STATE OF FIELD EDUCATION SURVEY

A Survey of Directors of Field Education on Administrative Models, Staffing, and Resources

Additional Analyses and Final Report of the Research Committee of COFE

CSWE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Introduction

With the dissemination of the 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) identified field education as the "signature pedagogy" of the social work profession (CSWE, 2008). This designation is meant to highlight the role that field education plays in socializing students to the profession. Field is where students integrate classroom knowledge with real-world experience, and field is where students acquire and demonstrate the skills and competencies fundamental to social work practice.

Although the designation of signature pedagogy to the field practicum may have provided recognition and even elevated the status of field education within social work education, some authors suggest that significant questions about the integration of field with the overall curriculum and available resources for field must be fully addressed for this designation to be robustly realized. Holosko and Skinner (2015), for example, noted the varying degrees to which field coordinators participate in the overall curriculum design of social work programs. Wayne, Bogo, and Raskin (2010) argued that the varied learning structures currently used in field education must be entirely reexamined. They suggest that a reallocation of resources for field education may be required to accomplish a comprehensive examination of program outcomes.

The 2015 State of Field Education survey represents an attempt to understand how differences in the position of coordinator or director, field program structure, and field program resources vary across social work programs.

The 2015 State of Field Education survey represents an attempt to understand how differences in the position of coordinator or director, field program structure, and field program resources vary across social work programs. The authors of this report hope that data presented here will help build the groundwork for further inquiry on how differences in field education functions within programs may affect the quality of field instruction and field learning.

OVERVIEW

In spring 2015 the Council on Field Education (COFE), with support from CSWE's Educational Initiatives and Research staff, launched the first CSWE nationwide survey of field directors/coordinators to examine a range of issues in social work field education, focusing on administration and resources. The survey collected data on elements of field education: administrative models, staffing, resources provided, and the activities of field directors/coordinators and functions of offices of field education. The survey instrument received Institutional Review Board approval from Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts.

More specifically, this study sought to discover information about field education staffing by faculty, administrative professionals, and adjuncts; ratios of field personnel to students for placement; and field directors' and coordinators' experiences in the position, as well as some of the elements in the process of placing students in field education settings. An executive summary, Findings From the 2015 State of Field Education Survey: A Survey of Directors of Field Education on Administrative Models, Staffing, and Resources, first made public in 2015, provided an initial broad overview of the findings. The descriptive statistics reported in the executive summary are not repeated in the text of this report, but this report may refer readers to tables or sections in that document, including descriptions of respondent demographics, students, and staffing and resources. Following publication of the executive summary the COFE research team continued analyzing the data, including focusing on the field director/coordinator experience and how it relates to field, the program, and institutional characteristics.

This report presents additional analyses related to two predominant themes that emerged from the findings: resources and leadership.

This report presents additional analyses related to two predominant themes that emerged from the findings: resources and leadership. Although this survey and the analysis that followed have provided a snapshot of the current state of field education, circa 2015–2018, many questions remain. The research team has outlined recommendations for future research and analysis at the end of the report. In addition to these recommendations, building from this seminal survey the COFE will continue initiatives to address critical issues and advance quality field education.

The survey instrument consisted of 65 questions with multiple-choice, open-ended, and Likert scale responses. It was administered online through the survey platform Zarca Interactive. Survey and invitations were e-mailed to one field education director or coordinator at each institution housing a CSWE-accredited social work program. If there were two field directors/coordinators at the institution, undergraduate and graduate, the survey directed the recipient to coordinate responses with the relevant colleague. Thus, schools with undergraduate and graduate programs filled out one questionnaire, but data received reflected information about both programs in different reporting sections. If institutional websites did not publish an e-mail address for a field director/coordinator, the invitation was sent to a program chair, director, or dean. The survey closed in May 2015.

At the time of survey launch, 562 institutions with baccalaureate and/or master's social work programs were accredited by CSWE. The survey link was e-mailed successfully to 540 programs, and only 22 e-mails were returned or bounced. The survey was completed by 312 respondents, for a response rate of 57.8%. This sample reflected characteristics similar to those of institutions that responded to CSWE's 2014 Annual Survey of Social Work Programs, including program level, CSWE region, auspice, ethnic/sex identification, and Carnegie classification. Thus, respondents to the 2015 field survey reflect a reasonable representation and subset of CSWE-accredited programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are sporadic examples in the professional literature, dating to 1989, in which inquiry has focused on the opinions/perceptions of directors of field education regarding the work they do. Articles also exist that reference the resources provided or needed to conduct the functions of the office of field education. The question of resources devoted to field education has often been coupled with the recognition, or lack thereof, of the managerial role and potential for valuable input into decision-making by directors/coordinators of field education on the part of institutional administrators (Dettlaff & Wallace, 2002; Hawthorne & Holtzman, 1991). Notably, Lyter's survey of field directors and deans/directors of social work programs (2012) highlighted differing opinions about the role of field directors. This study found that field directors most strongly differed from deans/directors regarding administration. Deans/directors perceived that the input of field directors on key decisions was sought more than field directors perceived this; and field directors felt that they should be afforded a greater span of authority given the advent of signature pedagogy in social work education compared with deans'/directors' beliefs.

Institutional support and resources for field education have been explored in a relatively small number of studies. Bedard's survey (1998) of field placement directors presented the statement, "There is a lack of institutional support for field instruction in the university," with which 43% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. In the same vein, the third most frequently cited sentiment noted by respondents to Skolnick's survey (1989) was an absence of university support and administrative capacity for field education functions. Regarding resources, McChesney's survey (1999) respondents most frequently identified the resources of time, budget, and staff as lacking in the field education process. Similarly, the most cited challenge relevant to the administration of field education in Kilpatrick and Holland's survey (1993) of field directors was lack of resources. Further information on the topic of resources and support was provided by Dalton, Stevens, and Maas-Brady (2011), who found that 24% of respondents considered institutional support for field education inadequate (with 17% neutral).

> *This complexity—including changing student demographics, the state of the economy, agency environments and staff turnover, students as consumers, students' competing obligations, and students' economic statuses—drives the need for increased resources.*

The significant complexity of engaging in field education in the current era has been noted as well. This complexity—including changing student demographics, the state of the economy, agency environments and staff turnover, students as consumers, students' competing obligations, and students' economic statuses—drives the need for increased resources. Perhaps the most important of these resources is personnel with the time and ability to address individual needs adequately. From a qualitative study of field directors' professional experiences, Buck, Bradley, Robb & Shapiro-Kirzner (2012) reported three primary themes or pressures: (1) demands made on directors of field education from students, administrators, contemporary social work practice, and community/local

resources; (2) the pressure to meet accreditation standards; and (3) the metatheme of managing demands. The last of the three themes certainly reflects the complexity of engaging in field education functions and references the range of demands found in the first theme. A high degree of complexity in field education was also found in this 2015 study of field directors/coordinators.

Although attention has been paid periodically to the resource needs of engaging in field education functions and the leadership potential of the director/coordinator role, and although these foci of attention may be growing, little appears to have changed given the findings of the study presented here. A growing recognition and acknowledgment of the increasing complexity involved in the functioning of field education in the current environment could and should result in policy changes at the institutional and accreditor levels that affect resources and leadership contributions and opportunities.

SUMMARY OF INDICATIVE FINDINGS ON RESOURCES AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Survey findings suggest that a notable number of participants (39.3%) thought that resources allocated for field were inadequate for the programs they managed. Interestingly, as the size of the core field team increased (four or more), respondents were more likely to agree with statements regarding the inadequacy of resources at their institutions.

Findings from the survey also point to a lack of field director or coordinator participation at the program level in curriculum, admissions, and other committees, as well as programmatic decision-making. For example, only 50.6% of directors/coordinators responding to the survey said they participate in their program's management and leadership teams.

Findings from the survey also point to a lack of field director or coordinator participation at the program level in curriculum, admissions, and other committees, as well as programmatic decision-making.

These findings parallel several themes from the 2014 CSWE Field Summit, which took place in fall 2014. Summit participants, under the discussion heading of Economic Trends and Pressures, noted the need for CSWE to provide leadership to empower social work schools and departments to develop internal and external policies and funding to better support field education. Participants also noted the need for accreditation standards that mandate an effective level of resources for field, including technology and staffing, to better meet the diverse and complex needs of students of today and the future (CSWE, 2015b). Indeed, partially because of the 2014 Field Summit, COFE and other social work educators were successful in introducing new language to CSWE's 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. Accreditation Standard 3.5.6 in Implicit Curriculum, Administrative Structure states: "The program describes its administrative structure for field education and explains how its resources (personnel, time, and technological support) are sufficient to administer its field education program to meet its mission and goals" (CSWE, 2015a, p.18).

