornings)
- 1 extra hour of seminar (if needed) - 30 mins X 2
- Faculty Liaison consultations
- Written requirements, including evaluations and CUPortfolio page

Academic Prerequisites

- Good academic standing in the MSW program
 - SOWK 5000: Theoretical Foundations
 - SOWK 5001: Interpersonal Practice in Social Work
 - SOWK 5003: Policy Context of Social Work
 - SOWK 5608: Community Practice
 - Completion of or concurrent registration in SOWK 5004 Group Work
- **Permission of School of Social Work**
(Your application is your request for this permission)

Practicum Courses: 4 Mandatory Components

Field Placement (338-450 hours)

Practicum Seminars

- Standard Seminars (9:00 – 11:00 am on Fridays)
- Supplemental Component (seminar ends at 11:30am)

Faculty Liaison Consultations

Written requirements

- Learning Contract
- Theory to Practice Assignment x2
- Mid- and End-Point Evaluations
- Record of Hours
- CuPortfolio

Graded = Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Placement Dates (May vary by setting)

- First day is Monday January 10th, 2022
- Last day is approximately Thursday April 12th, 2022
- 4 days/week
- You will be on placement during reading week

FAQ

- ▶ Do I have to find my own placement?
 - ▶ No, quite the contrary.

- ▶ Students are strongly advised **AGAINST** soliciting placements directly with community agencies. Why?
 - ▶ Agency request
 - ▶ Direct contact can jeopardize placements for everyone.
 - ▶ Equitable process for all

Attendance & Absences Policy

Section 9.7 of the MSW Practicum Manual

- CASWE guidelines enable the temporary reduction in field hours and the establishment of remote & alternative learning plans (to April 2022)
 - It is not possible to guarantee these options beyond this date
 - Covid-19 (minimum of 338 field hours)
 - Normal Standard (minimum of 450 field hours)
- Field hours only accrue when you are in placement (not on stat holidays or sick days).
- During reading weeks, students should remain in the agency and follow the agency calendar
- Absence due to illness exceeding 2 days (see medical leave policy)

Steps in setting up your placement

Submit Practicum Application Form (**Due September 10th**)

Electronic copy of resume & cover letter to Coordinator

Coordinator sends to agency (student copied)

Remain in contact with Coordinator (throughout the process)

Attend interview with placement setting

Confirm the placement and complete paperwork

Ensure all pre-placement requirements are met (police check, etc.)

Register for the Practicum course

Where will you be matched? You will be asked for a cover letter

- ▶ Cover letter requests will be made by the Coordinator by early October.
- ▶ **This is how you will be informed of your first match.**
- ▶ **Cover letter and resume returned to Coordinator to be sent out from the School**
- ▶ Applications are sent out to one agency only
- ▶ If 'turned back', Coordinator will work with you on next steps and alternatives

The matching

- Your resume and cover letter is sent by Coordinator (copy to you)
- Student responsibilities:
 - follow up immediately to 'close the loop' and kindly inquire as to the possibility of an interview
 - Ongoing follow up as needed
 - You are expected to do multiple follow ups before asking for assistance – phone, email etc.
(Agencies react negatively when the School follows up)
*Remember, your application is only one of many priorities for the agency
- Keep in touch with Coordinator. She needs to know:
 - Interview date
 - Difficulty making contact (after multiple attempts)
 - Inability to offer you a placement?
 - Placement offered and accepted?

Use Carleton email!

Placement is a time-sensitive issue



Throughout, for consistency and professionalism, and to identify as a Carleton student.



Primary mechanism for communication.



Check often! You don't want to miss this communication during the placement process.



Field realities that may impact you:

- ▶ Placements are never guaranteed, but we enjoy very positive relationships with multiple organizations. Our timelines match the deadlines set by multiple organizations.
- ▶ Increasing pressure on agencies to place students – there may be other candidates from other schools
- ▶ ‘Turn backs’ can and do happen due to unexpected changes in the setting
- ▶ Need to balance proactivity (push) with the reality of the agency’s internal process. A slow response does not equal a poor placement or a lack of interest in the placement.

