

**Simmons** UNIVERSITY

School of Social Work

**SPECIALIZED YEAR II**

**FIELD PLACEMENT GUIDE**

**2023–2024**

## **Table of Contents**

[I. YEAR II PLACEMENT PROCESS TIMELINE](#)

[II. PREPARING FOR PLACEMENT: PROCESS AND INSTRUCTIONS](#)

[III: THE PLACEMENT PROCESS: COMMUNICATION AND INTERVIEWING](#)

[VI. FIELD EDUCATION INTERVIEW CHECKLIST](#)

[V. PREPARING A SOCIAL WORK RESUME](#)

[VI. YEAR II PLACEMENT PROCESS FAQs](#)

[VII. HOSPITAL SETTING CONSIDERATIONS](#)

## I. YEAR II PLACEMENT PROCESS TIMELINE

Timeframe	Student Tasks to be completed
Starting Oct 24, 2022	Review all Year II placement materials in this Guide
Mid-Nov, 2022	<p>Students receive an email from the Field Education Department with information on how to initiate the site placement process in Tevera</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In Tevera, students will be prompted to complete the Field Application, upload their updated resume, and schedule a meeting with Field Faculty.</li> </ul>
Sunday, Nov 27, 2022	<p>Field Application Deadline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilize Tevera to submit your application and updated resume. Once these steps are completed you can schedule a meeting with Field Faculty.</li> </ul>
Monday, Nov 28, 2022 - Friday, Dec 16, 2022	Field placement meetings take place via Zoom
Dec 2022 & Jan 2023	For students following the Independent Application Agency Path: Submit application materials directly to sites
Starting January 2023**	<p>For students following the Traditional Application Path: Field Faculty may begin sending resumes with inquiries to agencies.</p> <p><b>**Open application dates vary by agency. Your Field Faculty member will reach out to you when your resume is sent.</b></p>

Note: Throughout the process you will be asked to complete tasks in Tevera in order to capture placement information and be completely “matched” for the start of field in the Fall. You will receive instructions on how to do this in Tevera prior to the start of this process.

## II. PREPARING FOR PLACEMENT: PROCESS AND INSTRUCTIONS

### **STEP 1: Update your resume**

- Update your contact information and list your Simmons email address
- Add your Year I field placement information
- Utilize your Field Instructor (supervisor at your agency/placement) and/or Field Liaison (Simmons faculty member who provides field advising) by asking them to review your resume for content, editing, etc.
- Resume Resources
  - Example of Social Work Resume (see p.12 of this Guide)
  - Contact [Career Education Center](#)

### **STEP 2: Learn About Potential Agencies**

- Review the Sample Year II Placement List that was emailed to you and look up the agencies' websites to get an idea of their mission and services provided.
  - As you review field placements, think about the social work skills you want to develop and what kinds of agencies, populations and experiences might support your professional growth. Keep in mind some agencies listed will be Independent Application Agencies. (See step 3 for more information on this process). Most agencies follow the traditional placement process.
  - Some agencies listed on the Sample Year II Placement List will not be available next academic year; others may change their programs, mission or ability to host a student due to Field Instructor changes.
  - Please approach this list of agencies as examples, and review them to get a sense of the types of agencies that might best help you meet your learning goals (i.e. the type of population you're interested in working with or skills you hope to develop).
  - If you have an agency in mind that is not on our list, and you know they have an LICSW to supervise, please inform your Field Faculty member at your meeting to discuss the feasibility of this agency as a potential placement. **Please do not initiate contact yourself.**
- Some agencies (i.e. hospitals) require students to complete CORI checks, drug screens, fingerprinting, or other onboarding requirements; you will be responsible for associated costs.

### **STEP 3: Explore which placement process you want to pursue for securing your Year II placement**

- There are three placement paths to choose from: Independent Application Agency Path, Traditional Path, and Employment-Based Path.
  - Independent Application Agency Path (IAA)
    - IAA agencies operate independently of Simmons and require direct application submission by you (rather than by Simmons Field Faculty). With this path, you can apply to as many agencies as you want.

