Ryerson University School of Social Work

anti-oppression | social transformation | social justice

2021/2022
Remote
Field Education Manual

School of Social Work
Faculty of Community Services

Ryerson University

Remote Field Education Manual 2021/2022

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The School of Social Work is governed by the mission, policies and requirements of the University as stated in Ryerson University's Undergraduate Calendar. This manual supplements Ryerson University's Undergraduate Calendar and Student Guide.

The timelines listed in this manual are subject to change. For the most current information about important dates, refer to the School of Social Work's website.

Students are advised to be aware of and abide by Ryerson University's Academic Integrity policy, Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct, and Experiential Learning Policy. Students should also be aware of and abide by the Code of Ethics of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (2005). Violation of this Code may lead to suspension from the program on grounds of professional unsuitability.

The complete Code of Ethics and Guidelines of Ethical Practice (2005) are available on the Canadian Association of Social Workers website.

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Section 1: Introduction to this Manual

This Remote Field Education Manual has been prepared to provide information and guidance to Students, Field Instructors, and Faculty Consultants who will be engaged in placement activities in the Fall 2021 and Winter 2022 terms (September 2021 – April 2022).

In light of the global COVID 19 pandemic, on March 18, 2020 Ryerson University shifted operations to an essential services model until further notice. This shift in services resulted in social work students no longer attending classes on campus, the suspension of all in-person experiential learning activities, and School of Social Work staff and faculty moving their work to be completed remotely.

In June 2021, the School of Social Work made the decision that all placement activities for the Fall 2021 term must be completed remotely. The decision to continue with a remote placement format was made to promote the health and safety of students and communities, while supporting students towards meeting the program requirements in order to graduate with the least disruption to their academic plan.

We anticipate that Students, Field Instructors and Faculty Consultants will have questions on how our field education program can and will look in the upcoming semesters. We have tailored this manual in anticipation of some of those questions, and hope it will be a useful resource in the placement relationship. The sections have been designed to provide starting points for Students and Field Instructors, with suggested ideas for conversation and areas for consideration. These suggestions are by no way an exhaustive list and we welcome feedback on additional areas we might want to include in a future version of this manual.

Please note that the information and resources shared may be subject to change depending on the circumstances resulting from the evolving pandemic.

Ryerson University has developed a [COVID-19 specific website](#) providing information and updates to the Ryerson community. Students, Field Instructors and Faculty Consultants are encouraged to periodically review this website for the latest resources and updates on campus changes.

Section 2: Revised Placement Parameters

Remote Learning

The School of Social Work's contingency plans for the Fall 2021 and Winter 2022 semesters were determined in the Spring and Summer of 2021, and were informed by upper administration within Ryerson University's School of Social Work. In this time, the School made the decision that all field placements taking place from September 2021 – April 2022 for BSW and MSW students needed to be completed in a remote format. This decision was made out of an abundance of caution, and further informed by the following factors:

- Many of our field partners had moved to only offering their programs and services in a virtual format and/or were completely pausing what they were providing to service users. Those organizations who continued to provide frontline, face-to-face services (i.e. long-term care homes, health care facilities, group homes, etc.) were understandably not in a position to offer any in-person or remote placements in the upcoming term.

- Not knowing if and when a fourth outbreak were to occur, we do not want to risk putting students back into the field and needing to pull them out before the completion of their placement hours and possibly disrupting their degree completion (i.e. like what the School was forced to do in March 2020 with all BSW and MSW placements).

- As everyone involved in the placement relationship knows, the Field Education Office works almost a year in advance in order to accommodate coordinating the volume of placements we require for students. As the pandemic is still not over and we are in the midst of a fourth wave, the decision to stay remote is primarily based on the health and safety concerns for our students. As we needed to reach out to our community partners much in advance before the starting of the term, the decision related to the format of the field placements were also made well in advance.

- With the exception of a small number of placements approved before the September 2021 start date, the Field Education Office does not have plans to coordinate or request any face-to-face activities for January 2022 for students currently in a remote placement outside of these specific sectors.

- WSIB insurance coverage is not being extended to students for any COVID-related illness. While there has been some movement in this area, there are still no guarantees that if a student comes down with COVID-19 while in a placement, that they would receive any coverage. Proving that a student contracted COVID-19 while completing placement activities (vs. just going about their daily activities) is difficult to trace and would be adjudicated on a case-by-case basis.

The decision to continue in a remote format means that **students completing placements between September 2021 and late March 2022 may not work on-site at agencies or have any face-to-face contact with agency staff or clients; and students must be able to engage in their placement activities remotely** (i.e. from home). This condition remains in place for students regardless of whether or not their placement organization resumes or has continued to provide face-to-face services to their community members.

To-date, the placements that have been established and secured reflect an agreement each site has made with the field education office that they can offer a meaningful learning experience in the selected format (i.e. fully remote). Understandably, though, as the pandemic evolves and public health restrictions change, some placement sites and students may want to change their placement format partway through the placement. In the event that staff, faculty or a student in the school receive a request for a placement format switch, the Field Education Office must be consulted, and several factors must be considered in making a decision on whether the request will be passed along to the Dean's Office for potential approval.

Revised Placement Hours

In addition to continuing all placements to a remote format, the School of Social Work has made changes to the number of hours that students will be expected to complete in Fall/Winter 2021/2022.

SWP 51A/B ~ 4th Year BSW Placement Hours

Prior to the pandemic, the School of Social Work had made a change in the SWP 51A/B curriculum requirements, whereby beginning Fall 2021, students would need to complete 364 hours instead of 504 hours. In June 2020, the School of Social Work was able to fast-track this change to hours and make the 364-hour threshold become effective Fall 2020. Additionally, in March 2020, the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) provided guidelines to accredited Schools of Social Work that students be permitted, on a temporary basis, to complete 75% of placement hours. With these updates and guidelines in place, **4th Year BSW students completing a placement in the Fall 2021 - Winter 2022 Semesters will be expected to complete 270 placement hours over 2 days a week**. Of important note, since the first edition of this accompanying Field Guide, the School has received confirmation from CASWE that the 75% placement hour threshold will continue until April 2022.

The School of Social Work does not yet have confirmation from the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) about whether or not the 75% placement hour threshold (270 hours for 4th year) will continue past April 2022. Thus, students deferring their placements to Spring 2022 should expect that they may need to complete the full placement hours (364 hours for 4th year).

SWP 36A/B ~ 3rd Year BSW Placement Hours

For BSW students who intend on completing their SWP 36A/B field education credits in 2021/2022, they will be expected to complete 250 placement hours rather than 336 hours. As noted above, the School has now received confirmation from CASWE that the 75% placement hour threshold will continue until April 2022.

The School of Social Work does not yet have confirmation from the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) about whether or not the 75% placement hour threshold (250 hours for 3rd year) will continue past April 2022. Thus, students deferring their placements to Spring 2022 should expect that they may need to complete the full placement hours (336 hours for 3rd year).

SK 8105 ~ MSW Placement Hours

For MSW students completing SK 8105 in the Winter 2022 term, they will be expected to complete 338 placement hours rather than 450.

Revised BSW Course Offerings & Placement Timelines

Students completing their 3rd or 4th year field education credits in 2021/2022 will be in placement from September 2021 to March 2022.

