To: Incoming First-Year Full Time MSW Students  
From: Rebecca B. Brigham, MSW, Director of Field Education  
Date: May 10, 2010  
Re: Field Practicum Planning Procedures

Welcome to the School of Social Work and the Field Education Program! As you know, field education is an integral component of your graduate program. While classroom learning focuses on discrete knowledge and theoretical background, the field placement provides opportunities to practice and exercise the skills and knowledge obtained in the classroom.

Your first field placement, the Foundation Practicum, provides the student with opportunities to develop generalist social work knowledge and skills through placement in a selected community agency. In this placement, it is intended that students experience a range of direct practice opportunities with a variety of individuals, families and groups, and also have opportunities to understand and work within an organization and community.

Two courses constitute the Foundation Practicum: SoWo 520, Social Work Practicum I, and SoWo 521, Social Work Practicum II. During the Foundation Practicum, students are in the field approximately 220 hours, depending on the length of the academic calendar, for each of two semesters. Typically, this amounts to two full days a week for a total of sixty days. Associated with these courses is a required Field Seminar, SoWo523 (Fall) and SoWo524 (Spring). Seminar meets for 2 hours every other Monday or Tuesday, depending on your assigned section. The purpose of the seminar is to facilitate the integration of field and classroom learning. Students meet in small discussion groups to provide a supportive environment for topical discussion, consultation, skill building and problem solving.

The School is committed to arranging placements which are appropriate to the goals of the program and incorporate your learning needs and interests. There are three tasks that you must complete as soon as possible, but no later than Friday, May 21, 2010. Students who do not meet this deadline risk being considered for field placements towards the end of the process, when many placements will have been filled.

1. Using the following instructions, complete the Foundation Practicum Planning Guide (FPPG) online and upload a recent resume into the database.

To log into the database, go to www.uncssw.org and enter your last name in the username box and your PID# in the password box. Please enter a hyphen (-) after the 4th digit of your PID. You will then move to a page that asks you to change your username and password. Your new password must be 8 alpha/numeric characters long and contain at least one number.

In the Add/Edit/Print Forms box, click on Foundation Planning Guide. Complete each section of the form. Click Continue to move forward through your form. Once it is completed or, if you need to exit the form before it is finished, click Save & Exit. To return to your form at a later date to make changes, go to Print Forms; click on Foundation.
**Planning Guide** and click **Continue** on each page of the form until you arrive at the section you want to change. (If you are returning to your document within the same day you created it, remember to hit your “refresh” button before attempting to find the document.) The Foundation Planning Guide will be made available to faculty in the field education office and your potential field instructor. Please ensure that it is accurate and thorough.

2. **Upload your resume to the field education data base.**

   To provide us with an overview of your background experience, please upload a current resume to the field education data base. Click on **Upload Resume**; click **Browse** to locate your resume on your computer; select the appropriate file and click **Upload Resume** to upload to the Field Education database. You can then click your back button and click **View Resume** to see that your resume has been uploaded. Your resume will also be made available to faculty in the field education office and your potential Field Instructor.

3. **Print, sign (including PID Number) and date the Release to Share Background Information** form (obtained under the orientation section of the School website). Return the completed form to Linda Pridgen Braswell by fax (919)962-3384 or mail: UNC-CH, School of Social Work, CB #3550, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3550.

   Most field placements such as hospitals, school systems and child welfare agencies, require students to participate in a criminal records check and/or drug screens. Record checks are either run by the Field Education Office and the results sent to the agency, or run directly by the agency. Once your placement has been determined and if the agency requires the Field Education Office to run the records check, you will receive an email from Linda Pridgen-Braswell, informing you how to complete the process using the UNC-CH records check vendor, Certiphi. If the records check will be conducted by the agency, your field instructor will inform you of their procedures.

Once you have completed the Foundation Practicum Planning Guide (FPPG) and the Release to Share Background Information, and uploaded your resume, following is the process we will use to match you to your assigned field placement:

1. Once the FPPG is complete and signed, the Field Education Office will have access to it. You **do not** have to submit any hard copy documents to this office.

2. Between May 24 and June 18, 2010 a faculty member from the Field Education Program will review your FPPG and contact you to discuss your interests. After reviewing available placements an assignment will be made. The assignment is based on your learning goals as well as available field placement sites. You will not be placed in an agency which would duplicate previous human services experiences that you have had. **That being said, the more you are able to articulate your social work interests the more readily we will be able to match your interests with an agency setting.**

   If you are going to be unavailable during this time period please contact us ASAP so that we may ascertain another option for learning about your field placement interests. If we are unable to contact you by June 18, you will be placed in a field setting based solely on the information provided in your FPPG.

3. Prior to July 1, 2010 you will receive an email from the Field Education Office informing you which section of Field Seminar (SoWo 523) to register for. Registration for classes begins on July 1, 2010.
4. In late July and early August, you will be notified via email (see word of caution) with instructions on how to contact the field instructor that you have been matched with. As soon as you receive notification of your assignment, please contact the field instructor to schedule an in-person or telephone interview. This interview is very important—it will give you and the field instructor an opportunity to discuss mutual expectations and plans for the practicum and to confirm the appropriateness of the placement. The interview should be approached professionally, as you would a job interview. Our Field Instructors are unpaid; they volunteer their time and effort as a support to the social work profession. Therefore they have the choice to accept or decline a student based on the interview. If you have difficulty reaching your assigned field instructor, please contact us immediately.

5. Once the interview has occurred, you and the field instructor will complete the online confirmation form by accessing your web page, and clicking on Confirmation of Placement. On page 2 enter the date of your interview and whether you accept or decline the placement. On page 3 click in the box next to your name to sign the confirmation. Click Continue at the bottom. If both you and the field instructor accept the placement, a final practicum confirmation form will be emailed to you. Should you decline the placement, you will need to provide substantial evidence to the field office about why this placement will not meet the learning goals of the Foundation Practicum. Please contact me at 919-962-6532 or brigham@email.unc.edu prior to declining the placement.

6. You are responsible for securing transportation to your field placement. As there is limited public transportation in North Carolina, you must have access to transportation to reach your field placement and complete your assignments. The Chapel Hill/Carrboro Communities are small and have few resources for field placements; therefore, you should plan on traveling within a 60 mile radius of the School for your field assignment.

7. Student Information: During the summer, please send any changes (especially telephone numbers and email addresses) to Student Services Manager, Linda Wilson, at LWilson@unc.edu.

8. Our success depends on meeting scheduled deadlines and your cooperation is appreciated. Please call or email Jean Livermore at the Field Education Office at 919-962-6529 or jlivermo@email.unc.edu if you have questions or need additional information about this process.

9. One last word of caution: many of the search engines available (Yahoo, MSN, EarthLink, etc.) do not allow our emails and attachments to be opened by you or may not even deliver our emails. It is imperative that you open and use your UNC email account exclusively while you are a student at the School of Social Work. We are a paperless system, and most of our communication is via email. Once you have your PID#, go to https://onyen.unc.edu/cgi-bin/unc_id/services to set up your email account.

Have a great summer; we are looking forward to meeting you and working with you. Should you need assistance with any of the above information, please feel free to contact me (contact info above) or Jean Livermore, Associate Director of Field Education, at 919-962-6529 or jlivermo@email.unc.edu.