This final report, *The State of Field Education Survey: A Survey of Directors of Field Education on Administrative Models, Staffing, and Resources*, is organized based on findings. The characteristics of the field director/coordinator position appear first, followed by findings on field education staffing and support. The perceptions and perspectives of field directors/coordinators when presented with statements about their work and work expectations appear next in two parts: percentages of field directors/coordinators who agreed or disagreed with the statements, followed by these statements along with the percentages analyzed with other variables, such as school auspice, size, and field education office full-time equivalents. Field directors/coordinators were also asked about the array of tasks they were expected to perform in their positions. Several of these tasks connote the possibility—or lack of possibility—for leadership in their institutions, and findings relevant to this subject are presented. Invited open comments offered by participants appear next, followed by the themes on staffing, resources, and leadership that emerged when survey results were looked at holistically. Recommendations conclude the report.

The authors of this final report hope readers, be they field directors/coordinators, faculty members, or administrators at the helm of schools and programs of social work, find the results and analysis, as well as recommendations, valuable, interesting, and even compelling enough to inspire action related to resources writ large. Supporting effective functioning in offices of field education allows the fulfillment of field education as the signature pedagogy of social work education and the social work profession. Because students become practitioners, the functioning of social systems, the needs of clients and consumers, and the fabric of society are at stake.

Characteristics of the Field Education Director or Coordinator Position

The executive summary reported on overall characteristics of the field education director or coordinator position, including whether the position was full-time or part-time, a faculty position with academic rank or clinical designation, or whether it was an administrative position. See Table 1 for details. Additional analysis explored characteristics of the field education director or coordinator position by program level.

Table 1. Characteristics of Field Education Position by Program Level

Characteristic	Baccalaureate		Master's		Co-Located	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Field Education Director or Coordinator[a]						
Full-time	92	56.4	30	81.1	70	84.3
Part-time	4	2.5	1	2.7	3	3.6
Part-time within full-time appointment with other duties assigned	67	41.1	6	16.2	10	12.0
Total	**163**		**37**		**83**	
Field Education Director or Coordinator[b]						
Faculty with clinical or practice designation	35	21.6	14	37.8	32	38.6
Faculty with academic rank	120	74.1	9	24.3	28	33.7
Administrative/professional (no faculty designation)	7	4.3	14	37.8	23	27.7
Total	**162**		**37**		**83**	
Field Education Director or Coordinator[c]						
Tenure track	83	51.6	2	5.6	15	18.5
Contracted annually	55	34.2	17	47.2	41	50.6
Long-term contracted (3 years or more)	23	14.3	17	47.2	25	30.9
Respondents reporting	161		36		81	

a χ^2 (df = 4) = 26.00, p < .0001
b χ^2 (df = 4) = 63.02 , p < .0001
c χ^2 (df = 4) = 47.40, p < .0001

Most field education directors across all program levels (baccalaureate, masters, and co-located programs) were full-time appointees: 56.4% among baccalaureate programs, 81% in master's programs, and 84.3% in co-located programs. The second largest group of appointments occured in baccalaureate programs, with 41.1% being part-time field directors/coordinators within a full-time appointment (with other duties assigned). The position of field education director or coordinator was least likely to be full-time at baccalaureate programs.

Baccalaureate directors were more likely to have academic rank, at 74% versus 24.3% in master's programs, and 33.7% in co-located programs. Director positions in baccalaureate programs were also more likely to be tenure-track, at 51.6%, than in master's programs, at 5.6%, and co-located programs, at 18.5%. In general, the position of field director/coordinator was more likely to be contracted annually or long-term contracted (3 years or more) at MSW or co-located programs.

POSITION OF FIELD EDUCATION DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR BY CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION OF INSTITUTION

A few notable findings emerged when the characteristics of the field director/coordinator position were analyzed by the Carnegie Classification of the institution of the respondent (doctorate-granting, master's, or baccalaureate). Table 2 summarizes these findings.

- Full-time versus part-time: The field director/coordinator was most likely to be a full-time position at doctorate-granting universities. The position was most likely to be part-time within a full-time appointment with other duties assigned at baccalaureate colleges.

- Faculty designation: The field director/coordinator was most likely to be a faculty position with clinical or practice designation at doctorate-granting universities. At baccalaureate colleges the position was most likely to be faculty with academic rank.

- Tenure-track or contracted: The field director/coordinator was more likely to be a tenure-track position at master's colleges/universities and baccalaureate colleges. The position was most likely to be a long-term contracted (3 years or more) position at doctorate-granting universities.

Table 2. Characteristics of Field Education Position by General Carnegie Classification

Characteristic	Doctorate-Granting Universities		Master's Colleges & Universities		Baccalaureate Colleges	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Field Education Director or Coordinator[a]						
Full-time	66	86.8	89	60.5	36	62.1
Part-time	1	1.3	5	3.4	2	3.4
Part-time within full-time appointment with other duties assigned	9	11.8	53	36.1	20	34.5
Total	**76**		**147**		**58**	
Field Education Director or Coordinator[b]						
Faculty with clinical or practice designation	34	44.7	36	24.7	11	19.0
Faculty with academic rank	24	31.6	87	59.6	44	75.9
Administrative/professional (no faculty designation)	18	23.7	23	15.8	3	5.2
Total	**76**		**146**		**58**	
Field Education Director or Coordinator[c]						
Tenure track	10	13.5	64	44.4	25	43.1
Contracted annually	34	45.9	56	38.9	22	37.9
Long-term contracted (3 years or more)	30	40.5	24	16.7	11	19.0
Total	**74**		**144**		**58**	

a χ^2 (df = 6) = 17.51, p < .008
b χ^2 (df = 6) = 30.94, p < .0001
c χ^2 (df = 6) = 28.00, p < .0001

CHARACTERISTICS OF FIELD EDUCATION POSITION BY NUMBER OF STUDENTS

The characteristics of the field education position were further analyzed by number of students in the program. Larger programs (250 or more students) were more likely to have full-time field education directors/coordinators (91.3%). Field director/coordinator positions were also more likely to be filled by faculty with clinical or practice designation in larger programs.

Field directors/coordinators were more likely to be tenure-track positions in smaller (100 students or fewer) programs and more likely to be contracted positions as program size increased.

Table 3 summarizes these findings.

Table 3. Characteristics of Field Education Position by Number of Students (Across Program Level and Enrollment Status)

Characteristic	Fewer Than 100		100–249		250 or More	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Field Education Director or Coordinator[a]						
Full-time	58	58.0	47	56.6	73	91.3
Part-time	4	4.0	2	2.4	2	2.5
Part-time within full-time appointment with other duties assigned	38	38.0	34	41.0	5	6.3
Total	**100**		**83**		**80**	
Field Education Director or Coordinator[b]						
Faculty with clinical or practice designation	19	19.0	26	31.7	30	37.5
Faculty with academic rank	76	76.0	44	53.7	27	33.8
Administrative/professional (no faculty designation)	5	5.0	12	14.6	23	28.8
Total	**100**		**82**		**80**	
Field Education Director or Coordinator[c]						
Tenure track	48	48.5	31	37.3	15	19.2
Contracted annually	36	36.4	32	38.6	37	47.4
Long-term contracted (3 years or more)	15	15.2	20	24.1	26	33.3
Total	**99**		**83**		**78**	

a χ^2 (df = 4) = 30.90, $p < .0001$
b χ^2 (df = 4) = 36.43, $p < .0001$
c χ^2 (df = 4) = 17.97, $p < .001$

FIELD POSITION CHARACTERISTICS AND INSTITUTIONAL AUSPICE, PUBLIC OR PRIVATE

Comparisons were made between programs at public versus private (combining private-religion affiliated and private-other) institutions. Overall findings follow. See Table 4 for a summary of these results.

- The position of field education director/coordinator was more likely to be full-time and occupied by faculty members with clinical or practice designation at public institutions (75% and 40.7%, respectively). The position was more likely to be tenure-track at private institutions (43.6%).

- As noted, public institutions were more likely to have a full-time field director/coordinator. Private institutions were more likely to have a part-time field education director/coordinator serving in a full-time appointment with other duties assigned (37.6% for private institutions versus 22% for public institutions).

- As noted, public institutions were more likely to have a faculty member with a clinical or practice designation serving as field education director/coordinator. Private institutions were more likely to have a faculty member with academic rank serving as field education director/coordinator (72%).

