

To BSW students preparing for the fourth-year practicum course (SOWK 4600 or SOWK 4601-4602) in the summer 2022 term:

The following message provides detailed information about the fourth-year practicum courses (beginning in Summer 2022) and options available. Please read carefully.

Given the changing context related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the field team is necessarily planning term-by-term at this time. The following options and procedures are specific to the Summer 2022 practicum term. Practicum procedures and options may be subject to change.

We would also like to take this time to direct you to the online Practicum Hub, which is the primary resource for students preparing for and involved in practicum courses. This site contains term-specific information and related application forms, as well as the BSW Practicum Manual, information about practicum opportunities, learning contract templates, and more:

<https://carleton.ca/socialwork/practicum-hub-2/>

On the Practicum Hub, and attached here, you will find a ‘**Preparing for Field Placement**’ package. This package includes resume and cover letter guidelines, sample cover letters for field placement opportunities, and common interview questions to help you prepare for the placement process. An **online Field Orientation** will be held on **Wednesday, January 05th, 2022 from 9:30 – 11:00 am** (Zoom link will be sent out in advance via email), to provide you with further information about the placement process.

General course information/Summer 2022 Term:

Practicum II is a two-credit mandatory practicum course, normally taken in the fourth-year of the BSW program. You must apply to take this course. The deadline to apply for the Summer 2022 term is **January 10th, 2022**. However, students who wish to pursue a workplace and/or distance option for the Summer term (See Placement Options below) may submit their applications as early as November 10th, 2021 through to January 10th, 2022.

There are two options for Practicum II beginning in the Summer 2022 term:

1. **SOWK 4600** (2.0 credits) – field placement is completed over one term (May - August) on a 4 day per week basis, or the equivalent of 28 field hours per week, excluding meal breaks. Includes six concurrent seminars in the Summer term. Runs from May 05th to August 16th, 2022.
2. **SOWK 4601-4602** (1.0 credit each term) – field placement is completed over two consecutive terms (May to December) on a 2 day per week basis, or the equivalent of 14-16

field hours per week, excluding meal breaks. Students must register for SOWK 4601 (1.0 credit) in the Summer term, and SOWK 4602 (1.0 credit) in the Fall term. The field placement is completed in one setting over both terms. Includes six concurrent seminars taken in the Summer term. Runs from May 05th to early December, 2022 (last day of fall term not yet posted). **Please note, there are limited part-time placement options at the fourth-year level.**

Students must meet the following prerequisites to be eligible for Practicum II:

- 3rd year standing in the BSW program
- Good academic standing in the BSW program and have a 6.00 GPA in the Social Work major
- Completion of SOWK 2001, SOWK 2005, SOWK 2100, SOWK 2202, SOWK 2203, SOWK 3100, and Practicum I (SOWK 3600 or 3601 or 3602)
- For the Summer term, must formally apply no later than **January 10th, 2022** (See Application Process below).

Practicum II consists of the following mandatory components:

- Field placement (minimum of 352 field hours)
- Attendance and participation in six concurrent Practicum Seminars
- Faculty Liaison consultations
- Completion of all written requirements (learning contract, theory-to-practice assignment, mid- and end-point evaluations, record of hours)

Summer Term Placement Hours:

BSW field placements will consist of a minimum of 352 hours.

Some of you may have had the option of reduced field placement hours (264 – 352 hours) for practicums that took place prior to April 2022. This was a temporary option designed to increase field capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was permitted by the accrediting body for social work education (CASWE-ACFTS) to April 2022 only. At this time, this guideline has not been extended by CASWE-ACFTS. Thus, all BSW field placements that begin after this date will require the normally required field hours of **352 hours**.

Field hours are completed on a 4-day per week basis for students in SOWK 4600 (one term), and on a 2 day per week basis for students in SOWK 4601-4602 (two terms).

Practicum Seminars:

Attendance at 6 practicum seminars (held in real time) during the Summer term is a mandatory course component of both SOWK 4600 and SOWK 4601.

Six practicum seminars will be held during the Summer term, which involve synchronous learning (they are held in real time). Students must be available to attend and participate in all six seminars, which will be held on Friday mornings (9:00 am - 11:30 am) on the following dates: May 13th, May 27th, June 10th, July 08th, July 22nd, August 05th

As Carleton University is planning for a gradual and safe return to campus over the 2021-2022 academic year, the mandatory practicum seminars may be delivered in-person, on-campus in the

Summer term (online seminars are normally reserved for students in distance placements). However, summer course delivery formats remain pending at this time, and will be fully communicated to students once the University plans for the Summer 2022 term are established.