All BSW students were given the option of deferring their placements until the Spring/Summer 2022 semesters or until the following academic year (Fall/Winter 2022-2023). Of important note, 4th year students who chose to defer completion of their SWP 51A/B field credit until the Spring/Summer 2022 semesters are still required to attend their virtual SWP 50A/B seminars between September 2021 - April 2022. Please be aware that 4th year students who decide to pursue placement in the Spring/Summer 2022 semesters will not be eligible to graduate in June 2022; but rather will be eligible to graduate in October 2022 (assuming all other requirements of the degree have been met). Of the same importance, 3rd year students who have chosen to defer the completion of their field practicum until the Spring/Summer 2022 semesters are still required to register in and attend their SWP 36A/B seminars between September 2021 – April 2022.

Summary of Changes to BSW Courses

SWP 51A/B & SWP 50A/B: Summary of Changes

A summary of the changes to 4th year BSW field education credits are captured in the table below:

Type of Change	New Parameters due to Pandemic	Regular Parameters
Type of Placement	Remote / virtual / off-site	Face-to-face / in-person / on-site
Semester Offered	Fall/Winter 2021-2022 or Spring/Summer 2022	Fall/Winter 2021-2022
Placement Hours	270 (Guidelines from CASWE for 25% reduced hours)	364
# of days per week	2	3
Placement Days	Wednesday, Thursday	Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Field Course Offered	SWP 50A/B: Offered from September - April SWP 51A/B: Offered from September - March	SWP 50A/B: Offered from September - April SWP 51A/B: Offered from September - April

SWP 36A/B: Summary of Changes

A summary of the changes to 3rd year BSW field education credit are captured in the table below:

Type of Change	New Parameters due to Pandemic	Regular Parameters
Type of Placement	Remote / virtual / off-site	Face-to-face, in-person, on-site
Semester Offered	Fall/Winter 2021-2022 or Spring/Summer 2022	Fall/Winter 2021-2022
Placement Hours	250 (Guidelines from CASWE for 25% reduced hours)	336
# of days per week	2	2
Placement Days	Tuesday & Thursday	Tuesday & Thursday
Field Course Offered	SWP 36A/B with 8 seminars	SWP 36A/B with 8 seminars

Peer Led Mutual Aid Groups (PLMAG) Placements

In response to the severe shortage of remote placement opportunities for BSW and MSW students this academic year, the School of Social Work has developed an internal field placement project through the development of Peer Led Mutual Aid Groups. Based on a model from the University of Buffalo and in partnership with SHARPP (Student Health Assistance and Resilience Peer Program), the School launched its Peer Led Mutual Aid/Support Groups Model in January 2021. An extended educational, experiential, and support model is a development to meet students' needs during the COVID-19 global pandemic and beyond. This model includes peer support led by student peers, clinical supervision and training, anti-oppression and transformative social work practice, and joint educational and experiential learning.

During this challenging period, many students may experience this pandemic's effects and may need additional support from their peers. Many students have also experienced the disruption due to our transition to emergency remote field placements. Peer support, by students and for students, is a mechanism for providing mutual support by bringing together students with the required student experiences to facilitate psychoeducation and support (Elliott & Ormrod, 2016; Gill et al., 2006).

The School has developed this support model of experiential learning to prepare students for hands-on social work practice. Through the project, students will be trained to be peer leaders that can provide support on several intersectional areas, including but not limited to: social isolation, parenting during COVID-19, depression/anxiety/stress, critical anti-oppression and transformative social work practice, health promotion, dealing with change and the unknown, confidentiality and privacy, social work ethics, personal and communal self-care, interpersonal relationships, academic concerns, grief and loss, conflict resolution, suicide prevention and group facilitation skills.

Students who have chosen to participate in the Peer Led Mutual Aid Groups (PLMAG) for their field placements will be supported by one of the Practicum Project Supervisors hired by the School of Social Work. Like a traditional placement, students and supervisors will work closely with a Faculty Consultant to guide and evaluate the student's learning. For more information about these placements, please email swfield@ryerson.ca.

Section 3: Planning for a Successful Remote Placement

Orientation and Onboarding

Providing students with a thoughtful and well-planned placement orientation and onboarding process is key to setting the stage for a successful learning experience to take place. This has been well demonstrated in previous years when there is not a global pandemic taking place, and so we emphasize that this will be even more critical in the context of preparing students to complete a placement in a completely remote format. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to refer to the following areas when planning their orientation to the organization.

Policies & Procedures

While not always the most exciting part of an onboarding process, sharing core organizational policies and procedures with students is an important first step to helping them orient and integrate themselves into the virtual environment they will be placed within. Consider sharing the following documents with students electronically and creating a space (i.e. credited placement time) for them to thoroughly read, review and ask questions about the following:

- ✓ Organizational Volunteer and/or Student Placement Policies
- ✓ Organizational Human Resources Policies
- ✓ Organizational Confidentiality Policies
- ✓ Organizational Privacy Policies (especially as they relate to remote work)
- ✓ Organizational Access, Equity, and/or Inclusion Policies
- ✓ Pandemic-Specific Organizational Protocols & Policies
- ✓ Relevant codes of conduct, including but not limited to the CASW Code of Ethics
- ✓ Important legislative acts specific to your sector of practice (i.e. Child, Youth and Family Services Act, AODA, Mental Health Act, Personal Health Information Act, etc.)
- ✓ Organizational Statements (i.e. positional statements, Core Values, Land Acknowledgements, etc.)

Information Technology (IT) Needs

In a time of remote work, clarifying parameters around IT needs, requirements and assets is a critical conversation to have at the start of the placement. Field Instructors are reminded that not all students will have the same level or type of access to such tools, and familiarity and comfort using different online platforms will vary.

✓ Review what technical equipment the student will require to complete their placement activities and if they do not currently have access to this, explore options for meeting this need. Students needing access to a borrowed laptop and/or mobile internet hotspots are encouraged to visit Ryerson Library Services website.

✓ Review what platforms (i.e. Google Suite, shared drives, etc.) the organization has set up to share and store files remotely. If necessary, arrange for students to have access to these platforms and/or create a shared space for them to store their work.

✓ Review what meeting platforms (i.e. Google meet, Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, etc.) the organization uses to host meetings with other staff, clients and community members. If necessary, arrange for students to have access and training on using these platforms.

✓ If necessary, review what type of phone requirements the placement has (i.e. any long-distance coverage, private voicemail service, data needs, blocking phone numbers, etc.) and if the student has access to these.

✓ If needed or used by a student, discuss any assistive technologies (i.e. screen readers or software) and how these will be resourced and used in the placement.

✓ Review how to make virtual events and meetings accessible by checking out the tips and accessibility features shared by Access Ryerson.

Organizational Culture

Developing a sense of the culture in an organization traditionally takes place through meeting and getting to informally know other staff in the workplace; having sensory experiences of being in physical spaces; participating in team meetings with other supervisors and leaders; witnessing how clients/service-users access and utilize programs and services and engage with staff; and through a variety of other means. Grasping an organization's culture and feeling a part of the team are important ingredients in the recipe of a successful placement experience for students. As students will not have these in-person experiences and may feel isolated from others as a result, Field Instructors are encouraged to think of creative and intentional ways they can help students build a sense of the organization's culture. Some ideas for consideration include:

✓ Allowing students the opportunity to participate in scheduled team / organizational-wide meetings as well as informal gatherings, such as virtual lunch-breaks or other wellness activities.

