

Simmons UNIVERSITY

School of Social Work

PRACTICUM EDUCATION

SPECIALIZED YEAR II

**PLACEMENT PROCESS
GUIDE**

2025–2026

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I. YEAR II PLACEMENT PROCESS TIMELINE

Timeframe	Student Tasks to be Completed
November 18, 2024	<p>Year II Placement Process Launch Day!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read this Guide thoroughly and carefully - Complete the Tevera Placement Process Tasks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the Practicum Intake Form 2. Upload your updated resume 3. Book an appointment with a Faculty Placement Advisor (FPA); Only available once you've completed the first two tasks above - Review the list of example Year II agencies - Review the IAA list - Review instructions for browsing Tevera sites <p>Year II Student Placement Process Experience Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12:00 - 1:00 pm via Zoom - Hear from current Year II students about their experience in the placement process, what to expect, and recommendations for success
November 25, 2024 - December 13, 2024	<p>Meet with Faculty Placement Advisor via Zoom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you are considering the IAA path, please book an appointment with us on <u>November 25 or November 26</u> (the two days before Thanksgiving break) - If you are considering the standard CAP process path, please book an appointment with us between <u>December 3 - 13</u> - Friday, December 13 is the last day you can meet with us

Dec 2024 & Jan 2025	For students following the Independent Application Agency Path: Submit application materials directly to sites and log your progress using the IAA Log
January - March 2025	For students following the standard process, the Centralized Application Process (CAP) begins
By April 1, 2025	All incoming Year II students should secure a practicum placement

II. PREPARING FOR PLACEMENT: PROCESS AND INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: Update Your Resume

Your resume should be updated and ready to submit *before* you book your appointment with your Faculty Placement Advisor. Even if you feel your resume is solid, **there are specific required edits you need to make on your resume for this placement process**. We in the Practicum Education Department will be assessing resumes based on specific criteria outlined in [V. Preparing a Social Work Resume Checklist](#) later in this guide. If you do not update your resume according to the criteria listed, you will be asked to redo it, which will delay your application.

In addition to this guide, we encourage you to utilize your Practicum Instructor (supervisor) and/or your Practicum Liaison by asking them to review your resume for content, editing, etc. Additionally, contact the [Career Education Center](#) (CEC) at Simmons for more resume-writing support.

We also recommend that you begin the process of drafting Cover Letters, as well as asking for Letters of Recommendation. Ideally, one letter of recommendation should be from your Year I Practicum Instructor. Other options for references include your current professors or past work supervisors. **Make sure to give your references ample time to complete a letter of recommendation**. Please note that we will give extra consideration to applications with reference lists or letters of recommendation included, even if the agency does not require it.

Sample cover letters can be found in the Google Drive folder linked at the very end of this guide in the [Resources](#) section.

STEP 2: Learn About Potential Agencies

The first way to learn about potential agencies is by **browsing our partnership agencies in Tevera**. You'll receive instructions on how to do this on Launch Day on November 18th, but pay particularly close attention to the Tags feature. The second way to learn about potential agencies is via the **Example Year II Placement List**, which you will also receive on Launch Day.

Use these two resources to explore the *types* of agencies you might want, but keep in mind that some agencies might not have internships in the coming year (they might have changed programs, mission, ability to host a student, etc.). We work to update Tevera sites as fast as we can, and **this information is continuously being updated as agencies share information**.

If you have an agency in mind that's not in Tevera (and they have an LICSW on staff), inform your Faculty Placement Advisor at your individual meeting. ***Please do not initiate contact with agencies yourself.***

Some agencies (i.e. hospitals) require CORI checks, drug screens, vaccinations, fingerprinting, or other onboarding needs. You will be responsible for getting that done in a timely manner, and for all associated costs (we encourage you to ask about this during the interview).