- As noted, private institutions were more likely to have a field education director/coordinator in a tenure-track or tenured position. Public institutions were more likely to have a field education director/coordinator who was contracted annually (47.6%).

Table 4. Characteristics of Field Education Position by Auspice

Characteristic	Public		Private	
	Number	%	Number	%
Field Education Director or Coordinatora				
Full-time	113	75.3	79	59.4
Part-time	4	2.7	4	3.0
Part-time within full-time appointment with other duties assigned	33	22.0	50	37.6
Total	**150**		**133**	
Field Education Director or Coordinatorb				
Faculty with clinical or practice designation	61	40.7	20	15.2
Faculty with academic rank	62	41.3	95	72.0
Administrative/professional (no faculty designation)	27	18.0	17	12.9
Total	**150**		**132**	
Field Education Director or Coordinatorc				
Tenure track	42	29.0	58	43.6
Contracted annually	69	47.6	44	33.1
Long-term contracted (3 years or more)	34	23.4	31	23.3
Respondents reporting	145		133	

a χ^2 (df = 2) = 8.51, p < .014
b χ^2 (df = 2) = 28.93, p < .0001
c χ^2 (df = 2) = 7.73, p < .021

Interestingly, salaries did not differ statistically by institutional auspice. Table 5 summarizes these findings.

Table 5. Annual Salary Ranges of Survey Respondents by Auspice

Annual Salary Ranges	Public		Private	
	Number	%	Number	%
Less Than $50,000	24	15.2	28	20.7
$50,000–$59,999	41	25.9	37	27.4
$60,000–$69,999	35	22.2	24	17.8
$70,000–$79,999	31	19.6	22	16.3
$80,000 or more	27	17.1	24	17.8
Total	158		135	

χ^2 (df = 4) = 2.48, nonsignificant

Field Education Staffing and Support

The survey asked focused questions about staff support in the field office, specifically whether the program has an administrative assistant, student aide, or adjuncts serving as field liaisons. For the original reporting on these items, see page 16 of the executive summary.

In analyzing responses by program level, it was found that baccalaureate programs were least likely to have an administrative assistant assigned to field education functions (54.1% had no administrative assistant assigned to field education functions; in fact, 54.1% of baccalaureate programs, 22.2% of master's programs, and 35.5% of co-located programs had no administrative assistant assigned. Table 6 summarizes results related to staff support by program level.

Table 6. Nonfaculty Field Staff by Program Level

Types of Staff Positions Available	Baccalaureate		Master's		Co-Located	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Is an administrative assistant or office professional assigned to field education functions?[a]						
No	85	54.1	8	22.2	27	35.5
Yes, less than full-time	71	45.2	13	36.1	25	32.9
Yes, one full-time dedicated to field	1	0.6	9	25.0	22	28.9
Yes, more than one (including at least one FTE) dedicated to field	0	0	6	16.7	2	2.6
Total	**157**		**36**		**76**	
Is there a student aide or aides specifically dedicated to field office functions?[b]						
Yes	21	13.2	18	50.0	33	43.4
No	138	86.8	18	50.0	43	56.6
Total	**159**		**36**		**76**	
If yes, hours per week contributed						
Median	10.0		10.0		10.0	
Mean	9.3		13.4		12.7	
Is there access to one or more part-time student aides not specifically dedicated to field office functions?[c]						
Yes	84	53.5	16	44.4	41	53.9
No	73	46.5	20	55.6	35	46.1
Total	**157**		**36**		**76**	
If yes, hours per week contributed						
Median	2.0		2.5		5.0	
Mean	4.2		3.1		5.6	

Note. FTE = full-time equivalent.
a χ^2 (df = 6) = 78.66, p < .0001
b χ^2 (df = 2) = 35.74, p < .0001
c χ^2 (df = 2) = 1.06, nonsignificant

Hours contributed at baccalaureate programs by student aides were significantly less than hours contributed at master's programs [t (df=34) 2.15, p<.039]. Comparisons of hours contributed at baccalaureate programs versus co-located programs, and master's programs versus co-located programs, were not statistically significant.

FIELD EDUCATION STAFFING BY AUSPICE, PUBLIC OR PRIVATE

There were no statistically significant differences by institutional auspice for non-faculty field staff (see Table 7).

Table 7. Nonfaculty Field Staff by Auspice

Types of Staff Positions Available	Public		Private	
	Number	%	Number	%
Is an administrative assistant or office professional assigned to field education functions? [a]				
No	70	50.0	50	38.8
Yes, less than full-time	46	32.9	63	48.8
Yes, one full-time dedicated to field	19	13.6	13	10.1
Yes, more than one (including at least one) dedicated to field	5	3.6	3	2.3
Total	**140**		**129**	
Is there a student aide or aides specifically dedicated to field office functions?[b]				
Yes	43	30.3	29	22.5
No	99	69.7	100	77.5
Total	**142**		**129**	
Is there access to one or more part-time student aides not specifically dedicated to field office functions?[c]				
Yes	71	50.0	70	55.1
No	71	50.0	57	44.9
Total	**142**		**127**	

Note. FTE = full-time equivalent.
a χ^2 (df = 3) = 7.17, p < .067
b χ^2 (df = 1) = 2.11, nonsignificant
c χ^2 (df = 1) < 1, nonsignificant

FIELD EDUCATION STAFFING BY CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION

The presence of staff support varied by Carnegie classification. Doctorate-granting universities, for example, were most likely to have an administrative assistant (32.4% had full-time administrative assistants) or student aide (43.1% had dedicated student aides) assigned to field office functions. See Table 8.

Table 8. Nonfaculty Field Staff by General Carnegie Classification

Types of Staff Positions Available	Doctorate-Granting Universities		Master's Colleges & Universities		Baccalaureate Colleges	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Is an administrative assistant or office professional assigned to field education functions?[a]						
No	20	28.2	69	49.3	30	53.6
Yes, less than full-time	23	32.4	61	43.6	25	44.6
Yes, one full-time dedicated to field	23	32.4	8	5.7	0	0
Yes, more than one (including at least on) dedicated to field	5	7.0	2	1.4	1	1.8
Total	**71**		**140**		**56**	
Is there a student aide or aides specifically dedicated to field office functions?[b]						
Yes	31	43.1	32	22.7	9	16.1
No	41	56.9	109	77.3	47	83.9
Total	**72**		**141**		**56**	
If yes, hours per week contributed						
Median	15.0		10.0		10.0	
Mean	15.0		9.8		9.1	
Is there access to one or more part-time student aides not specifically dedicated to field office functions?[c]						
Yes	33	45.8	79	56.4	29	52.7
No	39	54.2	61	43.6	26	47.3
Total	**72**		**140**		**55**	
If yes, hours per week contributed						
Median	2.0		3.5		2.0	
Mean	5.0		4.5		3.9	

Note. FTE = full-time equivalent.
a χ^2 (df = 9) = 52.61, *p* < .0001
b χ^2 (df = 3) = 15.00, *p* < .002
c χ^2 (df = 3) = 4.36, nonsignificant

Hours per week contributed by student aides at doctorate-granting universities were significantly higher than hours contributed at master's colleges and universities, *t* (df=59)=3.36 hours, *p*<.001. Hours contributed at doctorate-granting universities were also significantly higher than hours contributed at baccalaureate colleges, *t* (df=38)=2.44 hours, *p*<.019. The difference in hours contributed at master's colleges/universities versus baccalaureate colleges was not statistically significant.

Regarding the number of hours per week contributed by part-time student aides, none of the comparisons were statistically significant.

NONFACULTY STAFF SUPPORT BY NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Smaller and midsized institutions tended to be less likely to have a full-time administrative assistant assigned to field education functions. See Table 9.