Field Realities that may impact you:

- Some students will confirm early, some quite late. This is not a reflection of the quality of the placement. More likely the process of the agency and/or the style of the placement contact person.
- Field Supervisors are not paid nor compensated. The pace of their work and their realities are also changing.
- I rely on you to keep me aware of what's happening and we will plan a strategy together.
- Try not to panic if your application seems to stall. Keep in touch with the Coordinator.

Large organizations, coordinators and trending organizations

- Large organizations are increasingly assigning placement coordination to either a Human Resources professional, or a designated social work coordinator.
- Students identify practice areas of interest in their application, but are not guaranteed matching in that area.
- Flexibility is needed.
- Timelines will be longer, due to multiple layers of process and interview. I.e. Internal committees, screening interviews, etc.
- Detail on exact supervisor, previous experiences etc. may not be available to you prior to being connected with the agency.

Where interest from students exceeds availability

- Where student interest is excessively high, multiple Carleton applications can be sent and screening will be done by the agency. This takes time.
- You can choose to be part of this process, or simply choose another agency.
- Students who are unsuccessful in agency screening will need to be flexible around settings, but will be placed again once they are advised that their application is not proceeding.

Shared interests

- Keep in mind that the school and you have shared interests.
- We both want to see you placed in an efficient manner, as soon as possible, with minimal turn backs, in a rich context of practice learning.
- We cannot control the factors that may impact your placement process
- Some students will apply to 2-4 agencies. This is hard to predict, and if it is you, please be advised it is an expected part of what it takes to place MSW students in the current climate.
- You will be well-supported to navigate the process and find your placement

Realities

- Placements cannot be guaranteed
- No field site is required to offer field placements to our students
 - No financial incentives
 - Offered on a voluntary basis – when an applicant meets the placement criteria & when agency resources enable student involvement & supervision
 - May consider applicants from multiple institutions & programs
 - Availability can change
- Why do agencies partner with the School?
 - To support your education and the profession
 - Professional development
 - Students contribute new ideas, knowledge, skills & energy to the organization
 - May be part of recruitment strategy
- *If a placement cannot be established for any reason, we will work with you to identify your options for deferral & staying on track with your degree progression, wherever possible, through alternative course sequencing.*

The Placement Interview

- ▶ Know the organization and be able to identify your areas/programs of highest interest
- ▶ Review website thoroughly!
- ▶ A different kind of interview – you don't have to qualify. Balance your strength with your needs as a learner.
- ▶ Demonstrate openness to learning and how past experience/education will support you to enter this learning environment.

The Interview – hours etc.

- ▶ You may be asked about start dates and end dates
- ▶ “Do the math” and be ready to put forward a proposed plan for working 338-450 hours.
- ▶ You are available Monday to Thursday only
- ▶ Fridays will be seminar and group work class until 2:30pm
- ▶ Be clear about your availability – evenings, weekends, daytime hours, long days
- ▶ It is important to identify any scheduling accommodations required in your application form that you submit to Vanessa and again at interview

Preparing for placement – Winter Term 2022

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338-450 hours “on-the-job” required

Monday January 10th is expected start date

Classes end **April 12th (13 weeks)**

Additional week if needed, until **April 22nd (14 weeks)**

You need to work throughout reading week

Sick time does not count

Work day will vary: 7, 7.5, 8, 12 hours per day

Seminar time does not count



Calculate Hours in Advance



Exceptions

- ▶ Extensions due to illness, bereavement etc. are possible if needed, but will require approval by practicum coordinator and the Faculty of Graduate and Postgraduate Affairs.
- ▶ Your faculty liaison will ask you to track hours throughout the placement.
- ▶ This is not a trust issue, but for your own protection.
- ▶ If you have concerns about achieving the full 338-450 hours, communicate directly with your liaison.
- ▶ A very rigidly surveilled accreditation standard. There is no wiggle room on the 338-450 hours.

You've got
an offer!

Steps to
Confirm:



Vanessa and Megan will email details once you have been offered and accept a placement.



An MSW Practicum Agreement Form and various insurance documents (ie. Health and safety coverage; COVID-19 training, etc) will need to be completed to finalize the placement.



It is the student's responsibility to get forms to Supervisor, get signatures and return the forms to the School by the deadline provided.

