The Illinois Placement Plan is a block internship placement, a unique feature of our program. The internship is the cornerstone of social work education, and this structure allows our students to complete coursework prior to the start of the internship, thus offering the students full immersion into the field placement. This full immersion is a benefit both to the students’ learning as well as the continuity of service and impact the student can provide to the organization in which they are placed.
There are several levels of field experience at the University of Illinois School of Social Work. A MSW (clinical/macro) student may be in field for one to two semesters depending on their undergraduate degree, while a BSW (generalist) student will serve one semester. All students adhere to the Illinois Placement Plan, a modified block placement. Each semester of placement is comprised of 16 weeks, 30-32 hours a week while the Advanced Standing summer internship is 14 weeks, 40 hours/week.

The School offers a dedicated field education faculty that works closely with all students to help tailor the internship experience to each student’s particular interests and needs. Our field education faculty makes all introductions between agencies and students and helps to facilitate interview opportunities. Once an agency and student have come to an agreement, the field office provides ongoing support throughout the internship.

**Examples of possible MSW learning experiences:**
- Clinical assessments/evaluations
- Treatment planning
- Therapeutic intervention with individuals, groups and families
- Program development
- Networking with stakeholders and their organizations
- Community organizing

**Examples of possible BSW learning experiences:**
- Assessing a client or community’s needs
- Empowering clients, communities and systems of all sizes
- Contacting and utilizing community resources
- Crisis intervention and supportive counseling under the supervision of clinician
- Conducting interviews with individuals, families, and systems of all sizes
- Implementing and evaluating effectiveness of interventions and/or programs
- Keeping concise and accurate records
- Managing a workload/case manager

**WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO FOR YOU?**

_Both BSW and MSW interns bring a refreshed sense of enthusiasm to the office and the staff they are working with. Interns allow workers and supervisors an opportunity to share experience and knowledge with someone who is interested in pursuing this type of work. In return, workers and supervisors are reminded of the reasons we entered this field, taken back to the fundamentals of the work, which sometimes gets forgotten. As a team, we are processing what is reviewed, heard, observed and connecting that back to child welfare practice and policy._

Heidi J. Gulbrandson
CWS/CPS Supervisor
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

_“I see the University of Illinois School of Social Work as a valuable resource and member of the community.”_

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**STUDENTS SAY:**

“My internship provided me an experience of a lifetime. It taught me to understand that where you end up at the start of your social work career is exactly where you are meant to be. It was a foundation that facilitated vulnerability in which courage and strengths as a young clinician could be built.”

Megan Murphy, MSW ‘14

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**MORE QUESTIONS? VISIT US ONLINE:**

http://socialwork.illinois.edu/field-education/become-a-field-education-site

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Julie Pryde
Public Health Administrator
Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

Heidi J. Gulbrandson
CWS/CPS Supervisor
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