✓ Encouraging the student to take the time to virtually meet other staff in the organization through a one-on-one conversation.

✓ Having honest conversations about how the pandemic has impacted overall staff morale and sharing any challenges the pandemic has now posed on meeting service delivery / funder targets, etc.

✓ Sharing what remote-working behaviours and norms have been encouraged and discouraged in the organization (i.e. don't hold meetings before or after a certain time, keep web-cameras on or off, use the mute feature at all times, what email etiquette looks like, how others like to be acknowledged, etc.).

✓ Sending an email across the organization to virtually introduce the student and share a brief bio about themselves.

✓ Conducting a "virtual" tour of the organization through a video call.

Accessibility and Inclusivity in Remote Placements and Placement-related Accommodations

The Field Education Office is committed to principles of equity, accessibility and inclusion, and works closely with community partners to reinforce these values in the field of social work. It is our goal to reduce structural barriers in the field so that field placements, whether remote or in-person, are accessible to all students.

As part of the placement matching process, we encourage students with disabilities who require accommodations to share this information with the Field Education Office, Field Instructors, and Faculty Consultants. In doing so, our hope is that we can support the student to have a successful placement. Students requiring academic accommodation and related support are encouraged to connect with Ryerson University's [Academic Accommodation Support (AAS)](#) office.

For more information about preparing for an accessible remote placement experience, please refer to [Ryerson's Accessibility Guides & Resources.](#)

Other General Areas

✓ Review the preferred reporting protocol (i.e. voicemail, email, text message, etc.) for students to inform their Field Instructor that they will be late, and/or unable to attend placement.

✓ Review if the organization will provide reimbursement for any costs that are associated with the completion of placement activities. Examples of this could include at-home internet costs, phone-related costs, printer toner and/or paper, etc. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss placement activities that do have associated costs with them *prior* to completion of such tasks.

✓ Review what methods of remote field instruction the Field Instructor will implement to assist students in their learning. In addition to utilizing the learning plan, possible techniques could include: assigning process recordings and/or other forms of critical reflection; audio or video recordings and written analysis of interviews; daily logs or personal journals; role plays; critical incident presentations; observation of groups; group field instruction; case studies, etc.

✓ Determine an agreed upon method for tracking student hours (more on this below).

Setting Realistic Expectations

As we enter into another unprecedented semester of emergency remote learning and teaching, it's imperative to acknowledge that many anticipated and expected learning experiences will not be possible in a climate of remote learning. The School of Social Work understands and appreciates that many of our Field Instructors and community partners likely cannot offer the same types of placement opportunities that they have in the past. We are aware that the pandemic has caused tremendous impacts on agency staff, clients and service-users, program and service delivery, and all facets of the organization. While some sectors of practice have been able to navigate new ways of working and delivering services, others have had to limit their services and work within skeletal structures. Throughout the pre-placement and matching processes, students have been encouraged to be cognizant of these impacts and the resulting implications on the delivery of field education in the social work field.

That said, we find ourselves in a situation that very likely will provide students with opportunities and sources of new and unanticipated learning. Open and regular communication, building remote rapport, developing trust, providing flexibility, and demonstrating resourcefulness are all essential skills students will need to embrace to make the placement experience a positive one. Working apart from one another means students must find different ways to implement and continue to develop these skills to get the most out of their experience. Developing and promoting new ways of delivering programs and services, as well as analyzing and responding to emergent social issues, amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, are rich sites of new learning and opportunity for students.

The pandemic will undoubtedly leave lasting impacts on the landscape of future work for students, and so learning how to be comfortable and competent working virtually will become imperative to future employment prospects. Students are encouraged to identify, with their Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant, what expanded sets of social work skills and knowledge they anticipate will be possible through their remote learning experience and which will assist in their growth as future social work practitioners.

While we encourage students to have realistic expectations of what is possible in their placements during these uncharted and challenging times, we also encourage Field Instructors and Faculty Consultants to be mindful of the expectations they have of students in the upcoming field placement experience. As students continue to adapt to the significant shifts in their personal lives as a result of the pandemic (such as children at home, new caretaking responsibilities, caretaking for sick family members, decreased supports due to social distancing, loss of employment, etc.) it's possible that their daily capacities and level of productivity towards their field placements will be impacted as well. Students, Field Instructors and Faculty Consultants are encouraged to discuss, from early on in the placement, what are realistic expectations from all parties in relation to daily hours of placement, the types of activities that can be completed in any one sitting, managing distractions at home, and more.

Planning for Effective Communication

The most important factor in creating and maintaining a positive field education experience between a student, Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant is ongoing and effective communication. In a face-to-face/in-person field placement, we often don't realize just how much verbal and non-verbal communication is constantly taking place between students, staff,

clients/service-users, community members, etc. Capturing others' emotions and conveying feelings is not as easy without face-to-face exchanges.

Completing a placement in a remote context will understandably limit (and in some cases eliminate) a student's organic experiences of entering into a workspace and being greeted by others; engaging in formal and informal dialogue with colleagues; having challenging and/or difficult conversations with clients/service-users and/or supervisors; witnessing non-verbal cues and signs from others; having quick office chats with Field Instructors to clarify ideas and expectations; and so much more. While communication techniques will surely need to look different in a remote placement, effective communication does not need to be compromised. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to incorporate the following tips for establishing and maintaining healthy communication in a remote placement:

- ✓ Try not to get stuck to one medium (i.e. email) to communicate all the time. If a conversation can happen through a brief phone call or video chat, try using different methods that might be more effective or suitable for particular conversations.

- ✓ Be mindful of the emotional tones that could be implied in email communication and consider holding off pressing send right away if a message might be misinterpreted.

- ✓ When in doubt or unsure about something, ask first (and clarify as needed, even repeatedly) before making assumptions or jumping to conclusions.

- ✓ When planning for meetings, allow some time for virtual casual (water-cooler) conversation in addition to the time needed to cover the meeting agenda.

- ✓ Where and when possible, establish set days and times for virtual check-ins and supervision so that students know when and how to plan for these conversations.

- ✓ Provide ongoing and honest feedback throughout the placement so that there are not any surprises at formal evaluation check-points.

- ✓ At the earliest sign of any difficulty, reach out to the Faculty Consultant assigned to the placement to support resolving problems, clarifying expectations, conflict resolution, etc. Try not to "save" such conversations only for the virtual field visit.

Placement Hours

While we know that flexibility in hours is desired and/or highly needed by some students, we remind all students that, at a very minimum, they must be available at least one-half day per week during a time when their Field Instructor is also available and therefore can directly supervise their work and engage in weekly supervision discussions. Furthermore, as is relevant in any academic year, there are a limited number of placement settings that offer flexible placement days and hours.

That said, many of the remote placements that have been coordinated for this upcoming term include activities and tasks that do not necessarily have to take place between the typical "9 to 5" timeframe. The pandemic has also created circumstances whereby the need for flexible placement hours and asynchronous event timing is being felt more than ever before. Students and Field Instructors may be contending with limited and/or shared IT resources within their

homes, revised or altered working hours to accommodate physical distancing in workplaces, increased dependent care responsibilities, and many others. For all of these reasons and more, Students and Field Instructors are highly encouraged to determine at the start of the placement, what are acceptable time frames in which placement hours can take place (i.e. daytime only, evenings, weekends) and if there are limits to how much flexibility can be granted.