Application Process:

To proceed with a summer practicum, you must submit the Summer 2022 BSW Practicum Application (attached), along with an updated social work resume, no later than January 10th, 2022.

Please submit these two documents via email to the Practicum Administrator, Megan Stansel, at: SSW.Practicum.Admin@cunet.carleton.ca

In the BSW Practicum Application Form, there is a heading titled, “Placement Options.” **In this section, please select the placement option (See Placement Options below) that is of primary interest to you.** (Students who select a workplace or distance option as their primary selection, and who are not successful establishing a placement, may change this selection to ‘matched by the School’ up until February 22nd only.)

Your social work resume should outline your educational, training, work and volunteer history with an emphasis on your skills and experience applicable to social work. See the ‘Preparing for Field Placement’ document for resume guidelines. **Your resume should include only your Carleton email address**, which must be used for all purposes related to practicum courses.

The placement process for the summer 2022 term will occur electronically. There will be no in-person meetings with Practicum Coordinators.

Placement Options

There are 3 placement options available to you.

- 1. Matched by the School**
- 2. Place of Employment Option***
- 3. Distance Option***

***Options #2 and #3 require you to find your own opportunity.**

Please read the details of each option carefully below, and respect the stated deadlines.

1. Matched by the School:

If you elect to be matched by the School, a Practicum Coordinator will be in touch with a potential match via email between January and March. You must respond within three days to maintain priority, and submit your tailored cover letter and resume by the stated deadline.

Options:

The placement options that are identified as potential matches for each student is influenced by a multitude of factors. These include: the availability of placement opportunities offered through the School’s field partners during the selected term; the learning needs and interests of *all* students going into the field during the selected term; and each student’s level of study, prior education,

training and experience, skills (e.g., languages), and other factors (e.g., access to a vehicle) in relation to the eligibility criteria for field placements set by each field setting.

Every effort is made to match each student with a placement opportunity that meets at least one of the student's stated needs or preferences on the Practicum Application Form, (for example, this could include a population group preference, level of practice preference, area of concentration preference, geographical location preference, or something else). However, **this may not be possible for every student.**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of our placement agencies have been unable to work at their full capacity. Some agencies have needed to significantly reduce placement positions, while others have needed to put a hold on all student placements until further notice. It is not yet known how these factors may influence capacity for the Summer 2022 term; however, some agencies and areas of practice may be unavailable.

As well, please note that Ottawa hospitals and school boards (OCSB and OCDSB social work offices), and most federal government programs, are not settings that extend placements to BSW students (MSW level only). Further, some settings only offer full-time opportunities, and are not available on a part-time basis.

The School's role is to link each student with a match that will provide relevant field learning opportunities at the BSW level to achieve the course learning objectives. The field team will aim to match you according to your areas and/or agencies of interest, based on the settings available at the BSW level. However, **no area or agency of interest can be guaranteed available to you.** Students who are flexible and open to a wide variety of practicum opportunities, and who provide a range of different areas of interest on their application forms, are best positioned to be successful in being matched for the summer term.

Matching steps:

If you elect to be matched, the Practicum Coordinator will email you with a placement option when one becomes available between January and March. Please ensure that you are checking your Carleton email regularly for news of a placement match from January onwards.

Once a placement opportunity is emailed to you, you will be given three days to confirm your interest in being prioritized for the opportunity before it will then be made available to another student. You will also be given a deadline to prepare a cover letter that is tailored to the specific position to which you are applying. Placement applications are time-sensitive, and many agencies invite applications from multiple programs. This process ensures that students have the best chance at being matched successfully with an open placement position.

Once your tailored cover letter and resume are received, they will be submitted by the Practicum Coordinator to the agency. All decisions to extend an interview and/or placement offer then rest with the placement agency.

To be successful at a placement interview: Students must fully prepare to engage in a professional interview process (e.g., complete research on the setting and the specific position to which you are

applying; be prepared to fully speak about your interest and relevant work, volunteer, and educational experience; and, be prepared to provide professional references upon request).

Once a placement offer is extended to you and you accept it, please inform the Practicum Coordinator, who will direct you on the required documents/steps to finalize your field placement with the School.

Fully Remote Placements / In-person Placements:

Both fully remote and in-person options may be available. Please indicate your preference for these options in the attached BSW Practicum Application Form.