- If you are interested in college counseling or outpatient mental health, this is likely the way you should go.
- Faculty will **not** send your resume anywhere unless you are not accepted by any of the IAAs you apply to and you decide to shift to the traditional placement process path.
- Note that deadlines are early and you will likely need to submit a cover letter and letter(s) of reference.
- o Traditional Placement Process Path
  - This is the same placement process as your Year I placement process. The Field Faculty will send your resume to specific agencies on your behalf.
- o Employment-Based Path
  - Placements in one's place of employment may be an option for students who are currently employed by a human service agency.
  - The placement must meet the school's criteria for a field placement.
  - The designated hours for the internship must be separate from the employment hours and must offer different learning opportunities.
  - You must have a qualified LICSW field instructor who meets all of the criteria of the school and is not the student's current employment supervisor.
  - If you are interested in an employment-based placement, please review the guidelines outlined in the [Employment-Based Application](#). You are still required to schedule a meeting with a Field Faculty member **and** complete the Year II Field Application.
- If you are not pursuing an Employment-Based placement, you can *either* apply through the IAA (See Step 4) process OR pursue the traditional placement process. Regardless of the process, you will meet with a Field Faculty member and work with them throughout the placement process.
- There are pros and cons to each path depending upon your interests. For example, you can apply to as many IAAs as you would like, but with the traditional process, your resume is sent to one agency at a time by your Field Faculty member.
- If you apply through the IAA path and would like to switch to the "traditional path" you may do so by communicating with your Field Faculty member. Ongoing communication, routine updates and collaboration are critical to the placement process.
- Consider talking with your Field Instructor and Field Liaison about your interests and experience to date as you reflect on which placement path you might pursue.

**STEP 4: Review the list of Independent Application Agencies (IAA).**

*The current list will be emailed separately by mid-November. [Click here to view last year's list for reference](#); please note that agencies are subject to change each year.*

- IAA agencies operate independently of Simmons and require direct application submission by you (rather than by Simmons Field Faculty). Some applications are due as early as mid-December or early January and can be highly competitive. Often, an IAA will require a cover letter and letters of reference to accompany your resume.
- IAA agencies select interns from a pool of applicants from all of the local graduate schools.
- Please talk with your Field Faculty member prior to applying to any of these agencies to make sure this is an appropriate path for you.

- If you are interested in applying to an IAA, be sure to carefully follow the application instructions. For example, **if a letter of reference is required, you will need to arrange for it immediately. You should be prepared to apply during the December break.**
- If you are interested in outpatient counseling, please consider IAA and college counseling centers. Many of these sites are represented in these selections. *Changes in community practice models have rendered such placements scarce.*
- You will receive a list of IAAs and due dates in November. The list will be updated routinely to reflect when IAAs are full or deadlines may have shifted.

## STEP 5: Complete the Field Application and Upload Your Resume

- Regardless of path, you will submit your field application utilizing Tevera. The [application](#) will ask you to share what types of settings, populations and social work skills you might be interested in developing. **If you are interested in an employment-based placement, please note this on the application.**
- When filling out the application, you may provide four examples of placement settings that reflect the kinds of social work practice skills that you might want to develop. You may choose to leave the decision up to the placement team, or you may wait to discuss specific agencies with your Field Faculty member when you meet.
- After you have submitted your application and uploaded your resume, you will schedule an individual meeting with a member of the Field Faculty between 11/28/22 - 12/16/22.
- *Note:* you are not required to meet with the same Field Faculty member you met with during the Year I placement process. However, students in the **Health Care Certificate** are encouraged to meet with Diane Zipoli, if possible.

## STEP 6: Meet with Field Faculty via Zoom

- Plan to be in a private, quiet space for your meeting and come prepared to discuss your interests, placement ideas, and logistical considerations (schedule, location, certificate requirements, etc.).
- While this is a collaborative process, some agency settings may not be eligible for you based on their own requirements or inability to take an intern. Please be mindful that finding a match is a process that can take time because of multiple factors.
- In discussion with your Field Faculty member, determine which placement process you will follow. If you choose the traditional route, similar to Year I, your Field Faculty member will send your resume to **one site at a time in succession**. If you choose the IAA route, you will keep your Field Faculty member updated about interviews, communications from sites, etc.
- If you are following the traditional path, the earliest your resume will be sent is the beginning of January. Each agency has their own timeline that guides our process. Your Field Faculty member will notify you when your resume has been sent to an agency.