Table 9. Nonfaculty Field Staff by Number of Students (Across Program Level and Enrollment Status)

Types of Staff Positions Available	Fewer Than 100		100–249		250 or More	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Is an administrative assistant or office professional assigned to field education functions?[a]						
No	51	52.6	42	51.9	20	27.0
Yes, less than full-time	45	46.4	34	42.0	21	28.4
Yes, one full-time dedicated to field	1	1.0	4	4.9	26	35.1
Yes, more than one (including at least on) dedicated to field	0	0	1	1.2	7	9.5
Total	**97**		**81**		**74**	
Is there a student aide or aides specifically dedicated to field office functions?[b]						
Yes	13	13.4	23	28.0	33	44.6
No	84	86.6	59	72.0	41	55.5
Total	**97**		**82**		**74**	
If yes, hours per week contributed						
Median	10.0		10.0		10.0	
Mean	11.1		9.2		13.7	
Is there access to one or more part-time student aides not specifically dedicated to field office functions?[c]						
Yes	45	46.9	45	56.3	41	54.7
No	51	53.1	35	43.8	34	45.3
Total	**96**		**80**		**75**	
If yes, hours per week contributed						
Median	2.0		4.0		3.0	
Mean	4.8		4.2		4.7	

Note. FTE = full-time equivalent.
a χ^2 (df = 6) = 69.21, *p* < .0001
b χ^2 (df = 2) = 20.63, *p* < .0001
c χ^2 (df = 2) = 1.80, nonsignificant

The number of hours per week cont ributed by dedicated student aides at programs with 250 or more students was significantly higher than the number contributed at programs with 100–249 students, *t* (df=54)=2.69, *p*<.009. No other comparisons related to student aide hours were statistically significant.

Again, regarding the number of hours per week contributed by part-time student aides, none of the comparisons were statistically significant.

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT OF FACULTY AND/OR STAFF

Participants were asked the following: "What is the total full-time equivalent (FTE) of faculty and/or staff members assigned to *any field education functions* (including administration, field advising, monitoring and supporting placements, and site visits) in your program(s)? Please count all personnel, including relevant teaching, research, and field faculty, plus part-time or adjunct faculty. Use an FTE formula that makes sense for your setting." Overall results can be found on page 13 in the executive summary.

In general, FTEs were higher in master's and co-located programs. FTEs were highest in doctorate granting universities, and, perhaps not surprisingly, were higher as program size increased.

Nearly half of participants from baccalaureate programs (52.6%) estimated fewer than 1.5 FTEs of faculty/staff were assigned to any field education functions, compared with 2.9% and 8.3% in master's and co-located programs, respectively. Regarding placement, baccalaureate programs were most likely to report fewer than 1.5 FTEs (75.3%) than either master's (23.5%) or co-located (24.7%) programs.

FTE BY PROGRAM LEVEL

Table 10 shows the variation in staff size assigned to field education functions and in staff members who place students in agencies, by program level.

Table 10. Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) of Field Staff by Program Level

Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	Baccalaureate		Master's		Co-Located	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Faculty/Staff Assigned to any Field Education Function[a]						
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	81	52.6	1	2.9	6	8.3
1.5–2.4 FTEs	34	22.1	4	11.8	12	16.7
2.5–5.4 FTEs	24	15.6	10	29.4	26	36.1
5.5 or more FTEs	15	9.7	19	55.9	28	38.9
Total	**154**		**34**		**72**	
Faculty/Staff Members Who Place Students in Agencies[b]						
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	116	75.3	8	23.5	18	24.7
1.5–2.4 FTEs	24	15.6	9	26.5	21	28.8
2.5–5.4 FTEs	14	9.1	17	50.0	34	46.6
Total	**154**		**34**		**73**	

a χ^2 (df = 6) = 85.27, p < .0001
b χ^2 (df = 4) = 72.84, p < .0001

FTES BY CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION

Baccalaureate colleges typically had fewer field staff, including those who place students in agencies.

Other relationships can be found in Table 11.

Table 11. Full-Time Equivalents of Field Staff by General Carnegie Classification

Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	Doctorate-Granting Universities		Master's Colleges & Universities		Baccalaureate Colleges	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Faculty/Staff Assigned to Any Field Education Functions[a]						
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	10	14.5	48	36.1	28	50.0
1.5–2.4 FTEs	10	14.5	29	21.8	11	19.6
2.5–5.4 FTEs	19	27.5	33	24.8	8	14.3
5.5 or more FTEs	30	43.5	23	17.3	9	16.1
Total	**69**		**133**		**56**	
Faculty/Staff Who Place Students in Agencies[b]						
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	18	25.4	86	64.7	36	65.5
1.5–2.4 FTEs	15	21.1	29	21.8	10	18.2
2.5 or more FTEs	38	53.5	18	13.5	9	16.4
Total	**71**		**133**		**55**	

a χ^2 (df = 9) = 34.94, p < .0001
b χ^2 (df = 6) = 48.61, p < .0001

FTES BY AUSPICE

Generally, FTEs were higher at public institutions than private institutions; see Table 12. Private institutions were more likely to report FTEs of fewer than 1.5 for faculty/staff members assigned to any field education functions. Public institutions were more likely to report 2.5 or FTEs for faculty/staff assigned to any field education functions. Private institutions were more likely to report fewer than 1.5 FTEs for faculty/staff members who placed students in agencies. Public institutions were more likely to report more than 1.5 FTEs for faculty/staff members who placed students in agencies.

Table 12. Full-Time Equivalents of Field Staff by Auspice

Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	Public		Private	
	Number	%	Number	%
Faculty/Staff Assigned to Any Field Education Functions[a]				
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	31	23.5	57	44.5
1.5–2.4 FTEs	24	18.2	26	20.3
2.5–5.4 FTEs	39	29.5	21	16.4
5.5 or more FTEs	38	28.8	24	18.8
Total	**132**		**128**	
Faculty/Staff Who Place Students in Agencies[b]				
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	59	44.0	83	65.4
1.5–2.4 FTEs	35	26.1	19	15.0
2.5–5.4 FTEs	40	29.9	25	19.7
Total	**134**		**127**	

a χ^2 (df = 3) = 16.27, p < .001
b χ^2 (df = 2) = 12.19, p < .002

SPECIAL NOTE ON STAFFING OF FIELD FUNCTIONS

Survey participants were also asked what an adequate number of FTEs assigned to the field office for timely and effective placements would be for their program. The median response for BSW programs was 1.5 FTEs, or .5 more than the median results for what was currently assigned across respondents' programs. The median response for MSW programs was 3.0, or 1.5 more than the median results for what was currently assigned across respondents' programs. See page 13 in the 2015 executive summary for more on this subject.

FTES BY NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Not surprisingly, smaller programs reported fewer field staff members assigned to any field education functions, including placing students in agencies; see Table 13.

Table 13. Full-Time Equivalents of Field Staff Members by Number of Students (Across Program Level and Enrollment Status)

Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	Fewer Than 100		100–249		250 or More	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Faculty/Staff Members Assigned to any Field Education Functions[a]						
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	58	59.2	22	28.9	6	8.3
1.5–2.4 FTEs	21	21.4	17	22.4	6	8.3
2.5–5.4 FTEs	9	9.2	27	35.5	19	26.4
5.5 or more FTEs	10	10.2	10	13.2	41	56.9
Total	**98**		**76**		**72**	
Faculty/Staff Members Who Place Students in Agencies[b]						
Fewer than 1.5 FTE	78	80.4	45	59.2	9	12.5
1.5–2.4 FTEs	12	12.4	19	25.0	18	25.0
2.5 or more FTEs	7	7.2	12	15.8	45	62.5
Total	**97**		**76**		**72**	

a χ^2 (df = 6) = 93.65, p < .0001
b χ^2 (df = 4) = 93.48, p < .0001

Perspectives and Experiences of Field Directors/Coordinators

Survey respondents were also asked to indicate on a 6-point Likert-style scale ("*strongly agree,*" "*agree,*" "*somewhat agree,*" "*strongly disagree,*" "*disagree,*" or "*somewhat disagree*") their level of agreement with a series of 25 statements about their experiences as administrators of the functions of field education. For ease of presentation later in this section, those items have been separated by general topic area: field education resources, including staffing and time; the process of finding and establishing field placements; student preparation and safety; and agency/placement partnerships. Also, to assist with review and interpretation, only the combined categories of "*agree*" and "*strongly agree*" and "*disagree*" and "*strongly disagree*" appear in the tables that follow. However, in the text that follows, the reader will find references that include "*somewhat agree*" or "*somewhat disagree*" responses for selected statements and where relevant.

Table 14 includes all items, categories of responses, and item response rates. Further analyses of topic areas follow the full table presentation.

