

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Field Education Program 2021-2022

Frequently Asked Questions

HOURS and SCHEDULE

1. When is the first day of field education?

The official first day of field education is **Wednesday, August 25, 2021**. However, we recognize that some students and agencies may not yet be ready to begin field education on this date due to a range of factors. We expect that each student and field instructor/task supervisor match will negotiate the start date of field and the student schedule in concert with their assigned field faculty member.

2. Can students begin their field placement early?

Specialization year students may begin their field placement after August 1, if:

- The field instructor agrees and is prepared to accept an early start.
- The student has completed all Student Field Placement Agreement Requirements (SFPA) and has signed the SFPA in the UNC-School of Social Work (SSW) Information System (SSWiS).
- Any required agency onboarding documentation (varies by agency)

3. How many field education hours do students need to complete for this academic year?

For academic year 2021-2022, the UNC Field Education Program requires that Generalist year students complete a minimum of 400 hours of field education and Specialization year students complete a minimum of 600 hours of field education. We do understand that some agencies may require that students complete more hours due to student stipends or other factors. We also know that some students may choose to complete additional hours which is acceptable to us. Students who plan to complete more than the minimum number of hours should document this on their Learning Agreement and Competency Evaluation (LACE). More information about hours in field for this academic year can be obtained here: <https://fielddeduction.web.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/23165/2021/07/2021-2022-Hours-in-field-1.pdf>

4. What if the student does not complete the required number of hours of field education at the end of each semester?

Students who do not complete the required number of hours at the end of each semester will receive a grade of Incomplete (I) which will change to a final grade once

the hours and competency evaluations are complete. The student is required to work with their field faculty member to develop and sign an incomplete contract.

5. When is the earliest a student can complete their field placement?

Students may finish their field placement no earlier than April 1, 2022 with advance approval from their field instructor/task supervisor.

6. Will there be alternative opportunities to accrue field hours if needed?

Yes. We understand that some students may start their field placements late or that there may be an interruption in their ability to accrue field hours due to quarantine, illness or other factors. Students should work with their field instructor and field faculty member to identify and approve learning activities that may be completed outside of the agency setting, if necessary.

7. Will students be completing their field placement hours remotely or in-person?

Due to the fluidity of the COVID-19 virus we understand that agency service delivery is being provided remote, in-person or a hybrid of the two. We also recognize that this may change over the course of the academic year. In general, we will expect students to work as the social workers in the agency are working. For example, if a field instructor is working part of their time remotely and part of their time in-person, we would expect for the student to be doing the same, unless they have been provided accommodations through Accessibility Resource and Service (ARS).

8. Are students required to complete a field placement?

Students are not required to participate in a field placement if they do not feel it is safe to do so. However, Field Education courses are a required part of the MSW curriculum, therefore, graduation requirements remain the same. If students wish to alter the usual course of study they may request to complete a block placement. Students are encouraged to discuss questions and concerns with their assigned field faculty member, plan of study advisor, the Assistant Dean of Field Education and/or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs to determine what options might be available for their circumstances.

9. How will Field Faculty conduct their field visits with students and agencies?

Field faculty plan to conduct some visits remotely and some face-to-face. This is an individual field faculty decision made in concert with the field instructor.

10. What training will students have on COVID-19?

Students are required to complete all field placement agency training requirements.

11. Will students have Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available to them?

The UNC-SSW will provide 2 masks/week and 1 personal face shield to students who are completing their field placement **in-person**. Agencies may prefer for students to wear PPE which they provide. The UNC-SSW has masks and face shields available for students. Students can make requests for PPE here: • [PPE Request \(Microsoft Form\)](#). Chapel Hill students will pick up their PPE in Suite 335 of the School of Social Work. Winston-Salem students will have PPE mailed to them. If you have questions about this please Carol Ann Hincy at chincy@email.unc.edu

12. Are students required to wear PPE and utilize other public health measures?

Students are required to follow agency policy regarding PPE and other public health measures.

