



## Social Work Related Experience

*Guidelines for the 100-hour  
requirement for BSW students.*



## Purpose

**The social work related experience requirement has several purposes:**

- ❖ Provides each student with the opportunity to see first-hand the types of services, agencies and experience that may be part of being a social worker.
- ❖ Allows students to directly test their interest in social work.
- ❖ Provides students with valuable experience during social work classes.
- ❖ Through a reference from the supervisor, social work faculty gain insight into the appropriateness of each student for the profession of social work.

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*All BSW students are required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of social work related experience (volunteer or paid).*

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## Requirements

### **The social work related experience must meet the following requirements:**

1. All BSW students are required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of social work related experience (volunteer or paid).
  - a. At least 50 hours must be completed by the end of the semester in which the student applies to the BSW program. For example, if you apply to the program in March, at least 50 hours must be completed by the last day of spring semester classes.
  - b. Remaining hours must be completed before students can register for SWK 321 and SWK 375, which are taken the spring semester of the junior year.
2. No more than two experiences can be counted toward the 100 hours, with at least 35 hours in the shorter experience.
3. An Approval Form **MUST** be completed for proposed experiences, including a detailed description of the tasks to be completed.
  - a. This form must be signed by the person supervising and approved by your social work advisor.
  - b. Where there is a dual relationship between the supervisor and the student (such as a personal relationship), it is the student's responsibility to check with their social work advisor in advance about the appropriateness of the supervisor.
4. All hours **MUST** be documented by the supervisor using a Reference Form for Social Work Related Experience. References may not be completed by a peer.
5. Students with appropriate work experience may be able to receive approval for that experience as a substitute for volunteering.



## Sites

**Acceptable sites provide social work related experiences in which a student will interact with client systems of the agency and ideally, learn about social service organizations or program.**

- ❖ Programs such as crisis lines or domestic violence shelters that provide volunteer training are particularly suitable.
- ❖ Other settings, such as child welfare programs, nursing homes, or community soup kitchens are typically appropriate.
- ❖ Activities such as coaching kids' sport teams, day cares, community cleanup projects, and fundraisers for a sorority or fraternity will typically not be acceptable.
- ❖ Other opportunities or activities, such as alternative spring breaks or work trips, may be approved. Minimally, students **MUST** have access to a program leader/supervisor at the site who is **NOT** a peer for the required reference. Appropriateness of these experiences will be evaluated by social work faculty on an individual basis. Consult with your advisor.



## Process

Follow these steps to properly document your social work related experience.

- Identify possible sites as directed by your social work advisor. The social work office has a list of volunteer sites in the local area to help you get started.
- Turn in a completed Approval Form to the social work office once an agency is selected. It's best to get approved BEFORE you begin putting in hours at an agency.
- Once you have at least 50 hours of experience, ask your supervisor to complete the Reference Form for Social Work Related Experience. The supervisor must return the completed form directly to the social work office (not to the student.)
- A written reflection on this experience is part of the application. Once you have completed at least 50 hours in the approved setting, submit your Reflection Statement to the social work office. The Reflection Statement prompts are available from the office.
- All 100 hours must be completed to register for SWK321/SWK375.
  - If you change to a second agency, remember that you must get a new Approval Form submitted.
  - Have your supervisor submit a Reference Form to document the completion of your remaining hours.

# Social Work Program

## Forms

The Approval and Reference Forms for the Social Work Related Experience are available:

- In the Social Work Office, Anspach 034
- On the Social Work website at:  
[class.cmich.edu/socialwork](http://class.cmich.edu/socialwork)
- On the Social Work Blackboard site:  
[blackboard.cmich.edu](http://blackboard.cmich.edu)

## Contact Us

Contact our office to schedule an appointment with a social work advisor and for assistance with questions related to the Social Work Related Experience.

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