Table 14. Field Director/Coordinator Perceptions on Field Education Resources and Staff

Statement	Combined *Disagree & Strongly Disagree* (%)	*Somewhat Disagree* (%)	*Somewhat Agree* (%)	Combined *Agree & Strongly Agree* (%)	Number of Responses
Field education receives adequate resources overall, including staffing, financial resources, technology, & technical support, for its programs & operations at my institution.	29.3	10.0	18.9	41.8	249
Field education staffing levels in my school/program are adequate to address fully the responsibilities of overseeing field education.	27.4	14.1	19.7	39.0	249
Having enough appropriate placements for the number of students admitted to this social work program is a significant ongoing challenge.	17.5	10.2	22.0	50.4	246
Pressures to increase student enrollment at my institution have affected the field education process, including identifying & providing appropriate placements for students.	30.9	14.2	24.2	30.8	240
Because of large numbers of students, it is sometimes necessary to place students in field education settings that we would otherwise not choose to use.	39.3	17.6	19.7	23.4	239
The field team has adequate staffing resources to ensure that placements provide the full range of expected learning activities & experiences.	17.2	17.6	22.0	43.2	245
The region where we place students has adequate placement opportunities to provide the full range of expected learning activities & experiences.	10.2	12.7	29.0	48.2	245
Locating appropriate placements based on the range of skills & preparation of students admitted to this institution is very time-consuming.	7.5	3.3	15.8	73.4	241

(continued)

Table 14 (continued)

Statement	Combined Disagree & Strongly Disagree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Combined Agree & Strongly Agree (%)	Number of Responses
Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator & field staff, locating appropriate placements regularly results in work performed for the functioning of the field office by the director/coordinator well beyond the recognized work hours of the day, week, month, or year.	11.5	9.1	14.4	65.0	243
Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator & field staff, it is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed.	9.4	10.6	20.7	59.3	246
Out of necessity, the field team often uses non-MSW supervisors to supervise students in field education.	29.4	16.4	21.0	33.1	238
Most community agencies are committed to providing quality field instruction on an ongoing basis.	2.4	4.9	23.3	69.3	245
Field education opportunities depend heavily on the willingness of agencies & their social workers to provide voluntarily field instruction	1.7	0.4	3.3	94.6	239
At my school/program, the number of students admitted is considered in relation to the number of field education opportunities typically available for students in a given year in this geographic area.	59.5	15.6	9.3	15.6	237
Student performance problems in field education are treated very similarly to classroom performance problems in my program's retention & advancement policies & practices.	11.2	12.9	22.0	54.0	241
Student performance problems, in both classroom & field, are addressed at my institution to the degree commensurate with the circumstances presented by the student.	5.1	5.5	17.8	71.6	236
It is difficult to cultivate new field placement opportunities because of the range of responsibilities assigned to/expected of the director/coordinator of field education.	27.2	21.5	20.7	30.6	242
It is difficult to cultivate new field placement opportunities because of the complexity of students' needs & requests related to field education, often necessitating the design of unique & individualized placement experiences.	23.7	24.9	21.6	29.8	245
Student safety is addressed to a sufficient degree.	3.3	11.2	21.1	64.5	242
Within the past 5 years, it seems that agencies have been struggling to provide field instruction, as agency budgets have been cut & staff positions lost.	11.7	9.2	24.7	54.4	239
Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common.	20.0	16.7	22.1	41.2	240
Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common.	29.3	19.1	25.8	25.8	236
My school/program is developing partnerships with community agencies to enhance collaboration in field education from year to year.	4.2	2.9	16.2	76.7	241
My school/program enjoys strong support from community agencies for many or most aspects of field education.	0.8	1.3	12.8	85.1	235
Institutional priorities provide incentives for full-time, tenure track teaching & research faculty members (beyond those already assigned to field education functions) to participate in field education functions.	64.1	16.1	9.9	9.8	223

FIELD EDUCATION RESOURCES, INCLUDING TIME AND PERSONNEL

There was moderate agreement for the items related to overall resources and staffing in the field office (items a–c in Table 15). That is, roughly 40% thought resources were adequate to fulfill field office functions. However, strongest agreement was expressed related to the statement, "it is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed" (59.3% agreed or strongly agreed).

Table 15. Field Director/Coordinator Perspectives on Field Education Resources and Staff

Statement	Disagree & Strongly Disagree (%)	Agree & Strongly Agree (%)
a) Field education receives adequate resources overall, including staffing, financial resources, technology, & technical support, for its programs & operations at my institution.	29.3	41.8
b) Field education staffing levels in my school/program are adequate to address fully the responsibilities of overseeing field education.	27.4	39.0
c) The field team has adequate staffing resources to ensure that placements provide the full range of expected learning activities & experiences.	17.2	43.2
d) Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator & field staff, it is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed.	9.4	59.3
e) Locating appropriate placements based on the range of skills & preparation of students admitted to this institution is very time-consuming.	7.5	73.4
f) Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator & field staff, locating appropriate placements regularly results in work performed for the functioning of the field office by the director/coordinator well beyond the recognized work hours of the day, week, month, or year.	11.5	65.0
g) Institutional priorities provide incentives for full-time, tenure track teaching & research faculty members (beyond those already assigned to field education functions) to participate in field education functions.	64.1	9.8

Although these findings may at first seem contradictory, the three statements focusing on staffing may have been interpreted to mean whether field activities can be completed with the resources committed to field education, whereas the fourth and fifth may have been interpreted to assess the level of difficulty experienced.

A final item on resources addressed incentivizing tenure track teaching and research faculty members to participate in field education. Most respondents disagreed (64.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed) that their institutions provided incentives for tenure track teaching and/or research faculty members to be involved in field education.

HIGHLIGHTS OF RESPONSES RELATED TO TIME LIMITATIONS FOR FIELD DIRECTORS/COORDINATORS AND FIELD STAFF, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE

Approximately 60% of respondents agreed at some level (*strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree*) that resources and staffing levels were adequate, whereas approximately 40% disagreed at some level with these statements regarding adequate levels of resources and staffing (see the first two statements on page 19).

- 79.4% of the respondents, or nearly three-fourths, strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed with the statement: "Given the range of expectations for the field director/ coordinator & field staff, locating appropriate placements regularly results in work performed for the functioning of the field office by the director/coordinator well beyond the recognized work hours of the day, week, month, or year"

- 89.2%, or the majority of respondents, agreed with the statement: "Locating appropriate placements based on the range of skills & preparation of students admitted to this institution is very time-consuming"

- 59.3% agree or strongly agree that it is difficult to find time to do everything needed. This figure increased to 80% when the "*Somewhat Agree*" category was included.

- 55% somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed that enrollment pressures affected the field education process, including identifying and providing appropriate placements.

- 51.4% agreed that it was difficult to cultivate new field placement opportunities because of the complexity of students' needs and requests for field placements.

MORE ON FINDING AND ESTABLISHING FIELD PLACEMENTS

Building on Items e and f in Table 15, eight additional statements focused on identifying, establishing, and matching students with field placements. Recall that the majority of respondents (65%) agreed that, given the range of expectations of the office of field education, finding appropriate placements requires time beyond the recognized work hours of the day, week, month, and year. Also of note, many respondents (59.5%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the number of students admitted to the program was influenced by the number of available placements in the geographic area (Item f in Table 16). However, only 30.8% agreed that pressures to increase enrollment have affected the field education process (Item b in Table 16). About half (50.4%) of respondents reported that having enough appropriate placements is a significant and ongoing challenge. More than 23% agreed or strongly agreed that because of large numbers of students it is sometimes necessary to place students in settings they would not otherwise choose (Item c in Table 16).

Table 16: Perspectives on Finding Field Placements

Statement	Disagree & Strongly Disagree (%)	Agree & Strongly Agree (%)
a) Having enough appropriate placements for the number of students admitted to this social work program is a significant, ongoing challenge.	17.5	50.4
b) Pressures to increase student enrollment at my institution have affected the field education process, including identifying & providing appropriate placements for students.	30.9	30.8
c) Because of large numbers of students, it is sometimes necessary to place students in field education settings that we would otherwise not choose to use.	39.3	23.4
d) The region where we place students has adequate placement opportunities to provide the full range of expected learning activities & experiences.	10.2	48.2
e) Out of necessity, the field team often utilizes non-MSW supervisors to supervise students in field education.	29.4	33.1
f) At my school/program, the number of students admitted is considered in relation to the number of field education opportunities typically available for students in a given year in this geographic area.	59.5	15.6
g. It is difficult to cultivate new field placement opportunities because of the range of responsibilities assigned to/expected of the director/coordinator of field education.	27.2	30.6
h. It is difficult to cultivate new field placement opportunities because of the complexity of students' needs & requests related to field education, often necessitating the design of unique & individualized placement experiences.	23.7	29.8

In summary, respondents reported that finding enough and appropriate placements for students is an ongoing challenge. The work of finding and establishing placements often extends the work of field directors/coordinators and staff beyond typical workday hours.