STEP 3: Complete the Tevera Placement Process Tasks

Regardless of which placement process path you take (see Step 5 for more information), you will need to complete the following Tevera Placement Process Tasks:

- Complete the Practicum Intake Form
- Upload your **updated** resume (see Step 1 above)*
- Book an appointment with a Faculty Placement Advisor (FPA)**

* Tevera will say your resume is **“Waiting on Placement Team”** once you upload it, not “Complete” as you might expect - please continue with the next task when you see that message.

** You can only access the appointment booking page once you have completed the prior two tasks.

Practicum Intake Form: This form will ask you to share what types of settings/populations you're interested in, and will ask you to provide 3-4 examples of placement agencies that reflect the kinds of social work practice skills you might want to develop. You will also be able to indicate if you want to pursue the Employment-Based path (more information in Step 5 below).

STEP 4: Meet with Faculty Placement Advisor via Zoom

On Launch Day, November 18th, you will have access to the appointment booking page after completing the prior two placement process tasks in Tevera.

If you are considering the Independent Application Agency (IAA) path process, you will be able to meet with a Faculty Placement Advisor on the Monday and Tuesday prior to Thanksgiving break: **November 25th and 26th.**

For all other students, you will be able to meet with a Faculty Placement Advisor after Thanksgiving break during a two-week period, starting on **December 3rd**. The last day to meet with a Faculty Placement Advisor is **Friday, December 13th**.

You are not required to meet with the same Faculty Placement Advisor you met with during the Year I placement process. However, students in certain certificate programs **are** required to schedule meetings with a specific Faculty Placement Advisor, listed below:

- **Healthcare Certificate:** Erika Peter-Harp*
- **School Adjustment Counselor Certificate:** Jeannine Chester or Celia Arias
- **Veterans Certificate:** Olivia Montgomery

* If you are not in the Healthcare Certificate program, but are confident that you are seeking a hospital-based placement for your Year II practicum, we strongly recommend that you meet with Erika Peter-Harp.

If you are in the Trauma Certificate or the Public Policy Certificate Programs, or if you are not in a certificate program, you may sign up with any of our Faculty Placement Advisors.

Plan to be in a private, quiet space for your meeting. Come prepared to discuss:

- Your interests and agency-type preferences
- Preferred placement process path (CAP vs IAA vs Employment-Based)
- Logistics (schedule, location, certificate requirements, etc.)

If you need to schedule a follow-up appointment with your Faculty Placement Advisor after this initial meeting, please reach out to them directly via email. **Do not book another appointment through the process above.** That will take up spots for other students who need to meet with us for their initial meeting.

STEP 5: Three Placement Process Options

*You don't have to decide which path you want to take before you meet with us, but you **do need** to explore the options below beforehand and come with questions/ready to discuss if you haven't decided.*

There are three (3) different placement process paths to choose from:

1. Centralized Application Process (CAP)

This path is what the majority of students choose. Much of this will look very familiar for most of you who went through the Year I placement process. In this path, you will submit multiple applications via the CAP Form, an online Google form in which you submit application materials to your Faculty Placement Advisor in batches for screening and review. Here is what the CAP form looks like:

The image shows a screenshot of a Google Form titled "Centralized Application Process: Year II and Advanced Standing". The form is set against a light blue background. At the top, the title is in a large, bold, black font. Below the title, there is a paragraph of text explaining the application process: "Complete one form per application. Submit up to 3 applications per batch. Students may only have **3 open applications** (IAAs and Traditional CAP) at any time." Below this, a bolded line states "Batch Deadlines are every Sunday at 11:59 PM". The next section shows the user's email address "montgomo@simmons.edu" with a "Switch account" link and a small profile icon. A note below reads: "The name and photo associated with your Google account will be recorded when you upload files and submit this form. Only the email you enter is part of your response." A red asterisk icon is followed by the text "* Indicates required question". The form then has two input fields: "Email *" with a placeholder "Your email" and "First Name *".