Some settings are offering fully remote placements at the present time, which means that all placement activities are occurring from home (telephone and teleconferencing activities, web-based work, research and special projects, etc.). These placements do not involve in-agency activities or face-to-face contact. Students may elect to be considered for fully remote opportunities only. However, **remote placements are limited and, again, cannot be guaranteed to be available.** Most settings that are offering remote placements at the present time do plan to reopen to in-person activities at some point. When available, priority for remote placements will be given to students with demonstrated need. In selecting this option, students must be able to participate in remote work (i.e., ability to work from home, reliable access to a computer and wifi, good self-management, organization and written communication skills, and availability for the required number of field hours per week during agency work hours).

Many settings are offering in-person placements. These placements include face-to-face activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, students who elect to participate in agency-based placements must sign COVID-19 waivers/releases and attestations indicating their awareness of the risks related to COVID-19, and assumption of the risks and liabilities associated with in-person activities, prior to beginning any field placement hours. Should there be additional closures or a reactivation of strict social distancing directives related to public health during your placement term, in-agency placements may be affected. The School would notify students of any changes as they arise, and work with students, wherever it can be arranged, to transition to remote and online activities to continue their field hours.

Please note that most settings are offering a combination of remote and in-person activities. More options will be available to you if you are open to both remote and in-person options. **Students are asked to indicate their interest in remote and in-person options on the BSW Practicum Application Form by checking the applicable boxes.**

Please note that the School matches students with settings in Ottawa and immediate surrounding regions only. The School does not match students with placements in other cities or provinces. Should you wish to pursue a placement in your hometown, please select an alternative option below.

Student instructions:

- Please confirm your interest in this option via the attached BSW Practicum Application Form due by January 10th.

- Monitor your email closely from January to March for news of a match. Respond to the Practicum Coordinator in regards to placement matches within three days. Be prepared to promptly follow up with a cover letter that is tailored to the specific learning opportunity.
- Fully prepare to engage in a professional interview as part of the placement process.

2. Place of Employment (Workplace):

Find and secure a placement within a current or former place of employment. To have your paid employment count towards your field hours, OR to establish a separate, unpaid opportunity within a current or former workplace, several criteria must be met:

- a. You will need to demonstrate that you will be engaged in **new** work activities that allow you to develop **new** learning at a BSW level. This new learning may occur within your current position and/or within a new area within your organization.
- b. Your proposed activities must meet the field hours requirements and start and end dates of your Practicum II course. This entails 4-days per week (or the equivalent of 28 field hours) from May 05th to August 16th, 2022 for students applying for SOWK 4600, or 14-16 field hours per week from May 05th to early December for students applying for SOWK 4601-4602. Field hours must enable a minimum total of 352 hours.
- c. Given health/safety/insurance realities, students must be paid employees for the entirety of the placement hours, OR establish a separate, unpaid placement opportunity for the entirety of the placement hours.
- d. You will need to negotiate placement supervision. Wherever possible, your field placement should be completed under the supervision of someone who has not previously supervised your work in the agency. This person should have a BSW or MSW degree. If this is not possible, other supervisors (including current or former supervisors, and/or individuals with other educational qualifications) may also be acceptable depending on the nature of the agency and work. Please discuss the supervisory criteria with the Practicum Coordinator.
- e. The placement supervisor and agency will need to agree to the usual responsibilities of field sites: weekly supervision, approval of the student's learning contract, completion of mid-point and end-point evaluations, and two consultation visits with the student and Faculty Liaison (to be held by telephone). They will be asked to sign a letter of agreement attesting to this in order to finalize the field placement.

Student instructions:

- Please confirm your interest in this option as soon as possible via the attached BSW Practicum Application Form. For this option, students may submit their application **as early as November 10th, 2021 and no later than January 10th, 2022.**
- If this option is of interest to you, please have the needed discussions with your employment setting as soon as possible.
- Proceed to complete the attached "Workplace Placement Proposal" in full and submit to Megan Stansel at the earliest opportunity, and no later than **February 22, 2022:**
SSW.Practicum.Admin@cunet.carleton.ca

- Clearly indicate whether your placement position will be paid or unpaid. The placement position cannot consist of both paid/unpaid hours.
- Once your proposal is reviewed, you will be notified by a Practicum Coordinator regarding next steps.

3. Distance placement

If you are residing in another city or province due to the COVID-19 pandemic, or you wish to do a field placement in your hometown if not from Ottawa, you may be permitted to find and secure a placement within your region. (Note: travelling for the sole purposes of field learning (i.e., international or distance placements that are not in one's hometown) is not being permitted by the University at this time.)