ISSUES OF STUDENTS IN FIELD

Four items primarily addressed issues with students in the field; see Table 17. The majority of respondents (71.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that student performance problems in classroom and field are appropriately addressed (Item b). The majority of respondents also agreed that student safety is addressed sufficiently (64.5% agreed/strongly agreed; Item c). An additional section of the survey specifically addressed how safety is covered in the field program; see p. 21 (Table 25) in the previously published executive summary for more details.

Table 17: Perspectives on Students

Statement	Disagree & Strongly Disagree (%)	Agree & Strongly Agree (%)
a) Student performance problems in field education are treated very similarly to classroom performance problems in my program's retention & advancement policies & practices.	11.2	54.0
b) Student performance problems, in both classroom & field, are addressed at my institution to the degree commensurate with the circumstances presented by the student.	5.1	71.6
c) Student safety is addressed to a sufficient degree.	3.3	64.5
d) Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common.	29.3	25.8

AGENCIES AND FIELD INSTRUCTORS

By far the highest levels of agreement were for the items related to relationships with and challenges faced by field agencies and field instructors, with 94.6% agreeing/strongly agreeing that field education is heavily dependent on the willingness of agencies to provide voluntary field instruction (see Table 18, Item a). Respondents also generally reported that their programs had support from community agencies for field education (Table 18, Item f, 85.1%) and that agencies were committed to providing quality field instruction (Table 18, Item b, 69.3%). Items c and d in Table 18 relate to the impact of agency budgets on field education; a little over half of respondents (54.4%) reported it seems that agencies have been struggling to provide field instruction, but fewer agreed that budget issues have led to placement disruptions (41.2% agreed/strongly agreed), and 20% disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement.

Table 18: Perspectives on Agencies and Field Instructors

Statement	Disagree & Strongly Disagree (%)	Agree & Strongly Agree (%)
a) Field education opportunities depend heavily on the willingness of agencies & their social workers to provide voluntarily field instruction.	1.7	94.6
b) Most community agencies are committed to providing quality field instruction on an ongoing basis.	2.4	69.3
c) In the past 5 years, it seems that agencies have been struggling to provide field instruction, because agency budgets have been cut & staff positions lost.	11.7	54.4
d) In the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common.	20.0	41.2
e) My school/program is developing partnerships with community agencies to enhance collaboration in field education from year to year.	4.2	76.7
f) My school/program enjoys strong support from community agencies for many or most aspects of field education.	0.8	85.1

The final two statements in Table 18 show how programs in social work are engaged in building relationships and partnerships with the range of agencies in the social service environment.

The Perspectives of Field Directors/Coordinators Analyzed With Additional Variables

As previously noted, respondents were presented with several statements regarding matters related to field education, including resources and leadership opportunities, to which they were asked to respond on a six-point scale. Responses to the series of statements about these aspects of field education were analyzed further by each of the following variables: annual salary, number in full-time core field team, number of students placed in BSW and MSW programs, number of staff members engaged in placing students, and full-time equivalency of the field office staff. The results are presented in the following sections.

ANNUAL SALARY

- Survey respondents with annual salaries less than $50,000 were more likely to agree/ strongly agree with the statement, "Field education receives adequate resources overall, including staffing, financial resources, technology, and technical support, for its programs and operations at my institution."

- Respondents with annual salaries less than $50,000 were more likely to strongly agree with the statement, "Field education staffing levels in my school/program are adequate to address fully the responsibilities of overseeing field education." Respondents with annual salaries of $70,000 or higher were more likely to disagree/strongly disagree with the statement.

- Respondents with annual salaries of $70,000 or higher were more likely to agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Locating appropriate placements based on the range of skills and preparation of students admitted to this institution is very time-consuming."

- Agreement with the statement "Given the range of expectations for the field director/ coordinator and field staff, locating appropriate placements regularly results in work performed for the functioning of the field office by the director/coordinator well beyond the recognized work hours of the day, week, month, or year" was associated with higher salaries. This same relationship was found for the following statements:

  - "Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator and field staff, it is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed"

  - "In the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common."

  - "In the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common."

FULL-TIME CORE FIELD TEAM

- Survey respondents with a full-time core team of four or more were more likely to strongly agree with the statement, "Having enough appropriate placements for the number of students admitted to this social work program is a significant, ongoing challenge."

- There was also a positive relationship between a larger full-time core field team and agreement with the following statements about placement activities:

  - "Pressures to increase student enrollment at my institution have affected the field education process, including identifying and providing appropriate placements for students" was associated with increasing size of the full-time core team.

  - "Because of large numbers of students, it is sometimes necessary to place students in field education settings that we would otherwise not choose to use."

  - "Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator and field staff, it is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed."

  - "It is difficult to cultivate new field placement opportunities because of the complexity of students' needs and requests related to field education, often necessitating the design of unique and individualized placement experiences."

  - "In the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common."

  - "In the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common."

- Survey respondents at programs with no administrative assistant or office professional assigned to field education functions were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the statement, "Out of necessity, the field team often utilizes non-MSW supervisors to supervise students in field education."

NUMBER OF BSW STUDENTS PLACED IN FIELD AGENCIES

- Survey respondents placing 35 or fewer BSW students were more likely to agree with the statement, "Field education receives adequate resources overall, including staffing, financial resources, technology, and technical support, for its programs and operations at my institution."

- This same relationship was found for the statement, "Field education staffing levels in my school/program are adequate to address fully the responsibilities of overseeing field education."

- Respondents placing 66 or more BSW students were more likely to agree with statement, "Having enough appropriate placements for the number of students admitted to this social work program is a significant, ongoing challenge." This same relationship was found for the following statements:

  - "Pressures to increase student enrollment at my institution have affected the field education process, including identifying and providing appropriate placements for students."

  - "Because of large numbers of students, it is sometimes necessary to place students in field education settings that we would otherwise not choose to use."

- As the number of BSW students being placed decreased, there was increasing agreement with the statement, "The field team has adequate staffing resources to ensure that placements provide the full range of expected learning activities and experiences." This same relationship was found for the statement, "Student performance problems in field education are treated very similarly to classroom performance problems in my program's retention and advancement policies and practices."

- As the number of BSW students being placed increased, there was increasing agreement with the statement, "Locating appropriate placements based on the range of skills and preparation of students admitted to this institution is very time-consuming." This same relationship was found for the following statements:

  - "Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator and field staff, it is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed."

  - "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common."

  - "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common."

NUMBER OF MSW STUDENTS PLACED IN FIELD AGENCIES

- Survey respondents who reported placing 115 or more MSW students were more likely to strongly agree with the statement, "Having enough appropriate placements for the number of students admitted to this social work program is a significant ongoing challenge."

- Increasing number of MSW students placed in agencies was associated with more agreement with the statement, "Pressures to increase student enrollment at my institution have affected the field education process, including identifying and providing appropriate placements for students." This same relationship was found for the following statements.

  - "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common."

- "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common."

- Greater agreement with the statement, "My school/program enjoys strong support from community agencies for many or most aspects of field education" was associated with fewer reported MSW students placed.

NUMBER OF FIELD TEAM MEMBERS PLACING STUDENTS IN AGENCIES

- Survey respondents reporting two or more field team members placing students in agencies were more likely to express agreement with the statement "Pressures to increase student enrollment at my institution have affected the field education process, including identifying and providing appropriate placements for students." This same relationship of increasing agreement was found for the following statements when two or more field team members were reported placing students:

  - "Because of large numbers of students, it is sometimes necessary to place students in field education settings that we would otherwise not choose to use."

  - "Locating appropriate placements based on the range of skills and preparation of students admitted to this institution is very time-consuming."

  - "Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator and field staff, it is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed."

  - "Within the past 5 years, it seems that agencies have been struggling to provide field instruction, as agency budgets have been cut and staff positions lost."

  - "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common."

  - "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common."

PERSPECTIVES OF FIELD DIRECTORS/COORDINATORS BY FTE

- Survey respondents reporting FTEs of 2.5 or higher were more likely to agree/strongly agree with the statement "Field education staffing levels in my school/program are adequate to address fully the responsibilities of overseeing field education."

- Respondents reporting FTEs of 2.5 or more were more likely to agree/strongly agree with the statement "Having enough appropriate placements for the number of students admitted to this social work program is a significant ongoing challenge."

- Agreement with the statement "Pressures to increase student enrollment at my institution have affected the field education process, including identifying and providing appropriate placements for students" was associated with increasing FTE. This same relationship was found for the following statements:

  - "Because of large numbers of students, it is sometimes necessary to place students in field education settings that we would otherwise not choose to use."

  - "It is difficult to cultivate new field placement opportunities because of the complexity of students' needs and requests related to field education, often necessitating the design of unique and individualized placement experiences."