Forms to Megan Stansel



Signed and scanned forms are ok, and can be emailed to SSW.Practicum.Admin@cunet.carleton.ca



Megan will let you know how to register for seminar groups

Pre- placement Requirements

- ▶ Clarify and attend to all pre-placement requirements (police check, training, immunizations etc.)
- ▶ This is your responsibility. Ask at your interview.
- ▶ Additional training may be required (online)
- ▶ Police record checks can be applied for online. Start the process ASAP. Letters to support (if needed) are available by emailing Megan Stansel at SSW.Practicum.Admin@cunet.carleton.ca

Don't
forget to
register!

Students will be assigned to a section in which to register.

Please communicate directly with Megan Stansel to find out what section you should register in.

January 31st is last day to withdraw from a course with no notation on transcript. No fee adjustment, if applicable, if withdrawal occurs later than this date.

Seminar Winter 2022 Dates

- ▶ Fri., Jan. 14 9-11:00
- ▶ Fri., Jan. 28 9-11:30*
- ▶ Fri., Feb. 11 9-11:00
- ▶ Fri., March 4 9-11:00
- ▶ Fri., March 18 9-11:30*

*Supplemental Support component 11:00 – 11:30

A note about field supervisor requirements

- ▶ Field component of the degree is part of the accredited curriculum
- ▶ CASWE Accreditation standards for field may impact on whether or not your chosen placement setting can be approved
- ▶ MSW I field supervisors “will typically hold a BSW or MSW degree from an accredited School of Social Work”
- ▶ Non-social work supervisors can be approved, but learning opportunity must be aligned with learning objectives (see manual)
- ▶ All Faculty Liaisons are MSW social workers, and play a role in providing social work supervision if needed.

Matching Policies

Section 4.2 of the MSW Practicum Manual

- ▶ **Students are permitted to apply to one setting at a time only. Once you apply to a setting, you will not be offered alternative options**
 - ▶ Please fully review the placement information & website
 - ▶ In electing to apply, you are demonstrating your full commitment to proceeding with the setting

- ▶ **Students are not permitted to withdraw from a confirmed placement for another opportunity at a later time.**

Matching Policies

Section 4.2 of the MSW Practicum Manual

- ▶ **Students are not to reach out to agencies to inquire about field placements unless permission has been received in advanced from a Practicum Coordinator**
 - ▶ Specific request of field sites
 - ▶ To ensure a fair and equitable process for all students
 - ▶ Can jeopardize placement opportunities for that student and others

Practicum Coordinator

- ▶ Field capacity, policies and curriculum
- ▶ Respond to applications
- ▶ Oversee matching process
- ▶ Send your application forward to agency & support placement process as needed
- ▶ Provide forms & ongoing information
- ▶ Link you with FL and seminars

Student

- ▶ Accommodations
- ▶ Flexibility & openness to a range of settings
- ▶ Check email regularly, prompt responses & ongoing communication
- ▶ Research setting, tailor cover letter, proof-read, send in Word format. CU email only.
- ▶ Prepare for interview (references)
- ▶ Finalize placement
- ▶ Read manual & term info

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Learning Contract: Why?



- Highlights that the purpose of the placement is the student's learning
- Basis for accountability
- Evidence of learning relative to curriculum outcomes
- Establishes baseline against which progress and development is measured.
- Safeguards the student

The Learning Contract

- ▶ Exemplar appears in *MSW Manual*
- ▶ Template posted on Practicum Hub
- ▶ Learning Contract is drafted **by student** once placement is confirmed
- ▶ Within two weeks, consult with Field Supervisor, make adjustments and make available to faculty liaison.
- ▶ Draft reviewed at on-site Consultation with Faculty Liaison and finalized shortly after

Integrate the qualitative feedback from SOWK 5001

- ▶ The qualitative feedback on your practice development in 5001 (Interpersonal Practice in Social Work) will contain valuable information about your learning needs on placement.
- ▶ You are strongly encouraged to integrate this feedback in your learning contract.
- ▶ Interpersonal skills have relevance to all areas of practice
 - ▶ Research
 - ▶ Policy Practice
 - ▶ Community Development
 - ▶ Direct practice
- ▶ Your faculty liaison will engage you in a discussion of how your practice learning needs can be addressed as part of your placement.

