INTERNATIONAL FIELD EDUCATION REGULATIONS

Department of Social Studies

University of Stavanger, Norway

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**Introduction**

This set of regulations is to be regarded as an attachment to the regulations presently valid for national field education courses for students in the two bachelor programs Social Work and Child Welfare respectively; BSOP20 Field Education and BBAP20 Field Education, within the Department of Social Studies at the University of Stavanger, Norway.

This set of regulations governs international field education for students placed directly with an international organization or institution approved by the Dept. of Social Studies. For international placement during spring semester 2013 the semester is divided between placements in Norway and abroad. This set of regulations does not apply to students who do field education through bilateral agreements with international partner universities and university colleges.

The opportunity of International Field Education shall give students the chance to experience how social work and social pedagogical work is carried out internationally. International Field Education and placement in a foreign country can be both challenging and rewarding. Studying abroad is in itself a learning process and a journey to self-discovery. Such self-discovery is critical in the maturing process of a social worker and a child welfare pedagogue.

The goal is that students shall gain knowledge, skills and general competency from participating on a global arena they otherwise would normally not be exposed to when doing field education in Norway.

**Preparations and debriefing**

Students are advised to partake in information meetings prior to departure, and in group and individual debriefing after their return.

**Accreditation of ECTS (study points)**

Field education amount to 30 ECTS in both study programs, and is compulsory. Field education shall be in direct contact with services users/target groups and under supervision by a trained social worker/social pedagogue or other closely related professions.

These 30 ECTS presently equals 22 weeks of field placement (excluding Easter holidays).

Department of Social Studies offers international field education in direct cooperation with carefully selected organizations with a solid reputation and strong professional competency. For students doing international field education with organizations during spring semester, the 22 compulsory weeks will be divided between the host organization and placement in Norway. Due to grants from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund, students are required to stay abroad a minimum of 12 weeks.

Direct arrangements are made in cooperation between International Coordinator with the Dept. of Social Studies at the University of Stavanger, and the director of the receiving organization.

Students in this particular program will be accredited a total of 30 ECTS from the University of Stavanger after completing the required 13+10 weeks field placement (including Easter holidays).
Incomplete exams prior to field education
Only students who have passed all exams prior to fourth semester are allowed to do international field placement.

Safety
All students must read and sign the following document issued by the University of Stavanger.

http://student.uis.no/studieinformasjon/utveksling/sikkerhet-paa-reisen/

All students are responsible for purchasing travel insurance prior to leaving on international field placement.

All students must thoroughly read the information about each country given by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs http://www.landsider.no/

It is equally important that students comply with local advice regarding safety measures. The receiving organization will at any time know what is best for a visitor to the country.

The students are also advised to register with the Norwegian embassy or consulate in the country upon arrival.

Should an emergency situation occur, students are responsible for immediately informing their nearest of kin and then the Dept. of Social Studies. The latter will respond accordingly.

Important telephone numbers

1. International Coordinator Linda Elisabeth Bjørknes
   +47 51 83 42 49 (office number)
   + 47 922 83 821 (private mobile phone)

2. University of Stavanger, reception (during office hours)
   +47 51 83 10 00

3. Head of Dept. of Social Studies Svanaug Fjær
   +47 51 83 42 94 (office number)
   +47 9188 9744 (private mobile phone)

Placement in the organization
During field placement students should be given tasks related to their respective bachelor programs.

For students in the Social Work program, this may include social work with vulnerable individuals or groups of any age.

For students in Child Welfare and Protection program, this should include working directly with children, youth and families at risk.
Working hours and conditions
The student shall comply with usual rules and regulations applicable to the local organization in each country. If the local agency has a formal set of regulations for their employees, students shall comply with these.

Students work 30 hours weekly in the organization and have one study day weekly to work on their written assignments and to prepare for supervision.

Students are required to work as per the ethical guidelines given by the Norwegian Labor Union for Social Workers and Child Welfare Pedagogues:

http://www.fo.no/yrkesetikk/yrkesetisk-grunnlagsdokument-article227-150.html

Should it be necessary to work evenings in the organizations, this shall be agreed upon with the field supervisor. Safety precautions shall always be taken into consideration when working evening shifts.

Students follow local holidays. If Easter falls during field placement, students may ask to be given time off on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Absence
Field education is compulsory and absence is only accepted when due to illness and/or leave of absence given by the Dept. of Social Studies, University of Stavanger. During the entire field placement period from January-June the maximum days of allowed absence is 10 days, as per the course descriptions for BBAP20 and BSOP20.

Continuous absence due to illness more than three days must be documented by a note from a medical doctor, or a registered nurse if a doctor is not available. A copy of this documentation shall be given to field supervisor and the original kept for the record, and brought back to the University of Stavanger.