  - "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to changes in agency staffing or funding have become more common."

  - "Within the past 5 years, placement disruptions due to lack of student readiness and/or student difficulties have become more common."

Field Director/Coordinator Tasks and Participation in Program Level Committees: *Potential Settings for Leadership*

Survey respondents were asked to select which tasks they were expected to complete from among a list of 39 activities. The full table of responses can be found in the Appendix. Using a conceptual model created by Wertheimer and Sodhi (2014) as a guide, activities that suggested participation and potential for leadership at the curricular, programmatic, and institutional levels were identified. Field director/coordinator responses to these are reported below.

- Participation in social work program committees: **77.9%**

- Participation in curriculum committee: **70.8%**

- Participation in admissions processes: **64.4%**

- Serving on management/leadership team: **50.6%**

- Participating in outcomes assessments: **74.4%**

- Participating in technology development and data management systems: **49.7%**

The responses above make clear that a notable minority of field directors/coordinators are not represented on program level committees. For example, almost 30% of respondents do not participate on curriculum committees at their programs. Only about half of respondents (50.6%) report serving on management or leadership teams. Fewer than half of field directors/coordinators are involved in technology development and data management systems. Whether lack of participation on these committees has implications for the position of director or coordinator of field education programs or for social work programs as a whole should be further examined. When there is a lack of participation, it may result in a lack of adequate resources and leadership opportunities. That is, the absence of settings in which directors of field education may advocate for resources for the functions they oversee may further result in inadequate resources and limited leadership opportunities.

General Comments From Participants:
More on Time as a Resource and Leadership Opportunities

In an open-ended response section, survey respondents were given the opportunity to offer additional comments. Of note is the number of comments related to challenges associated with placement and managing additional aspects of field education. Concern regarding resources is also apparent. Sample comments are provided below. These comments elaborate on many perception statements in the previous section, especially those related to time: "Locating appropriate placement based on the range of skills & preparation of students admitted to this institution is very time-consuming" and "Given the range of expectations for the field director/coordinator & field staff, locating appropriate placements regularly results in work performed for the functioning of the field office by the director/coordinator well beyond the recognized work hours of the week, month, or year."

TIME AS RESOURCE

- "It is difficult to find the time to do everything that is needed."

- "Staffing resources have not kept pace with increasing student enrollment; some field education programs have seen their staffing resources reduced."

- "If field education is the signature pedagogy in social work education as stated in EP 2.2 of the 2015 EPAS, survey respondents want to see it valued at least on an equal basis as classroom education and staffed by field education faculty, not supplemental non-faculty personnel."

- "The range of responsibilities keeps me from fully engaging in parts of the job."

- "Field [directors] are too preoccupied with fulfilling their work duties to have the opportunity to improve professional skills."

- "This job is labor- and time-sensitive."

- "There is a lot to do."

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Field director/coordinators responses in the comments section of the survey reflective of management participation and leadership were also identified. Comments suggest that competing demands on field directors/coordinators interfere with their ability to participate at the programmatic and institutional levels. A frequently mentioned concern was the inability of field directors/coordinators to attend CSWE's Annual Program Meeting. Sample comments are provided below. Generally, a number of participants indicated that CSWE should take an active

role in supporting directors of field education, including in participation at APM and setting standards for the functioning and management of field education components.

- "Field education staff at smaller social work programs do not have resources to attend CSWE, field conferences, and workshops."

- "Our university does not have the means to send faculty or field director to conferences to communicate with other faculty about new approaches to field."

- "Field requires adequate staffing and other resources to operate effectively. It appears that some universities need to be educated on the importance of field, as some of the problems with resources may stem from a lack of understanding on the part of university administrators."

- "I think that it would be important for CSWE to provide opportunities for small programs to attend CSWE field conferences to gain support and ideas regarding how to best structure field programs. This is particularly important for small programs that are faced with limitations that result from being placed in non–social work departments where the level of understanding regarding program requirements is limited."

- "I believe that Field Education will only be better resourced when required by CSWE. Field education is the place where students have contact with vulnerable populations and often experience triggering of their own issues. I believe it is a place for greater care which requires more staffing. While field education is the signature pedagogy it seems to be considered less than rather than equal to classroom education."

Themes From the Survey

Drawing from the wide range of responses to the 2015 State of Field Education Survey, two overarching themes emerged: the need for resources, particularly personnel, and the need for participation in leadership and decision-making opportunities that affect students' acquisition of competencies and their experiences in field and in the program.

Many field directors/coordinators thought that resources, including time, were inadequate at their institutions to fully address the needs and demands of field education in the current environment. In addition, many felt excluded from leadership roles and decision-making in their programs. However, there were exceptions to these sentiments. Notable percentages of respondents indicated they were effectively resourced and included in leadership and decision making at their institutions. As noted in the analyses, the size of the program and whether the participant represented an undergraduate or graduate program appeared to influence responses to the questions and opinion perceptions sections.

If institutions were to consider carefully and evaluate the resources afforded to field education, as well as the integration of field within the curriculum, and how the needs of the practice environment are reflected in both, the tenets of field education as signature pedagogy would likely become more fully realized. Similarly, clearly identifying the director or coordinator of field education as a member of the program's management team, with influence on decision-making, would strengthen the role of field education in the curriculum and in the functioning of the program. Taken together, these two practices—assessing resources and recognizing the valuable management role of directors/coordinators of field education—if effectively employed and institutionalized, could strengthen the overall educative potential of programs and increase the competency achievement of students. This is because students' educational needs would be better met. In addition, creating or developing a well-resourced field education program that also extends to field education a larger voice in decision making may open possibilities for field directors/coordinators and field staff and faculty to contribute in areas such as program development and research, including field education research. Following the philosophy of signature pedagogy, field is where students become acculturated to the profession on several levels. In fact, field education is often viewed as an area of social work education needing an increased research focus (Wayne, Raskin, & Bogo, 2010).

It is interesting to note that a strong trend emerged from the findings regarding resources and other variables that characterize the institutions in which field directors/coordinators work.
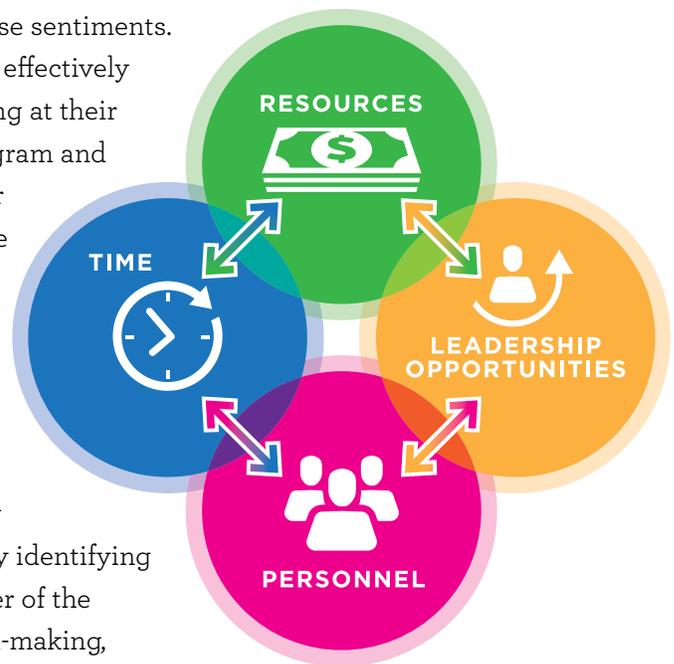
Field directors/coordinators with more staff and resources, including higher pay, and with larger numbers of students, reported greater agreement with perception statements indicating a lack of resources, including time to accomplish all that is needed in the role.

The authors were compelled to ask, in many cases, why more resources should not provide greater ability to execute the requirements of the position and the functioning of the office. Further analysis led the authors and the members of the Survey Work Group to posit the concept of "complexity breeds complexity." Thus, could it be that increased numbers of students and the situations and characteristics they present require greater attention to detail, more time in identifying and developing effective placements for individuals and unique situations, more need for problem-solving at all stages of the placement process, and greater monitoring of students, supervisors, and agencies, as well as greater consultation with faculty, field faculty, and administration? Increased numbers of students may bring an exponential increase in the field director's/coordinator's responsibilities in all administrative functions, thereby increasing the possibility of increased stress and need for attention to detail, as well as vulnerability to criticism. This proposition appears congruent with the findings of Buck, Bradley, Robb, & Kirzner's (2012) qualitative study on complexity and competing demands and the need for managing demands, and Dalton, Stevens, & Mass-Brady's (2009) finding that the existence of better staffed offices of field education did not correlate with those offices' field directors' perceptions of greater institutional support. The authors of this report have developed an informal formula based on the complexity-breeds-complexity concept. This formula proposes that the need for more time in executing the functions of the office of field education—because of the complexity and detail encountered with broad ranges of students, with differing readiness and skills, as well as a range of constituencies, including unique personal and professional situations—quite logically increases the need for more staff to address these in educationally and organizationally sound ways. Thus, complexity breeds complexity and brings the need for more attention to detail and unique-nesses which in turn requires more time, staff and, resources.