## STEP 7: Interviewing at an Agency

- Eventually, an agency will reach out to you to schedule an interview. Once this is scheduled, inform your Field Faculty member of your interview date and time.
- In preparation for interviews, be ready to talk about your experience, class learning and professional interests. Refer to the interview checklist sheet and tips in the next section of this guide.
- Carefully read all available materials and make sure you are willing to accommodate any special circumstances requested by the agency. Some agencies will require that you begin your internship early or end later in the year (school placements are one example).
- Once an offer is made and before accepting an offer, be sure to ask about schedule requirements so you are aware in advance of potential conflicts with classes and required field days at a particular site. **Additionally, inquire about onboarding requirements such as health screenings and background checks.**
- Generally you can expect to be in field on Monday, Thursday and either Wednesday or Friday. Many advanced year courses are offered on Tuesdays, and there are additional offerings on Fridays.
- **Please note that we can never guarantee you will be able to take all your courses in one day, nor can we assure you that we can create a field placement that accommodates your work schedule.**

Note: Throughout the process you will be asked to complete tasks in Tevera in order to capture placement information and be completely “matched” for the start of field in the Fall. You will receive instructions on how to do this in Tevera prior to the start of this process.

### **III: THE PLACEMENT PROCESS: COMMUNICATION AND INTERVIEWING**

- Beginning in early January, updated resumes of students following the traditional placement path will start to be sent to agencies on a rolling basis. Your Field Faculty member will advise you when your resume has been sent via email. Your resume will be sent out to one agency at a time. If interested, the agency will contact you for an interview.
- Ongoing communication between student, Field Faculty member and the agency is vital. Please return calls and emails from the Field Faculty member and agencies **within one business day** as this is a competitive process. Ensure that your voicemail is not full and that your greeting is professional. Students have been passed over by internship sites because they have not responded in a timely manner. Once an interview is scheduled, **immediately** notify your Field Faculty member with your interview date, time and interviewer name at the agency. ***If you are applying to an Independent Application Agency, you must still inform your Field Faculty member.***
- Some agencies may be ready for interviews right away, and most will conduct interviews by the end of March. It is acceptable to try to negotiate a time to meet, but please be prepared that you will need to be flexible. *Please note that having an interview is **not** an excused absence from class.* If you need to miss time at your placement, you should discuss this with the appropriate persons.
- Be sure to discuss hours and schedule expectations (including onboarding and orientation requirements) with the agency. There should be no surprises when you start placement. They may require a Tuesday field day or evening hours. Though we at Simmons say to expect to be in field on Mondays and Thursdays, and either Wednesday or Friday, agencies may have different required days.
- After your interview, email your Field Faculty member and let them know how the interview went, your impressions, and level of interest in the setting. It is important to do this on the same day.
- Immediately after the interview, send a thank you email to the person who interviewed you.
- **If you are offered an internship, you must let the agency know of your decision as soon as possible.** This may be difficult if you have interviewed at more than one IAA agency.
- If you have reservations about pursuing an opportunity, please contact your Field Faculty member you are working with **before** you contact the agency directly.
- Your Field Faculty member will confirm the placement with you as soon as the agency notifies us. The agency may contact you first to let you know of their decision to accept or not accept. If this is the case, please be in touch with the Field Faculty member you are



working with.

**Students will be informed of their placements at varying times, generally between January and April. This has to do with the agency timelines, and is something Simmons has little or no control over.**

## **VI. FIELD EDUCATION INTERVIEW CHECKLIST**

### **I. Getting Ready for the Interview:**

- Make sure to confirm the names(s) of the person(s) you will be meeting with, for how long, and whether this will be an individual or group interview
- Inform the Field Faculty member you are working with of the date of the interview
- If you are meeting in person, make sure to bring extra copies of your updated professional resume and cover letter, if applicable
- If you are meeting in person, leave extra time for transportation and/or parking. If you are unsure how to get to the location, do a test run. Being calm and on time is an essential step for interview success
- Dress professionally – even if the setting has a dress code that is more casual
- Learn about the agency— look at their website to see their mission, values and more about what they offer
- Be prepared to ask questions that reflect your interest in their program and the research you have done
- If you think that a mock interview would help, contact the [Career Education Center](#) to arrange for one

