

the School of Social Work

OFFICE OF FIELD AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

MSW FIELD INTERNSHIP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

So, how does this whole internship thing actually work? It seems like a major commitment.

Well, it is! You will be practicing social work and simultaneously studying social work theory, history and skills. In fact, field education is the cornerstone of social work education. It also generates the most questions, the most trepidation and also the most excitement.

OK, so how much of this field work do I have to do?

All field seminar classes are 2 parts and are always done consecutively, over the course of 2 semesters. 250 hours of on-site field work are required for each semester. This works out to roughly 17 hours per week over 15 weeks. The sequence of *foundation* field courses, SW 510 (Field Practicum I) and SW 520 (Field Practicum II), will run over two consecutive semesters. In the *2 concentration* field courses, you will work at a field placement that reflects your MSW concentration in either Clinical Practice with Families and Children or International and Community Development. These classes, SW 630 or 631 (Field Practicum III) and SW 640 or 641 (Field Practicum IV), also run over the course of 2 consecutive semesters. For more info on MSW concentrations, see the official website, monmouth.edu/socialwork.

I already have a bachelor's degree in Social Work. Can I get my MSW sooner?

Yes! If you have an accredited Bachelors in Social Work (BSW) and meet the eligibility

requirements, you may qualify for *advanced standing* and complete the program in 30 credits rather than the traditional 60 credits.

When exactly do we do all this field work?

If you are a full-time MSW student, the answer is very easy. You will be in the field concurrently with your course work. You will begin your internship in the Fall semester when you begin courses and you will end in April as your classes come to an end. There are 4 internship courses, one for each of the 4 semesters of the 2-year full-time MSW program.

If you are a part-time MSW student the answer gets a little trickier. Here is a breakdown of the part-time field sequence:

First year: Fall: 6 credits. Spring: 6 credits. Summer: no classes.

Second year: Fall: 6 credits. Spring: 9 credits including SW 510, 250 field hours. Summer: 6 Credits including SW 520, 250 field hours.

Third year (first year for advanced standing students): Fall: 6 credits. Spring: 6 credits. Summer: 6 credits including SW 630 or 631, 250 field hours.

Fourth year (second year for advanced standing students): Fall: 9 credits including SW 640 or 641, 250 field hours.

Field classes are usually on Thursday evenings, while the student fulfills his or her 250-hour service requirement at other times during the week. Remember that each student will have

access to one-on-one advising with a member of the School of Social Work field staff.

For a more detailed

overview of the part-time MSW schedule, please see the curriculum charts at monmouth.edu/socialwork.

What are the field requirements for advanced standing students?

Advanced standing students take 2 semesters of field, either SW 630 and SW 640 or SW 631 and 641. If you are a full-time, advanced standing student, your 2 internship courses will be concurrent with your classes, from Fall through the Spring terms. If you are part-time you will have no field work in your first Fall and Spring semesters. You will begin in your first Summer semester and continue through the Fall and you are done with the field requirement.

How many different internships will I do?

Well, that's an easy one. Your 500- and 600-level internships are done in consecutive semesters and each course level is done at the same placement. So, for a 60-credit student, you will have two different internships, each for a full year, each encompassing two semesters. Advanced standing students intern for one full academic year at one placement site.

So how do I actually get an internship?

Another easy question! This is *our* job in the Office of Field and Professional Education and we love our work! We are here to help you secure not only an internship but an internship that matches your interests. We also are attentive to guiding you toward the experience you will want on your resume in order to get the jobs you want after graduating. All students meet one-on-one with us for a *field briefing* where we will go over all of your options and goals. You will leave this meeting with three different options for placement. You will then call to set up interviews with the agencies. After selecting your placement you simply need to complete an easy-to-use online confirmation form and we are ready to go. Of course, we are here five days a week, twelve months a year and are available to speak with you and answer your questions about the internship program. Your internship is, in essence, customized to suit your specific learning objectives.



Page 1 of 2.

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monmouth.edu/socialwork

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How do I know what my internship schedule will be?

Full-time students have classes on Tuesday from 8:30 to 3:45 and Fridays 8:30 to 2:30. Part-time students have classes Tuesday evenings from 4:30 to 10:05. Beyond that, you will set your schedule directly with your new field supervisor.

Who will be supervising me?

There are precisely two people who will be responsible for your field supervision, one here at Monmouth University and one at your placement site. You will have a field seminar teacher who will conduct the weekly class and is responsible for the classroom portion of the requirements. This is a member of the Monmouth faculty. You will also have an agency-based social worker who will be your field supervisor. She or he is responsible for assigning you your work and evaluating your performance. Field supervisors are all experienced, Master of Social Work (MSW) trained professionals who are volunteers. They are giving back to the profession the same dedication and commitment once given to them when they were students.

Are there internships close to my home?

If you can get here, we have placement options close to your home! We work with about 500 agencies and have placements from Philadelphia and eastern Pennsylvania, all throughout New Jersey and into New York City.

Are there paid internships available?

Nope, sorry. Few and far between would be an over-estimate. We are responsible to ensure that our placement settings meet our standards and provide you with the kind of supported learning experience that truly enriches your classroom experience.

I currently work in the social service arena. Can I use my job as my internship?

Not exactly. An internship is designed to be a novel set of experiences within which a student can grow and develop new skills. You can't do that at a job you already know how to do. However, we do approve work/field arrangements regularly. For instance, a student may take on additional responsibilities and hours at his or her agency. Each arrangement requires an individualized plan established with us and your employer.

Arrangements may vary greatly in terms of scheduling and paid time, etc. Many employers are quite supportive of your going for your MSW and it is largely their support that can make this possible. You will need an MSW-level supervisor that is not your regular work supervisor and your duties must be qualitatively different than your employment duties. This is to avoid a conflict of interests between your evaluation as a learning, developing student and your evaluation as an employee. The rest of the details we will work out with you during your field briefing. Again, we can make no guarantee that such an arrangement will be possible.

Can any of my previous work experience count toward my internship requirement?

No, the Council on Social Work Education, from whom we get our accreditation, strictly prohibits giving credit for life and/or work experience.

I currently work outside of the social work arena. Are there internships that won't conflict with my schedule?

Yes. That said, evening and weekend placements will restrict the type of experience you can get. The majority of our placements mirror regular working hours. School social work, for example, would not be an option. The

more restrictive your schedule is, the more difficult it is to find suitable placement options. It is reasonable to

expect that some placement options may contribute a degree of interference with your other commitments.

I plan to do an organized volunteer activity this Summer. Can it be used for my internship?

Not typically. You would need to be enrolled in the field seminar course, have an MSW-level on-site supervisor and have this arrangement approved by us in your field briefing. Obviously, we encourage service projects and volunteerism, but it would have to meet all of the requirements of our internship program.

I am coming from far, far away to attend Monmouth. Is there housing available for graduate students?

Happily, yes. The University has arrangements for a limited amount of graduate housing. Currently, the units are oceanfront (actually ON THE BEACH!) and less than a mile from campus.

I read about your international field program, who is eligible for this?

We have contractual agreements with placements in over 8 countries. This is an 8 to 10 week placement that occurs in the last half of your last semester. It is only available to MSW students who choose the International & Community Development concentration.

For more information, please visit the MSW Student Handbook, which is available at monmouth.edu/socialwork. Official field policy is contained in the MSW Student Handbook.

The information in this FAQ is not intended to supersede or replace policies contained in the handbook.