The Social Work Learning Contract

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Objective	Task/Action	Evaluation
<p>What is my learning goal?</p> <p>Consider these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ethics and Values• Organizational Context of Practice• Community Context of Practice• Social Work Knowledge and Skills• Professional Identity and Philosophy of Practice	<p>How will I accomplish this goal?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What tasks will I do?• What resources do I need?	<p>Indicators</p> <p>What will I be able to do if I reach this goal?</p> <p>Evidence</p> <p>What task or product will demonstrate your learning?</p>

Objective <u>What is my learning goal?</u>	Task/Action <u>What tasks do I do?</u> <u>What resources do I need?</u>	Evaluation <u>Indicators?</u> <u>Evidence?</u>
To learn how to conduct screening and assessments for substance abuse disorders		

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To learn how to conduct screening and assessments for substance abuse disorders	To observe screening and assessments being conducted by staff To review screening and assessment forms and instruments used by agency To read best practices guidelines for screening and assessment of substance abuse disorders	

Objective <u>What is my learning goal?</u>	Task/Action <u>What tasks do I do?</u> <u>What resources do I need?</u>	Evaluation <u>Indicators?</u> <u>Evidence?</u>
To learn how to conduct screening and assessments for substance abuse disorders	To observe screening and assessments being conducted by staff To review screening and assessment forms and instruments used by agency To read best practices guidelines for screening and assessment of substance abuse disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the basic steps to screening and assessment for substance abuse disorders• Identify common instruments used in assessing substance abuse disorders• Identify key considerations in treatment matching• Will conduct at least one screening and assessment during Practicum• Will obtain feedback from supervisor to ensure my work is accurate and meets agency standards.

Why make a strong learning contract?



Your student evaluations (x2) will make direct reference to your learning contract



Invest in a good learning contract process in order to ease your process of self-evaluation

Theory-to-
Practice
Assignments
and
CuPortfolio

2 Reflective Journal Entries: 5 pages each

SOWK 5606 CuPortfolio Page

A summative collection of evidence of learning on placement

Required components, including a retrospective placement description and the final reflective paper

Evaluated by Faculty Liaison

Deadlines set by Faculty Liaison

SOWK 5606 CUPortfolio Page

- Description of organization and context of practice
- Your learning contract
- Excerpts from first two theory-to-practice journal entries
- The final reflective piece (in response to prompt questions)
- Student's Endpoint Self-evaluation

Example portfolios:

<https://cuportfolio.carleton.ca/view/view.php?t=fkg80UjvPyOo7XuK5dt1>

<https://cuportfolio.carleton.ca/view/view.php?t=QXLV8b0OPm2JW5f6spyC>

Evaluated by Faculty Liaison

Assessed for Content and Design/Communication

Evaluation Forms

Mid-point and End-Point Evaluation forms for Students and for Field Supervisors are online.