### **II. During the Interview:**

- Make sure to find out about the breadth and depth of learning opportunities offered for interns, including typical case assignments
- Ask if there are required days for the internship so that you will be prepared to plan class schedules without conflict. (Despite our best efforts, there are occasions when internship days may conflict with class offerings - talk with your academic advisor if you have questions.)
- Ask about expected time commitment (hours per day, required evenings, length of commitment—for example, a school setting may require a commitment to the end of the school year)
- Ask what experiences they have had with students and what qualities they are looking for in a student intern
- Ask about a daily schedule—what would a typical day look like
- Be prepared to describe your experience, including vignettes from your Year I placement, to emphasize your strengths, openness to learning, and learning goals
- Take in the culture of the agency; observe appropriate dress

### **III. After the Interview:**

- Immediately thank the interviewer(s) with an email
- Placements fill quickly, so follow up with your Field Faculty member as soon as possible!

- Speak with your Field Faculty member about any concerns you might have BEFORE refusing a placement offer. DO NOT refuse an offer without first speaking with your contact in the Field Department.

**IV. Once you have accepted an Internship, it is your responsibility to:**

- Ask about necessary clearances needed prior to start of internship including, but not limited to: health clearance (immunization record, TB test, drug testing, Hepatitis immunization), CORI, or fingerprinting. Also inquire about any necessary orientations or trainings that may take place prior to the internship start date.

## **V. PREPARING A SOCIAL WORK RESUME**

### **For Students Entering YR II Internships**

- Please make sure your name, address, phone number, and your Simmons email address are up to date. Make sure your voicemail is not full and your greeting is professional.
- Under Education: indicate that you are at Simmons University School of Social Work. You can add "MSW Candidate" and expected graduation date, then add other education information. Simmons should be listed first. If you are in a certificate program, list this as well. Do not include your grade point average or your high school education.
- Under each category or heading (education, employment, volunteer experience, etc.) always put your experiences in chronological order with your most recent experience first.
- Of utmost importance is a good description of your first MSW internship. The format is up to you. If you use bullets, then each phrase should start with an "action" verb in the same tense. If you use paragraph style, use full sentences. Please remember, your resume is a writing sample for agencies so be sure to edit it carefully, and have someone else proofread it. You don't need to fit everything on one page.
- When describing your first MSW internship include all perspective learning opportunities, even if they have not occurred yet. They will have occurred by the time you start in September. Be sure to also include:
  - The agency name, department, location and dates of internship
  - Your title (social work intern)
  - Brief description of the agency or program (i.e. residential program for adults with severe persistent mental illness)
  - Your duties (e.g.: case management, assessments, treatment planning, individual, group, or family work)
  - Type of clients served: age range, diagnosis or presenting problem, cultural/racial diversity
  - Describe any special projects, special skills, or training
- The [Career Education Center](#) is available to all students for resume assistance. Make an appointment as early as possible as appointments fill up quickly.
- Your Field Liaison and/or Field Instructor are excellent resources for checking a draft of your resume.
- Review the resume example below for additional guidance.
- You will be asked to upload your resume in Tevera and may receive feedback to change your resume. Your Field Faculty member will review your resume during your meeting.

## Sam Simmons

300 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02215 • sam.simmons@simmons.edu • (617) 555-5555

### **Education:**

Simmons University School of Social Work, Boston, MA  
*Master of Social Work (MSW) Candidate*

Anticipated 05/2023

The College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, NY  
*Bachelor of Science in Psychology*

05/2014

### **Employment Experience:**

Home for Little Wanderers, Waltham, MA  
*Direct Care Counselor*

06/2019 - Present

- Provide a safe, supportive environment for children ages 12-18 living in a group home.
- Communicate with other counselors from previous shifts to ensure the continued flow of information.
- Assist with the implementation of treatment plans that support the attainment of educational and social goals for residents.
- Document daily living activities in residential log.