You will submit one CAP form per application (1 CAP form = 1 Application), and you may submit **up to three (3) CAP forms/applications each batch.**

You will have the opportunity to rank your top choices on the CAP forms in each batch round. These rankings will be specific to each batch of applications you submit. We strongly encourage you **not** to submit applications to agencies/placements that you are not particularly interested in (i.e. applying to “safeties” or “backups”). **Please only apply to those agencies that are of strong interest to you.**

During the application process (January-March), we will have “batch” deadlines for when applications are due via CAP (see calendar below). They will happen weekly, on Sunday evenings at 11:59pm.

Batch #	“Batch Deadline”: Deadline to Submit Application(s) via CAP Form(s) for Faculty Review	Student Notified Whether Application is Selected/Approved by Faculty
1	Sunday, January 5, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, January 10, 2025 5:00 PM
2	Sunday, January 12, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, January 17, 2025 5:00 PM
3	Sunday, January 19, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, January 24, 2025 5:00 PM
4	Sunday, January 26, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, January 31, 2025 5:00 PM
5	Sunday, February 2, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, February 7, 2025 5:00 PM
6	Sunday, February 9, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, February 14, 2025 5:00 PM
7	Sunday, February 16, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, February 21, 2025 5:00 PM
8	Sunday, February 23, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, February 28, 2025 5:00 PM
9 (Spring Break)	Sunday, March 2, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, March 7, 2025 5:00 PM
10	Sunday, March 9, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, March 14, 2025 5:00 PM
11	Sunday, March 16, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, March 21, 2025 5:00 PM
12	Sunday, March 23, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, March 28, 2025 5:00 PM
13 (Final Round)	Sunday, March 30, 2025 11:59 PM	Friday, April 4, 2025 5:00 PM

Once you submit your CAP form/application(s) by the batch deadline (Sunday evenings), the Practicum Education Department faculty will review and assess your application that week (please see [V. Preparing a Social Work Resume](#) below for specific criteria on how we are assessing applications). Your Faculty Placement Advisor will notify you by Friday at 5:00pm of that same week if your application was chosen to be sent to the agency. Note that for certain agency-types, priority will be given to students

in certificate programs. For example, students in the Healthcare Certificate program will be given first priority for hospital placements.

Once your application has been selected by the Practicum faculty, there are two paths for what happens next:

CAP: Faculty Direct

For agencies that choose the “Faculty Direct” path in the CAP process, it means the agency requires that screened and approved applications be submitted directly by the Practicum Education Department faculty contacts. This is the traditional, standard process.

CAP: Student Direct

For agencies that choose the “Student Direct” path in the CAP process, after your applications are screened and chosen by Practicum Education Department faculty, instead of **us** sending the approved application to the agency, **you** submit the approved application directly. Please note that these agencies **still require your applications to be screened and approved by us first**. You are not permitted to send your application directly to the agency without faculty approval and notice.

Note: Students do not get to choose whether faculty or students send their applications in the CAP process. The CAP: Faculty Direct and CAP: Student Direct are designations set by the agency, and students and faculty alike must abide by these requirements.

Note that during your Year I placement process, you were only permitted up to 2 active applications at a time, but due to the competitive nature of Year II placements, we increase this number from 2 to 3 for Year II students.

Finally, if your application(s) were not selected / approved by faculty, the student will be required to continue submitting applications via the CAP form until a match is made. If a CAP form/application was incomplete (ex. you forgot to include a cover letter for an agency that requires it), your Faculty Placement Advisor will notify you, and you can re-submit for the following batch. **Pay attention to agency requirements** (car requirement, language fluency, schedule requirements, etc.); Your application will not be selected if you do not meet those requirements.

2. Independent Application Agency Path

Independent Application Agencies (IAAs) operate independently of Simmons and require direct application submission by you (rather than by the Practicum Education Department). This means you do not submit your applications via the CAP form, your

applications are not screened by department faculty, and there is no limit on the number of applications you may send out.