At the start of every placement relationship, students and Field Instructors are always reminded to develop and implement an agreed upon method for tracking placement hours and activities. In a time of remote work, where students and Field Instructors will not be in the physical presence of one another day to day and necessarily witnessing the work being completed, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of establishing a frequent routine and/or system for tracking this. The School of Social Work has created and posted a [timesheet](#) for students to use, however if an organization has their own preferred tool or document, Field Instructors are encouraged to share this with their student(s).

Confidentiality and Privacy

Regardless of whether a placement is conducted in-person or remotely, students are expected to familiarize themselves and follow the confidentiality guidelines outlined by the School of Social Work, the [CASW (2005) Code of Ethics](#), and their respective field placement settings. Field Instructors are asked to carefully review their organization's policies and procedures with their student, along with any specific legislation that the organization has to additionally adhere to as is related to the collection, retention and destruction of personal information.

General Privacy Considerations

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario and the Access and Privacy Office of the Ontario government offer advice for safeguarding personal information. Here are some general steps students can take to ensure compliance with the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) (MFIPPA).

- ✓ Store personal information securely. Keep hard copies under lock and key, such as in a locked filing cabinet; keep electronic documents on a password-protected computer. A clean desk will help prevent sensitive information being misplaced or inadvertently breached.

- ✓ Collect only as much personal information as you need to do your placement task.

- ✓ Explain why you need to collect the information and exactly how it will be used.

- ✓ Get consent from the individual to whom it is about (young people under 18, from parents), for the collection, storage and use of their personal information.

- ✓ When in doubt, ask for advice from your Field Instructor to ensure you are following the organization's policy and procedures regarding privacy.

Placement-Related Assignments

All materials produced by the student for remote educational purposes (e.g., audio or video recordings, process recordings, assessments or other written reports) remain the property of the placement setting and can only be shared with individuals outside of the placement with the permission of the Field Instructor. Material that students share with their Faculty Consultant or in their virtual seminar class should protect the confidentiality of any clients/service-users.

Placement-Related Activities & Technology

In response to the pandemic, many placement organizations have made a shift to providing services to clients/service-users in alternative formats, such as by phone, email, video conferencing, social media platforms, and other electronic formats. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss the implications of using these technologies as they relate to maintaining client confidentiality and privacy, as well as professional boundaries. Examples of areas for discussion could include:

- ✓ The security of a student's home Wi-Fi network. If the field placement organization uses virtual private networks (VPN), explore if the student can have access to this and receive training on how to use the network. Furthermore, if the organization uses two-factor authentication, advise the student on how to set up this security tool.

- ✓ The security of a student's personal/home based laptop or desktop. Will students be required to have antivirus software installed? Note that Ryerson University's Computing and Communications Services (CCS) offers [free security software](#) to students.

- ✓ If students will be responsible for accessing, sharing and/or storing confidential or private documents (i.e. such as client/service-user case notes), discuss what protocols will be

put in place to ensure that individuals in the same residence, who have access to the same IT equipment, will not be able to access such materials.

✓ If students will be conducting direct service work with clients/service-users remotely from their homes while other residents/dependents are home, how will they ensure that client/service-user confidentiality and privacy is maintained during those sessions?

✓ If a student experiences, or believes they have potentially experienced a data or privacy breach as a result of unauthorized access or sharing of personal information, discuss what procedures and/or processes the field placement organization requires the student to follow.

✓ At the end of the field placement, discuss how confidential and private materials will be "returned" electronically to the field placement organization and/or how to securely erase electronic records.

Students and Field Instructors may find it useful to review some of the Virtual Counselling Resources shared by the CASW, as well as a series of practice notes that address concerns around confidentiality and privacy as it relates to communication technology practices and policies and practicing social work electronically produced by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

Professionalism in a Remote Context

One of the main objectives and goals in a student's field placement experience is that of developing a professional identity and approach to practice. From learning to dress according to organizational norms, to demonstrating preparedness for undertaking placement tasks, to learning how to integrate one's use of self in a professional practice role, many students rely on their placement experience(s) to establish their sense of professionalism. While a remote context likely will require new thinking around how this objective might be further developed, there will still exist an abundance of ways in which students can demonstrate this objective in action. Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to discuss how achieving this goal might look in their specific remote field placement. Ideas students can incorporate into their practices might include:

✓ Preparing for a remote placement day with similar routines as would be applied to an in-person context, such as establishing set "office" hours and being intentional about taking restroom and eating breaks.

✓ Preparing for meetings with colleagues, clients/service-users, and their Field Instructor with the same level of detail that they would if meeting in person. For example, coming prepared with their questions and/or ideas, sign into their video chat a few minutes early to allow time for IT "hiccups," being a willing and active team player in virtual conversations, etc.

✓ Students are encouraged to get dressed in a manner that reflects that of other agency staff and is appropriate for the placement tasks of that day (i.e. providing a presentation vs. conducting online research).

✓ Where possible, create a personal workspace that minimizes distractions and offers the greatest amount of quiet and privacy as is possible. Where and when possible, turn down/off/away background distractions such as TVs, personal social media accounts, etc.

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Closely related to developing a professional identity and approach to practice is the need for students to establish and reinforce healthy boundaries in their remote placements. For many students, learning remotely has meant a complete blurring of one's placement setting, the classroom, and possibly their paid employment, all into their personal space. This makes the need to set intentional boundaries around placement tasks and activities more pertinent than ever before. Field Instructors are encouraged to support students in establishing these from the start of their placements, so that students can ultimately develop a better work-life balance, increase productivity inside and outside of the placement, and avoid burnout.

Personal Boundary Setting

Some possible areas for students to explore around creating healthy boundaries with a personal focus include:

✓ Setting electronic boundaries around when you will and will not be "plugged in" to placement by stopping particular tasks and activities and logging off. Shut down tabs/websites, platforms and/or programs that are placement-specific at the end of your placement day.

✓ Along with your Field Instructor and other students, discuss the benefits to establishing healthy boundaries and how to manage the anxieties that can arise from feeling the pressure to constantly have a presence online, be checking and responding to emails, be demonstrating that you're doing work, etc.

✓ If and when possible, create time-based boundaries at home with those who share your space so that they know what your placement schedule is, when you will not be available to them or when it's okay to be interrupted.

Boundaries with Clients/Service-Users

It's also very important that Field Instructors and students discuss boundaries as they relate to working with clients/services-users in a remote context. Having such conversations can help prevent inappropriate client/service-user engagements and/or violations felt in one's personal space. Some possible areas to explore around creating healthy boundaries with clients/service-users include:

✓ Discussing what protocols and/or methods staff use in the organization to reinforce healthy boundaries with clients/service-users, whether completing work tasks in-person or remotely.

✓ Setting technical boundaries around phone devices, limiting student availability and accessibility after placement hours. For instance, using blocking features on phone numbers and /or letting unknown calls go to private voicemails.

✓ Reviewing different ideas for how a student can make their virtual office feel less invasive into their personal home space (i.e. using green screen features in video chats).

✓ Reviewing what steps a student should take if they feel that a client/service-user has crossed one or more boundaries in their work together.