FIELD SUMMIT THEMES CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO SURVEY FINDINGS

As noted earlier in this report, in 2014 CSWE hosted a Field Education Summit during the Annual Program Meeting. The Summit was one part of an "initiative to improve the quality of field education, expand the capacity for exemplary sites, and enhance training and resources for field educators to ensure students develop into competent social work professionals" (CSWE, 2015b, p. 3). Summit participants included field directors, deans and program directors, and practitioners. Although the availability of resources did not emerge from the Summit as a specific theme, it underlies all the topic areas and themes that emerged from the Summit.

The original four topic areas assigned to participants follow, along with the six themes that emerged from the group process employed by group facilitators in the 2014 Field Summit (CSWE, 2015b, p. 5):

Four Topic Areas for Discussion in Groups

- Economic Trends and Pressures

- Imbalance Between Supply and Demand of Field Sites

- Diverse and Complex Student Needs

- Recruiting and Maintaining High-Quality Field Education Sites and Instructors

Six Themes Drawn From the Summit Process

- Expand Collaboration in and Among Social Work Programs, Agencies, and Field

- Enhance Communication and Collaboration in Schools of Social Work

- Establish New Field Placement Sites and New Models for Field Education, Including Nontraditional Opportunities

- Develop a Process That Ensures Students Are Prepared to Successfully Engage in Social Work Field Education

- Develop Guidelines That Define Quality Field Education Experiences

- Identify and Seek New Funding Sources to Expand Field Experiences

A macro interpretation of the six themes that emerged from the four work groups is that pursuing and instituting the ideas embedded in and constituting the themes, including seeking new funding and establishing new field placement sites and models, as two notable examples, involves expending time and resources. One might suppose that this includes the time of personnel already engaged with other duties. We know from this survey of field directors on administrative models, staffing, and resources that time and resources are limited for significant numbers of people in offices of field education-who are likely the individuals who would execute these new responsibilities. Although the themes from the Summit offer valuable ideas for how field education can expand its scope and become even more effective in realizing the goals of field education, administrators and faculty members of social work programs, as well as CSWE, will need to grapple with the underlying and unavoidably integral factor of the available resources that can be brought to bear on field education and its functions, including staffing.

It is hoped that the results of the 2015 State of Field Education Survey on administrative models, staffing, and resources will encourage: further research on the topic; institutional self-review specifically related to field education functions and potential; greater awareness in the social work education community of the challenges and successes of field education; policy development at the institutional and national levels; and greater consonance, overall, with the concept of field education as signature pedagogy. The future of field education and social work education demands that we take field education seriously and plan for change.

Recommendations

T
he 2015 State of Field Education Survey helped shed light on the structure of field education offices, staffing, resources, and the field education director position and perceptions of the role. This seminal survey helped us understand the strengths and needs in field education, but more work is needed. Based on the survey findings and discussion with COFE, the following recommendations are suggested by the COFE research committee for social work educators to consider:

- Examine program structures and models of staffing that best support student learning and competency development and that best support the involvement of community partners. New models may emerge and be tested.

- Examine program structures and models of staffing that facilitate the integration of field within their respective programs. Again, new models may emerge and be tested.

- Identify and promote mechanisms for leadership development for field faculty and staff members, including participation in CSWE's Annual Program Meeting and participation in regional and program level committees to share challenges, identify resources needed, explore new models, and develop knowledge about best practices.

- Address the need for field education to support the diversity and complexity of student needs by developing departmental policies and practices that recognize the need for and support adequate resources for the office of field education.

- Advocate for accreditation standards that mandate effective levels of resources for field education that consider the increased complexity of students' needs and the changed and changing practice environment, including staffing, time, and technology—in advance of EPAS 2022 and beyond.

- Further explore the relationship between larger program size and the increased concern among directors of those programs about lack of adequate time and staffing to achieve effective results.

- Conduct research and analyses of social work programs and the integration of the field education component of the curriculum in those programs.

Implementing these recommendations will take the commitment of field directors, field faculty and staff, deans and program directors, and faculty members, as well as CSWE and COFE. Such institutional self-review and research on field education may lead to policy development not only at the program or institutional level but also at the national level. Indeed, the CSWE Commission on Accreditation and Commission on Educational Policy is beginning work on reviewing the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards in advance of the 2022 revision as this report is being published. The findings presented here and in the executive summary may be helpful

to their work. Clearly, more information is needed to navigate and direct field education in the current environment and into the future. We must consider that students of the future will continue to present opportunities and significant challenges as they seek to fulfill field education expectations and become competent, effective, and contributory professional social workers.

An important recommendation that may be drawn from these findings, which were clearly not unilateral in direction, is that social work education programs would do well to review the opportunities field directors/coordinators and field staff, including field faculty members, have to share in decision-making, particularly participation in deliberations and decision-making related to resources (time, staffing, and technology), admissions, and the curriculum.

Field directors/coordinators, field staff, and field faculty members may be in the best position to carefully consider the current state of field education at their own institutions and in their own regions and make recommendations that can ensure the quality of the field component of social work education. Movement in this direction will, the authors believe, result in the enrichment of the lives of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities and better meet the service demands of an ever-changing nation and world. A better resourced field education office will help institutions realize the larger mission of social work through effective education. Field directors/coordinators and teams must be afforded the appropriate resources, including staffing, time, and technology, as well as input into decision-making, to make effective education a reality. Field directors must also be recognized as the leaders they are in the academic enterprise—those who identify and help shape the settings where students engage in the signature pedagogy of social work and who bring the truths of real-world practice to the academy.

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Appendix : Activities Expected by Field Team

Activity	Field Director/ Coordinator		Other Field Faculty or Professional/ Admin Staff	
	Number	%	Number	%
Placing students with agencies	255	81.7	84	26.9
Re-placing students	253	81.1	81	26.0
Developing new placements	261	83.7	81	26.0
Outreach to agencies	259	83.0	105	33.7
Trouble-shooting or resolution creation	263	84.3	140	44.9
Teaching field education seminars	210	67.3	126	40.4
Teaching social work courses other than field education	193	61.9	92	29.5
Orientation & training for agency field instructors	259	83.0	93	29.8
Recruitment of field liaisons	133	42.6	29	9.3
Orientation, supervision, & evaluation of field liaisons	177	56.7	37	11.9
Consultation with field liaisons about problems	192	61.5	80	25.6
Evaluation of field education programs & activities	249	79.8	62	19.9
Student orientations	250	80.1	96	30.8
Participation on social work program committees	243	77.9	113	36.2
Participation on social work program curriculum committee	221	70.8	74	23.7
Participation on college/university committee(s)	209	67.0	72	23.1
Participation in student retention processes	174	55.8	64	20.5
Participation in admissions processes	201	64.4	83	26.6
Administration of field education awards	143	45.8	36	11.5
Planning continuing education events for field instructors, field liaisons, &/or social work professionals	206	66.0	58	18.6
Creating/editing school documents	222	71.2	48	15.4
Scholarly research, publications, & presentations	142	45.5	54	17.3
Serving as field liaison	190	60.9	127	40.7
Submitting practicum grades	219	70.2	111	35.6
Advising students on field education-related matters	257	82.4	125	40.1
Advising prospective students on field education-related matters	253	81.1	78	25.0

(continued)

Activities Expected by Field Team (continued)

Activity	Field Director/ Coordinator		Other Field Faculty or Professional/ Admin Staff	
	Number	%	Number	%
Advising students on course selection, degree requirements, &/or career planning	210	67.3	83	26.6
Assisting with development of atypical course & field education schedules due to transfer credits or leaves of absence	175	56.1	41	13.1
Developing policies & procedures to guide employment-based field practicum	221	70.8	30	9.6
Serving on management/leadership team	158	50.6	30	9.6
Overseeing contracts	188	60.3	27	8.7
Supervising field staff/faculty	160	51.3	27	8.7
Developing field manual	252	80.8	41	13.1