Although your Faculty Placement Advisor will not be involved in managing your applications/communicating with agencies on your behalf, **you are still required to meet with a Faculty Placement Advisor as outlined in Step 4.** You will also be required to submit updates to your Faculty Placement Advisor via the [IAA Log](#), a (very short) online Google form for your FPA to follow your progress, including any communications from agencies, interviews, and offers. Here is what the IAA Log looks like:

The image shows a Google Form titled "Placement Process: Independent Application Placement Process Log (Students)". The form is designed for students to track their progress during the Independent Application Placement Process. It includes instructions to submit a separate log entry each time for specific events like applying to a new agency or receiving a status update. The form also shows the user's email as "montgomo@simmons.edu" with a "Switch account" link and a cloud icon. A red asterisk indicates required questions. The visible input fields are "Email *" and "Your Name *".

Placement Process: Independent Application Placement Process Log (Students)

Students, use this log to track your progress during the Independent Application Placement Process.

Submit a separate log entry each time:

- You apply to new Independent Application Agency (one entry per IAA)
- An agency contacts you with a status update on your application (i.e. an interview, an offer, a rejection)

montgomo@simmons.edu [Switch account](#)

* Indicates required question

Email *

Record [montgomo@simmons.edu](#) as the email to be included with my response

Your Name *

The list of IAAs for the 2025-2026 academic year will be sent out on Launch Day - November 18th. Typically, IAAs consist of a few hospitals (though most hospitals operate via the CAP process), community health centers, and college counseling centers. In particular, if you are confident that a college counseling center is where you would like your Year II practicum to be, the IAA path is likely a good option for you.

Most IAAs require applications as early as December 1st and are highly competitive. Because of this, we have designated times for students seeking the IAA path to meet with a Faculty Placement Advisor on November 25th and 26th (prior to Thanksgiving break). IAAs often require letters of recommendation and detailed cover letters, so we highly recommend talking to potential references **now** if you think you will choose this path.

Please note: If you choose the IAA path, you will not be eligible to apply via the CAP process until you have received approval from your Faculty Placement Advisor to submit applications through the CAP form. Be advised that this may be a later start than the first batch round (i.e. mid-late January or early February).

3. Employment-Based Path

This is an option for students currently employed by a human service agency. This is not the same as a paid internship. An employment-based placement requires clear delineation between practicum responsibilities/hours and employment responsibilities/hours. Guidelines are outlined in the Employment-Based Application located on [SSW Practicum website](#). If you choose this path, you are **still required to meet with a Faculty Placement Advisor** and complete the Year II placement process tasks on Tevera (Steps 1, 3, and 4).

The deadline for Employment-Based Applications is **April 1, 2025**.

Exploring the Three (3) Path Options

Regardless of which of the three placement process paths you choose, **you will need to meet with your Faculty Placement Advisor** for an individual meeting in November/December and work with them throughout the process.

There are pros and cons to each path: For example, you may apply to as many IAAs as you would like all at once, but there is a limited selection, and they are highly competitive. Whereas with the CAP process, you can only submit up to three applications for review at a time in designated batch rounds, and your applications may not be selected / approved in the first batch, but there are many more agency options to choose from compared to IAAs.

Remember: If you choose the IAA path, you will not be eligible to apply via the CAP process until you have received approval from your Faculty Placement Advisor to submit applications through the CAP form.

We encourage you to talk with your classroom instructors, your Practicum Instructor (supervisor), and your Practicum Liaison about your interests and experience as you reflect on which path you want to pursue.

III. THE PLACEMENT PROCESS: COMMUNICATION AND INTERVIEWING

Once an agency reaches out for an interview, your first action should be to inform your Faculty Placement Advisor of the interview date/time immediately, either via email (if the CAP process), or via the IAA Log.

In preparation for the interview, be ready to talk about the following:

- Relevant experience
- Your resume and cover letter
- Leadership experience
- Passion for the work/setting/population
- Academic progress
- Organizational skills
- Relevant coursework

Prior to the interview, be sure to read all available information on the agency, including their website, as well as their Agency Profile in Tevera. Make note of whether you can accommodate special circumstances required by the agency. For example: a different start or end date than the Simmons calendar, strict vaccination requirements, background checks, etc. Ideally, you should have already gathered this information prior to applying, but it never hurts to double check.