Planning for Learning Success

Completing placement activities in a completely remote format could organically give rise to one or more of the following consequences: an increase in independent tasks; a greater likelihood that the nature of assignments will require extended periods of time sitting in front of a computer; students completing work in what might be a monotonous environment; an increase in sensory demands (i.e. observing, listening, concentrating, etc.); and, an exacerbation and/or reduction of a student's need for academic and /or placement accommodations. It's important to acknowledge that a student's successful completion of their placement activities may be negatively or positively impacted by any of these factors. With these considerations in mind, students and field instructors will have to be more intentional than ever before about how to plan for a successful and rewarding placement experience. Field Instructors are encouraged to incorporate the following ideas when designing the placement experience:

✓ Plan for the student to be involved in a blend of both individual work and group-based activities with colleagues, other students and/or networks connected to your organization.

✓ While some placement days might require the student to perform homogeneous tasks (i.e. conducting literature reviews, completing data entry, transcribing notes, etc.), where and when possible, allow and encourage that students take on a variety of different tasks during their placement day, so as to "break up" the physical, mental and sensory demands placed on them.

✓ Encourage students to set daily and weekly goals (and share these with you at the start of the day/week) so that they can refer to something to stay on track and so that they can feel a sense of accomplishment when the day/week is over. These goals can be reviewed and/or shared during supervision times and/or when completing the mid-term and final evaluations.

✓ In assigning any particular placement activity, discuss the importance of process and outcomes as it relates to the student being able to demonstrate they successfully completed the task. For instance, if helping to conduct a focus group, discuss whether the meaningful engagement of the participants in the group or the collection of concrete data is the most important outcome of their involvement in the task.

✓ Demonstrate and encourage students to take physical breaks away from their workspace and recommend that they don't "work through" their eating breaks in an effort to finish placement earlier in the day or in the semester.

✓ If not already covered in an interview or prior to the placement starting, ask the student if there are any accommodations they require from you or the organization so that they can be set up for success and/or bring their best selves to their placement each day. Examples of accommodations students might ask for include: a later start time in the day; daily limits around repetitive tasks that cause physical strain; support accessing and using assistive technologies such as software or screen readers; flexibility to attend personal appointments that may have to be scheduled during the work day; and many more.

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at Ryerson University is dedicated to developing inclusive teaching practices that enrich the student learning experience. The Centre has developed a series of resources designed to support faculty and instructors teaching remotely which may have some useful insights for Field Instructors to consider. Field Instructors are encouraged to reach out the Faculty Consultant assigned to the placement for additional support around developing an experience that is compatible with the School's curriculum; to strategize around what methods of providing field instruction might best work in these times and with their specific student; and, to discuss how to create the most inclusive learning environment possible. Furthermore, students might find it useful to check out Ryerson's RU4U online resource as they intentionally plan for a successful upcoming placement.

Well-Being and Self-Care in a Pandemic

Students and Field Instructors are highly encouraged to be explicit and proactive in prioritizing discussions around what well-being and self-care can look and feel like as we continue to navigate through this pandemic. While students have the opportunity to discuss self-care through our School's field-based curriculum, the actualization of this important concept is often a challenging area for students to deliberately apply to themselves. Ongoing, intentional and thoughtful conversations about how Field Instructors and students can practice self-care may go a long way in helping a student not reach a state of a mental health crisis, burnout and/or needing to break from their program. Ideas for starting and maintaining these conversations include:

✓ Embed the concepts of well-being and self-care into the student's learning plan so that it doesn't get left off the agenda.

✓ Talk about well-being and self-care in meetings with others, including clients/service-users, colleagues, and with other placement students.

✓ Allow and encourage structured time in placement supervision for the student to discuss how they are coping with all their responsibilities.

✓ Most importantly, Field Instructors are encouraged to model how self-care looks and feels for them. Whether it's engaging in a physical activity, keeping firm work/life boundaries, using entitled sick leave, having established routines, improving on saying "no", or having a strong network of supports in place; by modelling these practices, Field Instructors can have a significant influence on how a student self-applies this concept.

Field Instructors and students may find it useful to check out Ryerson University's Student Wellbeing website, which has links to services and resources related to Academic Accommodation Support, the Centre for Student Development and Counselling, Health Promotion Programs, the Medical Centre, the Test Centre, and ThriveRU.

ThriveRU

An initiative of Student Affairs at Ryerson University, ThriveRU provides members of the Ryerson community with training and resources associated with resilience, well-being and thriving in both an academic and personal context. The purpose of this initiative *"is to help students feel a sense of support on campus, to better appreciate the connections between academic success and other elements of a healthy lifestyle, and, primarily, to help students develop capacities for thriving that will serve them throughout their lives."* Students and Field Instructors are encouraged to check out the workshops, workbooks, tip sheets, and meditation recordings that are available through the website.

Centre for Student Development and Counselling

The Centre for Student Development and Counselling (CSDC) at Ryerson University remains a virtual support system for students. Students can contact the CSDC to access various types of care, referrals and resources.

Section 4: Health & Safety in a Remote Context

Safety and Security in a Remote Placement

The School of Social Work at Ryerson University is concerned with student safety and security in the placement, and this remains pertinent regardless of whether a student is completing their placement activities in-person or remotely. Because the activities of social work can involve a certain level of vulnerability, placement settings are responsible for ensuring that students receive an orientation to organizational safety protocols. While reviewing areas such as fire procedures and after-hours locking procedures will not be required for a remote placement, other situations, such as how to handle emergency situations that arise virtually in the absence of their Field Instructor and how to navigate work with increased high risks, should be reviewed during a student's orientation. Students with concerns about safety in their remote placement are advised to discuss these with their Field Instructor and Faculty Consultant.

Some traditional areas of placement risk (i.e. travelling to and from field placements and transporting clients/service-users) will be removed this semester, however students still might be exposed to risk in the following ways:

- risk of physical injury or illness, which may occur in the performance of assigned and prescribed duties during the course of the field placement;
- risk of a lawsuit for negligence in which students may be named by a community patron, a client with whom they are, or have been, engaged in their role as students.

Students who perceive themselves at risk, at any time, in any remote placement setting, are obliged to contact their Faculty Consultant, or the Associate Director, Field Education (or designate) immediately.

Insurance Coverage in Placement

Coverage for Illness and Injury

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) provides Worker Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage for most students on unpaid placements who are placed with placement settings that are registered with the WSIB.

Private insurance coverage through Chubb Insurance is provided by MCU for most students on unpaid training placements who are placed with placement settings that are not registered with the WSIB.

WSIB coverage for students that do not meet MCU conditions is provided through the Ryerson WSIB plan. This means that in the event of a placement-related injury or illness, students are

eligible for benefits from WSIB or equivalent benefits through the private insurance carrier. Some of these benefits might include: health care costs, rehabilitation costs, and in some cases, compensation for future lost earnings. The total cost of the WSIB/private insurance coverage is paid by MCU or Ryerson.

If, during the course of completing a placement related activity or task, a student incurs an injury or illness that meets one or more of the below listed criteria, the student and Field Instructor must notify their Faculty Consultant immediately to be apprised of the required procedure regardless of whether the student intends to make a claim or not. Appropriate documentation of any occurrence must be provided.

- Requires health care by a health care professional for which there is a fee for service (this could include a physician, dentist, chiropractor, hospital, etc.);
- Results in lost time from work beyond the date of the work-related injury / disease;
- Requires modified work for more than seven calendar days; and/or,
- Results in exposure to communicable disease.