Travelling abroad will often include a higher risk of falling ill. Should a student fall ill during their international placement, he or she is therefore asked to inform the field supervisor as soon as possible. Should the prognosis be that a student will be sick for more than five days; the international coordinator at the Dept. of Social Studies shall be informed. As described in the Field Education Regulations, arrangements shall be made for a student to work extra hours to compensate for absence due to illness.

Supervision
The University of Stavanger requests that our students are given systematic supervision once a week by a qualified social worker/social pedagogue/other related professions in the organization/agency/program.

Supervision should preferably be given two hours weekly; individually or in groups.

Students are advised to keep a logbook during their placement, to enhance their reflective learning process.
If an organization works closely with a local University of University College, a lecturer from the academic institution may also provide the supervision. Some organizations may wish to appoint a contact staff member at any given agency where the student is placed; who may serve as a support person to both student and professional field supervisor.

It is the responsibility of the student to inform supervisor prior to supervision of topics to be discussed. The supervisor ensures that topics discussed are relevant to the student’s learning outcome.

See Responsibility of the international organization/agency (p.6)

Responsibility of the Dept. of Social Studies, University of Stavanger
The department will provide a contact teacher who will supervise via e-mail or Skype during the placement. All assignments shall be written in English, and shall be approved by both field supervisor and contact teacher.

It is highly recommended that the field supervisor is available for questions students may have regarding their written assignments. The Plan for Learning must be outlined in close cooperation with field supervisor and receiving organization.

The Dept. of Social Studies will appoint one contact teacher to each student. It is the responsibility of the contact teacher to follow up each student, field supervisors and/or other relevant people with the receiving organization during the placement period.

The contact teacher shall contact student and field supervisor via e-mail/telephone/Skype no later than three weeks after arrival.

It is the responsibility of the department to make the final decision in matters regarding whether or not a student shall be given a “fail-grade”. See Procedural Rules at the end of this document.

Responsibility of the student
Students applying for field education through this specific program are responsible for acquiring sufficient language skills enabling him or her to communicate verbally in the respective language. Course documentation or course plan, shall be presented to the international academic coordinator together with the application.

The student is responsible for his or her own learning. This means that the student shall familiarize him- or herself with the regulations applicable to the local organization. It is also the responsibility of the student to prepare the contents of supervision and to inform supervisor of topics to be discussed.

It is the responsibility of the student to familiarize him- or herself with the codes of ethics (pg.4). Professional Secrecy shall be followed even though there is no legal framework for such within the respective countries or receiving organization.

It is the responsibility of the student to read relevant information about the placement agency and to keep updated on information published on the webpage of the University of Stavanger, it’s learning.
It is the responsibility of the student to get in touch with the contact teacher whenever necessary.

Students are sometimes able to bring gifts or money contributions from Norway. Students are strongly advised not to give money or gifts to individuals or agencies without first consulting their field educator and/or director of local agency. This is to avoid misunderstandings and problems in the local community or receiving organization.

Students should be very careful about identifying individual children portrayed in pictures published on social media. Ethical rules applying to a Norwegian field placement is also valid abroad.

**Responsibility of the international organization/agency**

Give student relevant tasks to perform and partake in during placement according to their respective bachelor programs.

Provide weekly or biweekly supervision as described under *Supervision* (p.4).

Supervision should encourage students to actively reflect on academic/technical and ethical issues relating to their placement agency, as well as personal competency in practicing social work/social pedagogical work. Supervisor should follow the student in his/her learning process and actively interact with the student to ensure necessary progression in the learning process. This includes planning work tasks/learning goals, follow up and evaluation and if necessary adjusting work tasks/learning goals.

Supervisor should give student continuous feedback on his/her functioning at the placement.

It is highly recommended that the field supervisor is available for questions students may have regarding their written assignments. The Plan for Learning shall also be outlined in close cooperation with field supervisor and receiving organization.

*The organization shall inform the international coordinator/contact teacher in Norway should any concerns arise regarding the student’s performance and development.*

**Evaluation**

Students shall be given a mid-term and a final evaluation, as outlined in Annex I and 2 in this document.

Field supervisor and student sign the evaluation forms and the field supervisor sends a scanned version to contact teacher in Norway immediately. The student presents the original to contact teacher immediately upon return to Stavanger.

It is important that the evaluation be a shared process and that the supervisor and the student discuss variations and similarities in the assessments made.

The evaluation procedures for the part of the placement done in Norway will follow the Regulations for Norwegian field placement. The limited time frame will be taken into consideration.
Assignments during international placement

All written assignments shall follow the APA-style and shall include references to social work/social pedagogical theories learned so far in the study program.

For the sake of transparency between the student, placement agency and the Department of Social Studies, all assignments shall be written in English and a copy be given to the agency. Contact teacher will assess assignments to pass/fail.