Community Healthlink, Inc., Worcester, MA  
*Therapeutic Mentor*

06/2014 - 5/2019

- Provided structured, one-to-one, strength-based support services to youth for the purpose of addressing daily living, social, and communication needs.
- Developed and implemented Individual Intervention Plans (IIP).
- Collaborated with other professionals to ensure IIPs met client needs and supported the goals set by team members.
- Engaged in skill-building activities to improve communication, teach parenting techniques and strengthen family functioning.
- Maintained documentation of all sessions.

### **Internship Experience:**

Pathways for Change, Inc., Worcester, MA  
*MSW Intern*

09/2021 - 05/2022

- Provided individual and group counseling to survivors of sexual assault and/or significant others/family members of survivors.
- Served as a support and advocate for survivors at area hospitals, local police stations and court systems following an assault.
- Conducted outreach and education to adolescents to raise awareness of facts related to sexual assault and to teach about healthy relationships and warning signs of potential abusive romantic relationships.
- Documented meetings, referrals and services provided to clients.
- Completed 40 hour rape crisis counseling training.

## Sam Simmons

300 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02215 • sam.simmons@simmons.edu • (617) 555-5555

Action for New York Community Development, Inc., New York, NY

09/2013-05/2014

*Family Services Intern (Undergrad)*

- Performed eligibility screening through client intake process.
- Met with clients one-on-one to provide case management through the following services: food pantry, holiday assistance, fuel assistance, access to SNAP, referrals to other ABCD programs/services, and referrals to external programs/services.
- Assembled client files and completed data entry for services rendered through online client tracking program.
- Participated in outreach events in an effort to share resources with the community.

### **Additional Experience:**

*Family Child Care Provider*, Local family,

2012- Present

*Receptionist*, Admission Office at The College of New Rochelle,

2011 – 2014

### **Trainings:**

- *Fostering Resilience in Trauma-Impacted Youth and Families: The Attachment, Self-Regulation, and Competency (ARC) Treatment Framework*, Trauma Center at JRI – 6/27/16 & 6/28/16
- *Motivational Interviewing: Making Real Change Possible*, The Bridge Training Institute – 10/16/15
- *Adult First Aid/CPR/AED*, Red Cross of Northeast MA-Lawrence – 6/25/16
- *Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) Training*, The Home for Little Wanderers – 9/2/19

### **Affiliations and Memberships:**

- National Association of Social Workers, Massachusetts Chapter 09/2021 - present
- White Clinicians Against Racism (WCAR), Simmons School of Social Work 09/2021- present

## VI. YEAR II PLACEMENT PROCESS FAQs

### **1. Why can't I apply to any agency that interests me?**

We understand the wish to do so, but it is actually our community partners and agencies who determine whether they will utilize the independent application process or the traditional placement process. If they utilize the traditional placement process, they establish the “rules” by which we vet and match students. Once we establish their requirements, it is up to the Field Department to try to get the match right for both agency and student. If we send you to a placement that has clearly indicated that they are looking for experience that you don't have, we risk that you will lose another opportunity for which you are well-suited and qualified. This is a time-sensitive process.

### **2. Will my Year II field placement have a huge impact on the course of my future career?**

Please keep in mind that your Year II placement is one of *many* steps you will take along your professional journey. Much more important than *where* your Year II placement will be is *how* you engage with the learning. Focus on developing advanced practice skills and deepening your professional identity as they will be crucial in (and can be translated to) any setting.

### **3. Can I apply to do an Employment-Based Placement in order to make my life more financially stable?**

The Field Department actually encourages students to explore the feasibility of Employment-Based Internships. There are particular guidelines that are required, and we are happy to review them with you. If we can help your worksite develop the right learning opportunities for you, it may be a mutually beneficial arrangement.

### **4. If I choose the Independent Application path for my Year II placement, will I be without the support of the Field Department?**

No. There is a reason that we require you to meet with a Field Faculty member before determining which path (independent application vs. traditional placement process) is right for you. If you apply through the independent application path you will send your application materials directly to agencies but also keep your Field Faculty member updated along the way about your progress (or lack thereof). Your Field Faculty member is also available to review cover letters and prepare questions and thoughts before your interview(s).

It is in consultation with the Field Faculty that you might decide to stop the independent application process and pivot to the traditional process. Ongoing communication is essential for either path and if you are not successful with independent application agencies, we will work with you to find a placement. You are not on your own!