Faculty Consultants who require support completing the necessary documentation should reach out to the Field Education Manager for assistance.

An important note around insurance coverage for students as it relates to COVID-19 related illness: WSIB coverage for COVID-19 related illness may be extended to students who are placed with organizations that are registered with WSIB. Students who are placed with organizations that are not registered with WSIB, and require coverage through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities' limited private insurance and/or Ryerson's Accidental Injury Death and Dismemberment policy are not covered for any COVID-19 related claims. Students and Field Instructors should take into consideration the challenges associated with proving that a student became ill with COVID-19, as a result of completing remote based placement related tasks and activities, as it will likely be difficult to trace the origins of when and where a student came into contact with the virus.

Student Declaration of Understanding Form

Students entering into a remote placement during the 2021/2022 academic year will be required to electronically sign a Student Declaration of Understanding Form prior to starting their placement. This form needs to be signed regardless of whether or not it was signed in a previous academic year and/or for a previous placement. Students will receive instructions on how to electronically complete this form from their Faculty Consultant in the first virtual practice seminar course.

Letter to Placement Employers Form

Organizations who provide field placement opportunities to students in the School of Social Work are responsible for having this form signed by an authorized representative within the organization. Of important note, for most of our field partners, this form has already been completed as an appendix to our affiliation agreement. A copy of this declaration form is available on the School of Social Work's website. If you are unsure about whether or not your

organization has already submitted a signed version of this form, please email
swfield@ryerson.ca.

Coverage for Negligence

Ryerson has Third Party Insurance which would respond to a lawsuit against the University, its faculty, staff and students in the event of a claim against any of the above parties resulting from normal legal performance of duties and responsibilities associated with the academic activities of Ryerson.

Coverage for the Placement Setting/Patron Insurance

As is covered in the affiliation agreement between Ryerson University and the organization, the placement setting should have Third Party Liability Insurance to protect themselves.

Ergonomic Health & Safety

With the upcoming academic term being delivered remotely, it is inevitable students will be sitting for prolonged periods of time in front of a computer screen as they complete all of their classes and placement activities virtually. For this reason, it is imperative that ergonomic factors are taken into consideration so as to avoid the possibility of serious injury resulting from not moving around and engaging in repetitive tasks.

For many students, "going" to their placement site may now be a short trip from the bedroom to their couch; however, working from the couch and/or coffee table is not doing their backs or bodies any favours! Not every student will have access to a home office with appropriate equipment such as a desk and proper chair. There are, however, some simple things that can be kept in mind when setting up an ergonomically friendly workstation that will help with reducing the fatigue and discomfort to the body. To prevent new conditions of ill health and to avoid inflaming pre-existing conditions, students are encouraged to take time to set up a workspace that is considerate to the muscles, joints and nerves in their bodies. According to ErgoPlus, some specific areas to consider:

- ✓ Arms - The weight of your arms should be supported at all times this prevents muscles and neck strain.

- ✓ Neck - The best position for your neck is when the weight of the head is over the base of the neck for support. Notice if your neck is craned and adjust this position to ensure proper support of your neck and head.

- ✓ Back and Lumbar support - When you slouch you put pressure on the discs and vertebrate. Your chair should be pulled close to your workstation to avoid overreaching and excessive leaning. The chair you use should distribute your body weight and pressure evenly across your hips and back. A rolled towel can be placed behind your back to provide lumbar support.

- ✓ Eyes - Your monitor should be placed an arm's length away to prevent eye strain. Adjust this so that it is not too far or too close to you.

✓ Monitor - The top of the monitor should be no higher than eye level and placed directly in front of you. The placement of your monitor can prevent neck pains, lessening frequent turning of the neck to view the screen.

✓ Phone calls – Avoid taking calls with a phone sandwiched between your neck and ear. This will surely result in strains, aches and pains. Using a headset or speakerphone can assist in avoiding this position.

✓ Keyboard - Your keyboard should be placed close enough so that you can comfortably reach it without overextending your arms and shoulders.

✓ Lighting - Do not place your monitor in front of a window nor use a bright background. Adjusting the glare and brightness on your monitor using the settings and placement of your monitor to assist your eyes from getting strained and weary.

Ryerson University's [Environmental Health and Safety] unit has developed the following resources which can help students set up their workspaces so as to prevent injury.

✓ [How to set up an ergonomic workstation]

✓ [Setting up your desktop or laptop ergonomically]

✓ [Stretching exercises you can do at your desk]

✓ [Musculoskeletal prevention strategies]

✓ [Working ergonomically with handheld devices]

Section 5: Applicable Policies and Procedures

The School of Social Work and Ryerson University uphold a series of field placement related codes, policies and procedures that are vitally important for students, Field Instructors and Faculty Consultants to review and understand at the start of the placement relationship. These documents remain relevant, applicable and in effect, even in a remote placement context.

Canadian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics

The complete Code of Ethics (2005) and Guidelines of Ethical Practice (2005) are available from the [Canadian Association of Social Workers website](#).

Preamble

The social work profession is dedicated to the welfare and self-realization of all people; the development and disciplined use of scientific and professional knowledge; the development of resources and skills to meet individual, group, national, and international changing needs and aspirations; and the achievement of social justice for all. The profession has a particular interest in the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and/or living in poverty. Social workers are committed to human rights as enshrined in Canadian law, as well as in international conventions on human rights created or supported by the United Nations.

As professionals in a country that upholds respect for diversity and in keeping with democratic rights and freedoms, social workers respect the distinct systems of beliefs and lifestyles of individuals, families, groups, communities and nations without prejudice (United Nations Centre for Human Rights. 1992). Specifically, social workers do not tolerate discrimination based on age, abilities, ethnic background, gender, language, marital status, national ancestry, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

Core Social Work Values

Social workers uphold the following core social work values:

Value 1:	Respect for Inherent Dignity and Worth of Persons
Value 2:	Pursuit of Social Justice
Value 3:	Service to Humanity
Value 4:	Integrity of Professional Practice
Value 5:	Confidentiality in Professional Practice
Value 6:	Competence in Professional Practice

Social Media Policy

The School of Social Work at Ryerson University is committed to affirming human rights, equity and dignity among all people. As such, the School of Social Work values and respects the freedom of expression and academic freedom. The use of social media and technology has become a means of advancing social justice and social work education. The use of social media and technology can, however, present distinctive challenges, especially as it relates to the privacy and confidentiality of social service users. We believe it is imperative to provide guidelines and a framework to make informed decisions to the Ryerson Social Work community, including students, staff, and faculty, regarding the use of technology, social media, and other forms of electronic communication. The purpose of these guidelines is to maintain a respectful learning environment.

The Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) Accreditation Standards (2012) state: "The academic unit has a policy regarding ethical use of all forms of social media to ensure the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the academic unit and its field practicum community and demonstrates how the policy and procedures are consistent with the relevant human rights legislation, with the mission of CASWE-ACFTS, and with the mission of the academic unit concerned."

The CASW Code of Ethics (2005) outlines the core social work values as:

- Respect for the inherent dignity and worth of persons

- Pursuit of social justice

- Service to humanity

- Integrity of professional practice

- Confidentiality of professional practice

- Competence of professional practice

School of Social Work Social Media Policy

The School of Social Work values both academic freedom and freedom of expression and encourages these as fundamental aspects of a university education whether expressed in oral communication, print, or electronically. We recognize the importance of technology and social media and support the use of these communication tools among social workers.