In scheduling an interview with an agency, it is acceptable to try to negotiate a time to meet, but please be prepared that you will need to be flexible. Note that having an interview is **not** an excused absence from an academic class. If you need to miss time at your placement, you should discuss this with your Practicum Instructor on site.

During the interview, be sure to inquire about agency onboarding requirements, weekly scheduling, and orientation dates. Please note that missing class for a practicum site orientation is not considered an excused absence. You should speak with your agency as soon as possible to ensure that you are able to engage in onboarding activities in a way that does not conflict with your academic expectations.

For weekly scheduling, Year II practicum days are typically Mondays, Thursdays, and a third mutually agreed upon day between you and the agency. We strongly recommend that this day **not** be Tuesdays, as most course offerings for Year II students are on that day of the week.

After your interview, immediately email your Faculty Placement Advisor to 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. Within 24 hours of your interview, send a

thank-you email to the person who interviewed you.

If you are accepted by an agency, you have **at most** one week to respond to that agency, unless they require you to respond on a quicker timeline. If you have reservations about accepting the internship offer, please contact your Faculty Placement Advisor as soon as possible to discuss your decision **before** you respond to the agency.

Once you have decided to accept an offer, and if you have other applications under review at other agencies, you must do one of the following:

- If you have been in contact with those other agencies, email them directly to withdraw your application (please be polite, professional, and appreciative)
- If you have not been in contact with those other agencies, notify your Faculty Placement Advisor, and they will contact the agency to rescind your application

In the event of three or more unsuccessful placement interviews, the Faculty Placement Advisor will reassess your applications and collaborate with you to discuss next steps. Planning for another placement may not begin until the application materials are approved by the Faculty Placement Advisor, or other steps are taken as determined by the Practicum Education Department. Depending on the circumstances, you may be required to meet with the Director and/or the Associate Director of Practicum Education to re-evaluate your program plan.

It is at the discretion of the Director of the Practicum Education Department, in consultation with the Dean, to recommend dismissal from the program if an appropriate graduate level clinical social work internship appears unobtainable.

IV. PRACTICUM EDUCATION INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

I. Getting Ready for the Interview:

- Confirm the names(s) of the person(s) you will be meeting with, for how long, the location, and whether this will be an individual or group interview
- Inform your Faculty Placement Advisor of the date/time 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 (please review [this article](#) for details)
- Learn about the agency ahead of time (review the Agency Profile in Tevera and 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:

- Take in the culture of the agency; observe appropriate dress
- 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 in June, beyond Simmons' end in May)
- Ask what experiences they have had with graduate MSW 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 anecdotes from your Year I placement, to emphasize your strengths, openness to learning, and learning goals
- Confirm the agency's onboarding requirements, such as background checks, immunization/health requirements, and other required documentation. Remember that any costs associated with completing these requirements are your responsibility

III. After the Interview:

- Immediately thank the interviewer(s) with an email sent within 24 hours of your meeting
- Follow up with your Faculty Placement Advisor as soon as possible
- Speak with your Faculty Placement Advisor about any concerns you might have **before** refusing a placement offer. **Do not** refuse an offer without first speaking with your Faculty Placement Advisor

V. PREPARING A SOCIAL WORK RESUME CHECKLIST

- Update your contact information, making sure your name, address, phone number, and your [Simmons email address](#) are up to date
- Make sure your voicemail is not full and that your greeting is professional
- Make “Education” the first heading on your resume, listing that you are at Simmons School of Social Work
- Indicate that you are an MSW Candidate and list your expected graduation date and certificate program if applicable
- Do not include your grade point average (GPA) or your high school education
- Under each heading (Education, Employment, etc.), always put your experiences in reverse chronological order with your most recent experience first
- Add a robust description of your Year I MSW internship, including at least three (3) bullet points detailing the following:
 - 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)
 - Types of clients served: Age range, diagnosis or presenting problem, cultural/racial diversity
 - Describe any special projects, special skills, or training

Please use the [Career Education Center](#), your Practicum Instructor, your Practicum Liaison, and the sample resume below for guidance and review of your resume.