For distance placements, several criteria must be met:

- a. You must have good academic standing, have successfully completed all prerequisite course work, and have demonstrated your ability to consistently meet course deadlines and attendance requirements during your involvement in the BSW program.
- b. The placement opportunity must allow you to engage in relevant field learning activities at the BSW level.
- c. Your proposed activities must meet the field hours requirements and start and end dates of your Practicum II course. This entails 4-days per week (or the equivalent of 28 field hours) from May 05th to August 16th, 2022 for students applying for SOWK 4600, or 14-16 field hours per week from May 05th to early December for students applying for SOWK 4601-4602. Field hours must enable a minimum total of 352 hours.
- d. You will need to be supervised by someone who has a BSW or MSW degree. If this is not possible, other supervisors may also be acceptable depending on the nature of the agency and work. Please discuss the supervisory criteria with the Practicum Coordinator.
- d. The placement supervisor and agency will need to agree to the usual responsibilities of field sites: weekly supervision, approval of the student's learning contract, completion of mid-point and end-point evaluations, and two consultation visits with the student and Faculty Liaison (to be held by telephone). They will be asked to sign applicable documents attesting to this in order to finalize the field placement.

Student instructions:

- Please confirm your interest in this option as soon as possible via the attached BSW Practicum Application Form. For this option, students may submit their application **as early as November 10th, 2021 and no later than January 10th, 2022.**
- If this option is of interest to you, please identify and apply to positions immediately. Contact Megan Stansel should you have any questions about your eligibility for a distance placement, and/or the suitability of a particular position for a social work field placement.

- Once you have a placement offer, proceed to complete the attached “Distance Placement Proposal” in full and submit to Megan Stansel at the earliest opportunity, and no later than **February 22, 2022**: SSW.Practicum.Admin@cunet.carleton.ca
- Once your proposal is reviewed, you will be notified by a Practicum Coordinator regarding next steps.

For Options #2 and 3:

If you are interested in options #2 or #3 (place of employment or distance placement options), submit your Summer 2022 BSW Practicum Application form to the School as early as November 10th, 2021 and no later than January 10th, 2022. Once you have submitted your BSW Practicum Application, **begin looking for the placement opportunity/practice component immediately.**

If you are unable to find this opportunity before **February 22nd**, please advise your Practicum Coordinator, so that you can be included in the matching process at the School. **February 22nd is the final deadline to inform a Practicum Coordinator if you wish to be matched by the School.** Please note that matches as of February 22nd onwards will occur based on placement availability only.

Placement Policies:

Practicum students will need to abide by Carleton University and agency policies related to COVID-19, including vaccination policies.

Matching Policy:

In order to ensure an equitable and fair process for all students, and to ensure we retain our valued field partnerships, students are permitted to apply to one setting at a time only. Once you elect to apply to a setting, you will not be offered alternative options. You are expected to review the placement information and website fully in preparing your tailored cover letter. In submitting your application, you are demonstrating your full commitment to proceeding with the setting. Please note that all decisions to extend an interview and placement offer rest with the setting. If you are offered and accept a field placement position following an interview, you would not be permitted by the School to withdraw from that position for another opportunity at a later date, as, at that point, you are making a professional commitment to the setting in accepting the student placement position.

Pre-placement Requirements:

Students are responsible for meeting any pre-placement requirements of their particular field site in advance of the summer term to proceed with their field placement. Pre-placement requirements normally include a criminal record check for work with the vulnerable sector. Some field sites may have immunization and/or other requirements. Students are responsible for any costs associated with pre-placement requirements. For information related to the Vulnerable Sector Check:

<https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/about-us/level-3---vulnerable-sector-check.aspx>

For all other practicum policies, please see the BSW Practicum Manual:

<https://carleton.ca/socialwork/wp-content/uploads/BSW-Practicum-Manual-August-2020.pdf>.

To Conclude:

We appreciate your ongoing understanding that the COVID-19 pandemic means inevitable uncertainties about placement availability and formats. Much remains unknown and evolving about this situation. However, the field team is committed to maintaining the integrity and consistency of social work field education and to developing high-quality field learning opportunities for social work students during the pandemic. This includes establishing the above remote/alternate practicum options and related policies and guidelines, as well as building and sustaining supportive relationships with community partners to enhance their capacity to onboard and supervise social work students during the current times.

We are keenly motivated to place as many of you as possible, and to provide solid support both up until such time as your plan is clear, and over the course of your placement.

It may not be possible for all students to secure field placements for the Summer term in spite of all efforts made to identify options. If this turns out to be the case for you, we will continue to work with you to establish alternative course sequencing options should a practicum deferral be required.

At this time, we look forward to receiving your Summer 2022 BSW Practicum Application and current social work resume no later than January 10th, 2022, and to working with you to prepare for your summer practicum.

Kindest regards,

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