Examples of common social media outlets include; Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, online blogs, YouTube videos, and so on. Members of the Ryerson Social Work community, including Faculty, Staff and Students, are responsible and accountable for their actions and statements on all social media platforms.

Guidelines for the Use of Social Media

- Any information posted on social media platforms should be considered public documents and the parameters of privacy and confidentiality should be carefully maintained.

- Members of the School of Social Work community should refrain from disclosing any confidential or identifying information about the School of Social Work, staff and students, or any affiliated placement organizations unless permission is obtained.

- Members of the Ryerson Social Work community must identify that the views expressed on social media platforms are those of the author/writer and not those of the School of Social Work or placement settings, unless authorized to do so.

- Unless given permission by the School of Social Work or a Field Instructor, students are not authorized to speak on behalf of the School or their practicum agency.

- Uploading photographs of clients, classmates, peers, members of the Social Work community, without consent is a breach of privacy and confidentiality.

- Any discussions or conversations held in the classroom should be considered confidential and should not be disclosed via social media. This includes any discussions within peers, students and instructors, and any other personal information disclosed within the classroom setting, unless authorized to do so.

- Any discussions that take place outside of the classroom between students and instructors should also be considered confidential and should not be shared via social media without prior authorization.

- Notes, electronic documents, lectures, and other course related content should not be posted on social media platforms unless authorized by the instructor to do so, to avoid breaking copyright rules and regulations.

- Students must make themselves aware of and follow practicum agency policies regarding the use of electronic technologies and social media platforms.

- Students should discuss the use of electronic devices technologies for personal and placement reasons with their field instructor at the start of each field placement.

- Any discussions, activities or conversations with service users, communities, or field placement agencies should be considered confidential and should not be posted to social media platforms without prior authorization.

- In addition to following the confidentiality guidelines outlined by the School of Social Work and the CASW (2005) Code of Ethics, students are required to follow confidentiality and disclosure guidelines outlined by their respective field placement settings.

For further information regarding Ryerson University's perspective on the use of Social Media, please refer to the University Relations website.

Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy

Human Rights Services at Ryerson University are available to all members of the Ryerson community including students, staff, faculty and visitors. This office administers human rights questions and complaints as well as [Ryerson's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy.](#) The policy applies to all Ryerson employees and students, as well as to visitors and contractors. Human Rights Services does not advocate for any individual or group. It advocates for fairness and for a community where the dignity and human rights of all its members are respected and upheld.

Ryerson University's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedures is informed and guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code. This anti-discrimination policy is based on the Ontario Human Rights Code which provides that every person has the right to equal treatment without discrimination on the basis of: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status, or disability.

An excerpt from the policy states: "Discriminatory and harassing behaviours are offensive, degrading and illegal. Every member of the Ryerson University Community is responsible for creating an environment which is free of discrimination and harassment. Individuals acting on their own and/or on behalf of the University and the University itself can be held responsible under this Policy and in law for discriminatory and harassing acts. Those found to have engaged in such conduct on the basis of a prohibited ground will be subject to discipline. Those found to have been harassed or discriminated against on the basis of a prohibited ground will be entitled to a remedy."

All students are expected to have read the Ryerson Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy in its entirety. Students engaged in field education have the same rights and responsibilities as any member of the Ryerson community.

Jurisdiction of the University: Any incident involving members of the Ryerson Community and having study or workplace repercussions may be considered within the University's jurisdiction, whether or not it occurs on campus or during normally defined working hours.

Any student who feels they may be a victim of harassment or discrimination is encouraged to talk about their experience with someone who they trust and who can provide sound advice on what actions are available to the student so that the harassment and discrimination can be stopped. The Faculty Consultant, the Director and the Associate Directors of the school, and the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Officer are all available to students who have harassment and discrimination concerns or questions. Faculty and/or staff will assess the situation and discuss the range of actions available to the student.

Students need to be aware that if they disclose information about possible discrimination or harassment of any kind to a faculty member or to an administrative staff person in the school, it is incumbent upon that person to take action. The specific action to be taken will be determined based on the nature of the complaint.

Ryerson's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy notes:

"It is the responsibility of the University to exercise its authority to prevent discrimination and harassment, to penalize the repetition of discrimination and harassment, and to respond promptly to known or apparent incidents of discrimination and harassment, whether or not a complaint has been filed.

By law, the University and its senior administrators such as chair, deans, Directors, vice-presidents, the president, and others with supervisory responsibility have a legal responsibility to respond promptly to known or apparent incidents of discrimination and harassment, whether or not a complaint has been filed and to exercise authority to prevent and/or penalize the repetition of such behaviour. Where it is found that a senior administrator or others with supervisory responsibility knew of an incident of discrimination or harassment and did not take any action to stop the behaviour, that senior administrator may be subject to penalties and remedies under this Policy and under the law."

Faculty members and/or administrative staff in the School of Social Work will consult with the Associate Director, Field Education, and/or the Ryerson Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Officer in the event of any disclosure of possible discrimination and harassment, to seek advice on how to proceed.

Experiential Learning – Senate Policy 169

In June 2020, Ryerson University approved and implemented Senate Policy 169 ~ Experiential Learning. This policy governs authority and responsibility for experiential learning activities related to currently enrolled Ryerson University Ryerson students recognizing that Ryerson desires students to have meaningful, relevant, and safe experiences that provide a nexus to their career and academic goals. Questions about this policy can be sent to the Field Education Manager at swfield@ryerson.ca.

Removal of Students from Field Placements on Grounds of Professional Misconduct

With specific regard to the removal of students from a field placement, Senate Policy 169 highlights that *"Ryerson reserves the right, at any point, to remove a student from and/or terminate an EL opportunity where there is reasonable basis that the student presents a risk to themselves or others and/or engages in persistent or significant unprofessional behaviour in accordance with the Procedures under this policy."*

Each faculty and functional area has the authority and responsibility to outline a process applicable to them for identifying and managing experiential learning opportunities.   In line with the authority granted to the School of Social Work through Senate Policy 169, the following outline presents the policy and procedures that will be applied in a situation where a student is removed from their field placement on grounds of professional misconduct.

Preamble

The school has an obligation to protect the safety and well-being of the students, staff and faculty as well as the clients and staff of those agencies in which students carry out their field placements. The school has a responsibility to take appropriate action with respect to students in the program who have acted in an unethical or unprofessional manner.

This policy is subject to Ryerson University's [Student Code of Academic Conduct](#) and [Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct](#) as specified in the Ryerson University Calendar and on Ryerson University's website.

Policy

The Director of the school may remove a student from field placement when there is reason to suspect that the student:

a. has behaved/performed in a manner which endangers students, clients, placement setting staff, faculty or others; or

b. has harassed/abused a student, client, placement setting staff, faculty, or others; or

c. is in violation of the Canadian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics; or

d. has been convicted of, or has been charged with, a criminal offense involving violent or abusive behaviour.

Procedures

1. A faculty member, acting on their own judgment or on the advice of the placement setting/Field Instructor, may recommend, in writing, to the Director of the School of Social Work (with a copy to the student), the removal of a student from field placement under the circumstances outlined in the above policy. If the Director concurs, the student's removal will occur immediately, subject to the procedures set out below.