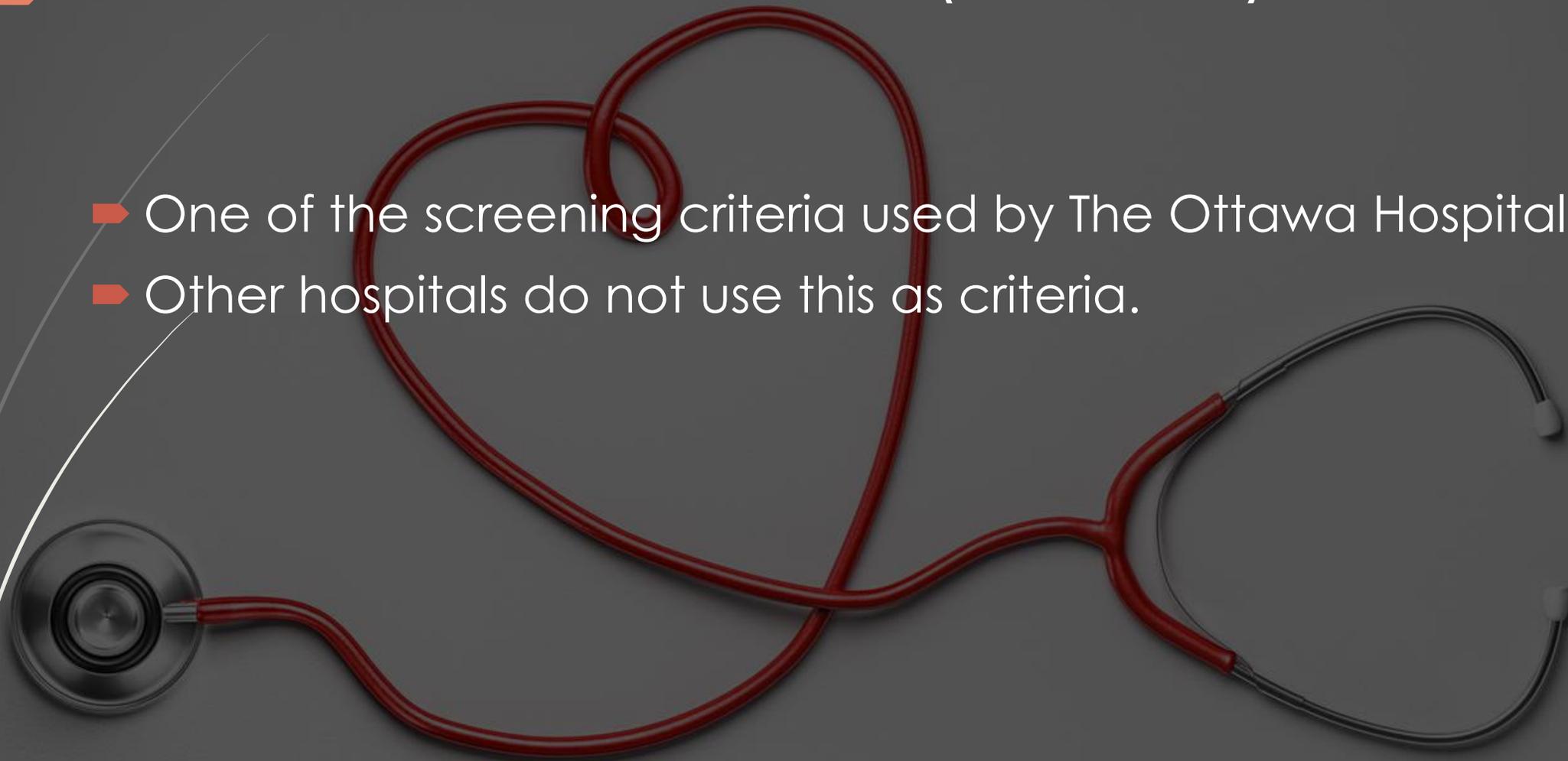
Forms must be signed by you and field supervisor but can be signed, scanned and emailed to faculty liaison

Field Supervisor – uses template to give feedback on competencies, strengths and challenges, achievements and areas for development.

Student – Self-evaluation is guided by template and centers on the learning contract.

Healthcare Course (elective)

- One of the screening criteria used by The Ottawa Hospital
- Other hospitals do not use this as criteria.



What field supervisors say they look for...

Students who:

- Present themselves professionally
- **Are prepared – have researched setting & area of practice (demonstrated by application/interview)**
- Are able to speak about their relevant skills & experience
- Demonstrates initiative – follows up / organized / able to answer questions about the placement requirements
- Are enthusiastic and have a positive attitude
- Are open to learning
- Student's learning interests in line with what the setting can offer
- Self-directed – takes initiative for own learning

The Shirley Judge Bursary

- Amount available: \$2700
- Deadline to apply: **October 31st, 2021**
- **Please fill out an [application](#) and send to SSW.Practicum.Admin@cunet.carleton.ca**
- <https://carleton.ca/socialwork/shirley-judge-bursary/>

Field education committee

Contact the Social Work Graduate Students' Collective

- <https://carleton.ca/socialwork/social-work-graduate-students-collective/>
- mollymcgovern@cmail.carleton.ca

Meeting Dates:

- Friday, October 15th – 9:15 am – 11:15 am
- Friday, February 18th – 9:15 am – 11:15 am

Questions?

You can reach me at Vanessa.Bascelli@Carleton.ca