**5. If I don't have much exposure to clients in my Year I field placement, will I be able to secure a clinical Year II placement?**

In the vast majority of cases, Year I students are engaged in generalist practice. All Year I MSW students' educational goals (at all schools of social work) include the socialization to the profession and introduction to generalist skills (including working with larger systems). We encourage you to think about how you will talk about the skills you are acquiring in your current placement when interviewing for your next placement. Read [this article](#) for more perspective. How you describe your Year I placement, your growth, and learning are critical during the interview process. Agencies are seeking students who have cultural humility, are self-reflective, critical thinkers, and open to feedback. If you need help thinking about how to message your Year I placement, please talk to your Field Instructor, Field Liaison, or Field Faculty member.

**6. Is In-Home Therapy (IHT) really “clinical?”**

IHT internships provide robust learning for clinical social work. The service delivery system has changed dramatically in the past decade or two, and with the advent of CBHI, in-home therapy is the most common community modality for the delivery of services to children and families. Meeting people in their homes provides a rich way to assess the “person-in-environment” and intervene with fewer barriers. You will learn how to complete comprehensive psychosocial assessments, implement focused interventions, develop and monitor treatment plans, understand diagnoses (and their impact on the client and family), utilize your practice skills to strengthen families, and even learn about insurance billing. You will be working with diverse clients in coordination with a diverse group of services and systems which may include: schools, the legal system, child welfare, medical, and collateral providers of behavioral health services.

**7. Given the location of Simmons, are hospital placements plentiful?**

There are quite a few medical settings in the Boston area and yet there are a limited number of social work internships. Hospitals are limited by the number of LICSWs they have available to supervise, and with the pandemic, resources at these sites have been reduced. You can learn the skills needed for a hospital/medical setting in other agencies as well. Please refer to the FAQs regarding hospital placements for more information.



## **VII. HOSPITAL SETTING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Interested in a Hospital Setting for your Year II Field Placement? Please consider the following:**

Hospital settings are fast-paced, acute care settings that have specific expectations of social work interns. With the goal of setting students up for success, we ask that you review the following before considering a hospital for your Year II placement:

- Hospital settings typically require students to arrive on time, and the pace allows for minimal down time. Are you a consistently punctual person who is able to manage a demanding schedule?
- Hospitals require students to have considerable autonomy and the ability to independently seek out resources. How are you at taking initiative, problem solving, and prioritizing tasks?
- A hospitalization represents a crisis for patients and families which brings with it intense emotion. Are you prepared to tolerate the strong affect that may accompany such situations - especially grief and anger?
- Effective and time-sensitive written and verbal communication is critical for all social workers. In a hospital setting, concise clinical notes are required with a quick turnaround via an electronic medical record system. In fact, most hospitals require that all notes are entered into their system before you leave each day. An entire team of professionals will be depending on the information you have to share in your notes. Do you feel comfortable with your writing skills? Do you envision the ability to complete progress notes and formulations immediately, even if it means that your day will be extended?
- Students in hospital settings often receive feedback from colleagues of different disciplines. Do you have the professional disposition to receive feedback from a range of professionals in addition to your Field Instructor?
- Are you prepared to work in a multi-disciplinary team within the medical model, where the social work voice may not be as valued or prominent?
- Reflect on your own loss history; are you prepared to work with patients and families who are entering the end of life, or actively dying? It is important to know that this will be a part of any hospital placement.
- Are you comfortable with the sight and the smell of bodily fluids, and the instruments and tools connected to patients for medical care? What coping skills will you draw from to stay grounded if this feels overwhelming?

- Interns in hospital settings are often considered essential workers, and may be required to intern on holidays and during inclement weather. Can you commit to making every effort to safely get to your placement when it snows, even when classes at Simmons are canceled?
- Interning in a hospital requires flexibility; you must be prepared to be paged in the event of a crisis, often necessitating a sudden change in your schedule. Are you able to be flexible when planning your day?
- You will be entering patients' rooms when other members of the medical team or family members are present, and may be interrupted by a medical professional during a social work session. Do you have a temperament that will allow for a more "public" presence, tolerate interruptions, and unanticipated "derailments" of your plans?