2. Within three working days of the faculty's recommendation, the Director will meet with the student to review the situation and to allow the student an opportunity to explain their conduct. The Director will then make a decision regarding the student's continuation in the field placement. The Director may decide that the student will:

    a. continue in the field placement with no restrictions; or

    b. continue in the field placement with appropriate restrictions; or

    c. be permanently removed from the field placement and that suspension from the program be recommended.

3. Written notification of the decision will be forwarded to the student, to the faculty member and, if necessary, to the Field Instructor, in the most expedient manner.

4. With reference to criminal offences, if charges are dropped, or the student acquitted of the offence, the student would be reinstated within the field placement.

5. Any student who has been restricted or permanently removed from the field placement has the right to request an Internal Review by a panel of three. The Internal Review Panel (the "Review Panel") will consist of:

    a. the Designate of the Director, who will chair the Review Panel;

    b. two members appointed by the Director.

    The student has the right to express any conflict of interest with any member of the Review Panel to the Director of the School of Social Work.

    A student may not remain in their field placement during the Internal Review. Students may continue with their class course work.

6. Any student requesting an Internal Review must notify the Director of this, in writing, within five working days of receipt of the Notice of Restriction or Removal from the field placement.

7. The Review Panel will meet and complete the review within 5 (five) working days immediately following the request being made by the student. This time may be extended by mutual consent of the student and the Chair of the Review Panel.

8. All members of the Review Panel are required to observe confidentiality regarding the discussions and recommendations.

9. The student has the right to meet with the Review Panel, to present relevant information, and to present submissions on their own behalf. The student may also be accompanied by one person of their choice who may act as agent.

10. Since this is an internal review, and since it is intended to keep matters as informal as possible, and since the right of appeal to a more formal tribunal is undisturbed, the use of legal counsel by either party is not permitted.

11. Within two working days of the conclusion of the review, the Review Panel will present a written decision, approved by all members of the panel, to the student and the Director. The written decision will be mailed (or emailed if agreed to by all parties).

12. A student who disagrees with the decision of the Review Panel, including the decision to recommend Disciplinary Suspension or Disciplinary Withdrawal, is entitled to appeal the decision under the Student Code of Academic Conduct.

13. Should the student be successful in the Internal Review and/or Appeal, they will be required to complete all field placement hours and/or course requirements. The Director, in consultation with the student, will determine when and how placement hours/assignments will be completed.

Section 6: Resources & References

Throughout this document, numerous resources have been referenced and/or hyperlinked. Below is an outline of these resources, along with many others, which students, Field Instructors and Faculty Consultants may find relevant and useful for the upcoming term.

General & Useful Ryerson University Websites

Ryerson COVID-19 Information and Updates provides students, faculty, staff and community members with the latest information on how the University is responding to the pandemic.

Seven Grandparent Teachings is an article by Ryerson's Indigenous Elder Joanne Dallaire on how these teachings can guide us through difficult times.

School of Social Work, Field Education Forms, includes all the required field education forms that students and Field Instructors shall complete, including learning plans, evaluations and timesheets.

Ryerson University Library Resources and Services has borrowing and lending services for students needing access to laptops and mobile internet hotspots.

RU4U is a Ryerson hub of important information, supports and programs for students to help them succeed in a virtual post-secondary environment.

Orientation and Onboarding

Tips for Onboarding Students Remotely from Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada.

Virtually Onboarding Your Intern is a series of short videos, produced by the University Of Denver School of Social Work, which shares best practices on supporting a student who will be completing a virtual placement.

Leader's Guide to Onboarding is a resource developed by the Human Resources department at Ryerson University. While specific to onboarding employees, some information is transferable to general onboarding processes.

Academic Accommodation and Support (AAS) supports students with disabilities at Ryerson. Students requiring accommodation and support as it relates to their field placement, are encouraged to review the range of programs and services which are offered through the AAS Office.

Ryerson's Accessibility Guides & Resources provides practical information which can be applied to preparing for an accessible remote placement experience.

Accessibility Best Practices for Remote Instruction/Work, by New York University, offers a series of tips and considerations for using technology in accessible formats.

Working & Providing Supervision Remotely

[Best Practices for Working Remotely](#) is a Ryerson University website on how to set yourself up for success in remote work situations.

[Tips for Supervising Students Remotely](#) from Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada.

[Supporting co-op students remotely](#) offers a video and series of resources produced by the University of Waterloo.

[Best Practices for Creating a Successful Virtual Internship](#), from the Harvard Business School, offers tips and suggestions for organizations and students to consider

[Tips for Working at Home](#) from Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada.

[Conducting virtual meetings](#) is a Ryerson University resource with tips on how to hold successful remote meetings

Confidentiality & Privacy in a Remote Environment

[Top 10 Considerations for Using Communication Technology in Practice](#) is a newsletter article shared by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW).

[Protecting Privacy in a Pandemic: Interpreting PHIPA in light of COVID-19](#), produced by BMS Canada Risk Services Ltd.

[Computing and Communications Services (CCS)](#) at Ryerson University provides Ryerson students with free and reliable security software.

[CASW Code of Ethics](#) provides confidentiality guidelines for students and social work practitioners to apply to their practice.

[CASW Virtual Counselling Resources](#) lists an assortment of resources, listed by Provincial colleges, for conducting social work practice in an electronic environment.

Well-Being & Self-Care

[ThriveRU](#), is an initiative of the Student Affairs department at Ryerson University and provides members of the Ryerson community with training and resources associated with resilience, well-being and thriving in both an academic and personal context.

[Student Wellbeing](#) at Ryerson University provides links to a variety of health, wellbeing and academic services and resources for students.

[Managing Dependent Care](#), from Ryerson's HR department, provides best practices and tips for facing the challenges of working from home while caring for children and/or other dependents.

Mental Health and the COVID-19 Pandemic provides resources and information from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Coping with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak is a short resource developed by the World Health Organization.

Tips for Coping with COVID-19, prepared by Morneau Shepell offers tips on building resilience in times of uncertainty and ideas for what you can do to feel better.

Good2Talk provides free and confidential support services for post-secondary students.

Health & Safety

Ergonomics by Ryerson University's Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) department offers a series of videos and tip sheets for students to set up their workspaces to prevent injury.

10 Office Ergonomics Tips to Help You Avoid Fatigue, by ErgoPlus, provides practical tips for setting up your workstation as well as a self-assessment tool.

Online health and safety training for Ryerson students is available through my.ryerson.ca and requires that students sign up to gain access to a D2L shell for access to video modules.

Slips, Trips and Falls is resource produced by Ryerson's EHS department that students can review and apply to their remote working environment.

Field Instruction & Teaching

Field Education Strategies for Remote Competency Development, from the University of Denver, provides examples of tasks and activities that students and Field Instructors can incorporate into their learning plans.

Field Instruction Resources is a compilation of resources related to placements during the COVID 19 pandemic, shared by different CASWE member, Schools of Social Work.

Ryerson University Library access is available to all Field Instructors who will be supervising a BSW or MSW student from Ryerson. Library access lasts for one academic year, from September 2021 to August 2022. If you would like to arrange for library privileges, please complete the Request for Library Privileges form or email swfield@ryerson.ca.

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at Ryerson University has developed a series of remote teaching resources, which although are targeted for Ryerson faculty and instructors, may be useful to Field Instructors as they adjust to providing field instruction in a remote format.