13. Does UNC-SSW have a health clearance protocol for field education?

Yes, the protocol is as follows:

What to do if you have possible SYMPTOMS of COVID-19:

DO NOT go to field placements if you have symptoms for COVID-19. Contact your field instructor and assigned field faculty member if you will be out of your field placement. Remain in communication with them until returning to your field placement.

On a daily basis, all students are required to self-monitor for symptoms. Refer to the symptom monitoring list post on the Campus Health Website <https://campushealth.unc.edu/services/covid-19-services/covid-19-faqs>

- Do you have **new muscle aches** not related to another medical condition or another specific activity (e.g. due to physical exercise)?
- Do you feel like you may have a **temperature of greater than 100.0°F**?
- Do you have **sore throat, runny nose and/or congestion** not related to another medical condition (e.g. allergies)?
- Do you have a **new or worsening cough** that is not related to another medical condition?
- Do you have **shortness of breath** that is not attributable to another medical condition?
- Do you have **recent (<5 days) loss of smell and taste**?
- Do you have new onset of **vomiting or diarrhea** not related to another medical condition?

If you answer **YES** to any of the questions above **OR if you have had a known exposure to COVID-19,**

Chapel Hill students should:

- Immediately **self-isolate** and **contact Campus Health** at **919-966-6573**.
- Not go to a *Carolina Together* testing site, instead they should follow Campus Health instructions for testing.

Winston Salem students should:

- Immediately self-isolate and contact their personal health provider for advice.

Students who are symptomatic must be tested for COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status. **Students may not attend class or field placements until their COVID test results come back.**

If symptoms resolve within 24 hours AND the PCR (**NOT** a rapid antigen) test result is NEGATIVE, Chapel Hill students do not need a clearance letter from Campus Health and Winston-Salem students do not need a clearance letter from their personal health care provider. Students may return to classes or their field placement once they have been fever-free without antipyretics (fever-reducing medicines such as Tylenol) for at least 24 hours, AND they have not had any diarrhea or vomiting for at least 48 hours, regardless of the cause.

If symptoms last longer than 24 hours, Chapel Hill students must contact Campus Health for guidance and Winston-Salem students must contact their personal health care provider and obtain a clearance letter to return to class or field placements **even if they have a negative PCR test result.**

If your test result is POSITIVE, you will be required to isolate. Campus Health will provide Chapel Hill students with a clearance letter when their isolation is complete. Winston-Salem students should request a clearance letter from their personal health care provider.

Chapel Hill students should communicate with Campus Health at least one business day in advance of expected return to classes/clinicals if a clearance letter is needed.

What to do if you have a POSITIVE COVID-19 test:

If you have a positive test result at any time, whether or not you have symptoms and regardless of vaccination status, immediately self-isolate and contact Campus Health (Chapel Hill Students) at 919-966-6573 or your personal health care provider (Winston-Salem Students) You will need a clearance letter to return to class or field placement.

14. Do students sign an agreement stating that they will follow COVID-19 required practices and protocols?

Yes. All students in a field placement are required to sign a Student Field Placement Agreement in SSWiS (under “My Documents”).

15. My placement agency had different public health standards than UNC. Which standards do I need to follow?

You must follow whichever standards are higher.

16. How will students who are working remotely ensure confidentiality with clients?

Students will be required to use their agency’s approved telehealth platform for meetings with clients, co-workers, and community partners. If their field instructors prefer it, students may also request a HIPPA Compliant Zoom account by contacting the SSW Information Technology (IT) program: citu@listserv.unc.edu

17. Who should I communicate with for additional assistance?

If you have been assigned a member of the field faculty, please contact them for assistance. If you have not been assigned an advisor or you are unsure who to contact you should contact Rebecca Brigham, Assistant Dean of Field Education at brigham@email.unc.edu or Denisé Dews, Assistant Director of Field Education at ddews@unc.edu. The contact information for the field faculty and administrative support , Carol Ann Hincy, can be obtained here: [Field Education Program Contacts](#).