How We Assess Your Application:

For your **resume**, we are looking for:

- Professional formatting and grammar
- Experience in human services field
- Leadership experience
- Academic background *
- Volunteer experience
- Diversity of experience and exposure
- Other professional experience

For your **cover letters**, we are looking for:

- Professional formatting and grammar
- Connection of experience and skills to internship responsibilities
- Passion for work, setting, population

* List any courses you have taken **only if** they are specifically relevant to the agency you are applying to (i.e. Do not put “Intro to Social Work”)

A sample resume is included below. Sample cover letters can be found in the Google Drive folder linked at the very end of this guide in the [Resources](#) section.

Sam Simmons

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

Education:

Simmons University School of Social Work, Boston, MA Anticipated 05/2025
Master of Social Work (MSW) Candidate

The College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, NY Graduated 05/2014
Bachelor of Science in Psychology

Relevant Coursework:

- SW422: Substance Use & Social Work
- SW528: Child and Adolescent Trauma
- SW464: Understanding Suicide

Employment Experience:

Home for Little Wanderers, Waltham, MA 06/2019 - Present
Direct Care Counselor

- 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 06/2014 - 05/2019
Therapeutic Mentor

- 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 09/2023 - 05/2024
MSW Intern

- 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.

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 directly to any agency that interests me?

We understand the wish to do so, but the majority of our community partners and agencies require that applications are first screened and pre-approved by university practicum departments (aka, the CAP process). Some of these agencies will utilize the Independent Application Agency process, but many do not wish to do so. It is important that we respect the wishes and requirements of our community partners and agencies in this process.

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

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 Practicum Education Department encourages students to explore the feasibility of Employment-Based Internships. There are particular guidelines 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. Please see [Step 5](#) above for more information.

4. If I choose the Independent Application Agency path for my Year II placement, will I be without the support of the Practicum Education Department?

No. If you apply through the Independent Agency Application path, you will still keep your Faculty Placement Advisor updated along the way about your progress (or lack thereof). Your Faculty Placement Advisor is also available to review cover letters and prepare questions and thoughts before your interview(s).

It is in consultation with your Faculty Placement Advisor that you might decide to stop the Independent Agency Application process and pivot to the CAP process. Please note that if you decide to switch, you will not be eligible to apply via the CAP process until you have received approval from your Faculty Placement Advisor. Ongoing communication is essential for either path and if you are not successful with the IAA process, we will work with you to find a placement. You are not on your own!

5. If I don't have much exposure to direct client care in my Year I practicum placement, will I be able to secure a clinical Year II placement?

It is certainly possible to secure a clinical Year II placement without much clinical exposure in Year I. 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 Practicum Instructor, Practicum Liaison, or Faculty Placement Advisor.

6. Given the location of Simmons in the Longwood Medical area, 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 since 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 (below) for more information.

VII. HOSPITAL SETTING CONSIDERATIONS

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 and consistent 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 elicits 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 in different disciplines. Do you have the professional disposition to receive feedback from a range of professionals in addition to your Practicum 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?

VIII. RESOURCES

To successfully navigate the Year II Placement Process, utilize the following resources:

- Year II Placement Guide (this document):
 - Sample Resume
- [For Students - Practicum Resources > YEAR II: Placement Process Materials](#) (Google Drive folder)
 - List of Example Year II Agencies
 - List of Independent Application Agencies (IAAs)
 - Tevera Instructions: Placement Process
 - Tevera Instructions: Browsing Agencies
 - Sample Cover Letters
- [Simmons School of Social Work - Practicum Education Department Resources Webpage](#) (for all other practicum-related resources)
- Your Faculty Placement Advisor! Once you have booked an appointment with your FPA, utilize them as a valuable resource throughout this process