

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR FIELD PLACEMENT INTERVIEW

1. **Prepare answers to questions the agency might ask.**
2. **Plan the questions that you want to ask.** This is your opportunity to learn about this agency and its services and to assess how well it fits with your educational needs and interests.
3. **Dress appropriately.** Dress as you would if you were interviewing for a social work position at that agency.
4. **Arrive on time.** Get directions to the agency and find out where to park. Arrive a few minutes early so you are ready when the field instructor is available to start the interview. Review your resume and list of strengths.
5. **Be respectful of the field instructor's time.** Find out how much time is available for the interview and try to have all of your questions answered by that time.
6. **Expect the unexpected.** There will probably be a question that surprises you. It is fine to say, "Let me think about that" or "I don't know how to answer that," and then ask the field instructor to clarify what they are asking.
7. **After the interview – reflect.** What questions did you answer well, what questions do you wish you had asked, and what question were you unprepared for or wish you had answered differently? Think about how you felt at the agency, with the field instructor, and about the possibility of learning there. Jot down your thoughts and questions to help prepare you for other interviews and to help you decide among agencies.
8. **Follow up.** It is always appropriate to send a thank you note. Even though you may not be assigned to that agency, it is very possible that in the future you may be working with them or even applying for a job there.
9. **Realize that you may not get your first choice.** There may be several students that want the same agency, and the agency is only able to accommodate two students. Occasionally agencies sometimes pick up on personal or unresolved issues which they think may get in the way of a student working with their clientele and decide the student would not be a good match. If you do not receive a placement you want you can direct your questions to the Director of Field who will try to determine the reason you were not placed with a particular agency.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED IN A FIELD INTERVIEW

(adapted from *Learning Through Field*, Susan F. Cochrane, Marla Hanley)

- Why are you interested in this agency/program?
- What strengths do you bring to this specific work?
- Why do you want to be a social worker?
- What would you hope to learn here?
- What are you looking for in a field instructor?
- How do you like to use supervisory conferences?
- Tell me more about your previous experience.
- What experiences have you had with diverse populations?
- What social work class is your favorite?
- What social work class has been especially challenging for you?
- How would you describe yourself?
- Describe your learning and work style?
- How well do you work on a team? What is your experience with teamwork?
- How do you handle stress?
- What are your strengths? Areas for growth?
- Do you have any personal experience with the issues we work with here? (domestic violence, child abuse, alcoholism, adoption, grief & loss?)
- Tell me about a specific case or project you have worked with.
- How many hours and what specific days could you commit to being here?
- What do you plan on doing five or ten years from now?

QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO ASK IN A FIELD INTERVIEW

- What is your experience with this school/other students?
- What do you expect from a student?
- How would you describe your supervisory style?
- What would a supervision session with you be like?
- Are you available for informal supervision other than the scheduled time?
- What would a typical day be like?
- How did you get into this field, and what do you enjoy about it?
- What kind of orientation is planned for a student in your agency?
- Are there other staff I would be working closely with? Can I meet them?
- Can I talk with other students that you have supervised?
- What hours do you expect a student to have?
- Are there meetings which I would be required to attend?
- How do you address the issue of safety in your agency?
- Will I need a car? If so am I reimbursed for my mileage?