1. Group assignment
Write a presentation of the placement agency to set the frame for the individual Plan for Learning.

Deadline: After 3 weeks of placement.

1500 words +/- 10%

2. Individual Plan for Learning
At the start of the placement the students write a Plan for Learning describing the student’s assignments and learning expectations.

Learning goals and learning objectives shall be written within the following framework: Knowledge, skills and general competency.

1. Describe how you will reach the goals.
2. Make a time schedule for the goals and objectives.
3. Describe the framework for preparations and supervision.

The following are important goals to be included in the learning contract:

- Understand the role of the social worker/child welfare pedagogue within the organization/agency/program
- Assess his/her personal value base
- Understand the ethical base of social work or social pedagogy and have a clear understanding of confidentiality
- Participate in case work where applicable (individual and/or group)
- Initiate activities with people of the target groups
- Actively participate in supervision
- Network with other community agencies where applicable

Plan for learning shall be a work tool for the student and the field supervisor. The plan shall therefore be developed in cooperation with and approved by field supervisor, prior to sending it to contact teacher at the University of Stavanger.

Deadline: After 3 weeks of placement

1000 words +/- 10%.
3. **Professional reflections**  
Based on the definition of social work/social pedagogical work used in your studies, describe a social problem you have encountered or observed during placement. Describe what causes and solutions you have been able to recognize.

In what way is your Norwegian way of thinking social work/social pedagogical work challenged in your understanding of this particular problem and what insights have you gained from this experience; personally, emotionally and professionally?

How can you draw on this learning experience in your future professional life?

Deadline: Two weeks before end of placement period.

1500 words +/- 10%.

4. **Field Education Final Report**  
Describe to what degree the goals in the Individual Plan for Learning have been reached. Obstacles may also be described.

Deadline: Two weeks before end of placement period.

500 words +/- 10%.

Deadline: Final week of placement.

**Assignments during placement in Norway**  
These assignments shall follow the APA-style and are to be written in Norwegian. Contact teacher shall assess assignments to pass/fail.

1. **Individual Plan for Learning**  
As described on pg. 7 under Assignments during international Field Placement.

Deadline: After 3 weeks of placement

1000 words +/- 10%.

2. **Field Education Final Report**  
Describe to what degree the goals in the Individual Plan for Learning have been reached. Obstacles may also be described.

Deadline: Two weeks before end of placement period.

1000 words +/- 10 %.

Deadline: Final week of placement.
Procedural rules regarding doubts of successful completion of field placement

A. Passed/failed field education is a formal individual measure as per the Norwegian Act relating to universities and university colleges.

B. The assessment is done based on the following: Report and recommendations from field supervisor/receiving organizations; the departmental assessment of the student; the student’s finished assignments and finally; the student’s absence from the work place.

C. Doubts regarding pass/fail:
   a. Field Educator/Field Supervisor and/or the University represented by Contact teacher/international coordinator may forward doubts and/or suggest failed placement in writing. If a situation raises doubt as to whether a student shall pass field placement, the student shall be informed immediately, and no later than mid-term evaluation. Should situations arise after mid-term evaluation, the student must be informed immediately.
   b. When doubt arises regarding passed field education, or when any of the parts suggest that a student shall be given a fail, a meeting1 between parties will be arranged. The parties included are the student, the field educator/supervisor and the contact teacher/international coordinator. Minutes shall be taken from this meeting. Should such doubt arise after mid-term evaluation, the student must be informed immediately.
   c. Contact teacher at the University of Stavanger shall immediately take the initiative to such a meeting.
   d. Reasons for doubt about a pass, or suggestion about a fail should be stated in writing to the student no later than 1 week prior to the mentioned meeting. The student may bring an observer to the meeting. The observer has no right to speak in the meeting.
   e. The department is responsible for calling and completing the meeting. Minutes from the meeting shall be written.
   f. The minutes shall be ready for signatures no later than a week after the meeting is completed. The parties are given the opportunity to comment its contents. Any comments to the minutes shall be given in writing and be sent to Head of the Dept. of Social Studies, with a copy to the field education coordinator/contact teacher within a week after the minutes have been signed.
   g. Head of Dept. in cooperation with academic staff decides whether all aspects of the case has been sufficiently exposed, or makes sure that additional information is obtained. Based on the information presented in the case, the course convener makes a formal measure as to whether or not the student has passed or failed his/her field education.
   h. Formal measure of failed field education shall be concluded in writing.
   i. Formal measure and arguments shall be sent the student.
   j. Only formal mistakes can be appealed against. For more details, see “Regulations for exams at the University of Stavanger”.
   k. **Should a student receive a fail grade during international field placement, he or she will be given the opportunity to repeat field placement in Norway.**

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1 For students who do field placement with international organizations, such a meeting can be held via Skype or by telephone.