

# FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL



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## PREPARED BY THE FIELD TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

Lauren Beasley, PhD, MS, LMSW | Philip Breitenbucher, EdD, MSW | Warren Clark, MSW, LMSW  
Amy Cox, PhD, LMSW | Kimberly Gibson, LMSW | Michael Henry, MSW | Jerry Reynolds II, PhD, LSW  
Charlotte Warren, LCSW, LCA | Kiana Winston, LMSW

# INTRODUCTION

To continue to promote growth within the social work profession, schools of social work must provide updated, evidenced-based training and education in both the classroom and through field education. Social workers continue to develop new practice areas that effectively integrate the values and ethics of the profession, including Social Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Some of these practice areas include but are not limited to, visual and performing arts, use of social media, food security, environmental issues, law enforcement, and sports social work.

The Alliance of Social Workers in Sports (ASWIS) invites you to explore the possibilities of a sport social work field placement in your social work program. Our vision is to lead the integration of social work practice into all realms of sports with the goal of individual and community well-being. We believe this vision can be furthered with more social workers in sport-based practicums. Our goal is to provide social work programs guidance on how to expand sport social work field placements. This guide provides suggestions for approaching professional sport organizations, athletic departments, and community-based sport agencies, to establish field training that meet BSW and MSW degree requirements.

In 2020, while interning with ASWIS, a group of the University of Alabama MSW students created a field education manual. Due to the revisions of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2022), Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), the ASWIS Field Task Force Committee reconvened to update the field manual. The Field Task Force consisted of a variety of members ranging from academics, field instruction coordinators, and students.

This manual aims to provide information for schools of social work, agencies, and social work interns on how sport social work programs and learning plans can seamlessly integrate into the CSWE/EPAS 2022. Furthermore, each section of the manual has been written in language that can be directly shared with sport organizations if they have questions and/or concerns about hosting a social work intern. With these two purposes in mind, we hope this guide provides a useful starting point for establishing field training partnerships between schools of social work and sport organizations!

## THE ALLIANCE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN SPORTS

Established in 2015, ASWIS raises awareness of how social work practice can partner with and contribute to all levels and all segments of sports. Indeed, the sport social work field has a long history. Starting in the late 1800s, Jane Addams and colleagues recognized that sport-based activities were an important intervention to preserve childhood, encourage physical activity and play, and promote cross-cultural interactions (Reynolds, 2017). Early sport social work education even offered elective courses that focused on training staff in recreation program planning, and field education opportunities and provided a certificate upon completion of the program.

In 1995, one of the most powerful social justice advocates of all time, Nelson Mandela, used the power of sport through rugby to unite individuals in the Apartheid era in South Africa. Mandela famously said, "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where there was once there was only despair. It is more powerful than the government in breaking down racial barriers." (Fraser, 2021, para. 4). As sport social workers, we follow in the footsteps of Jane Addams and Nelson Mandela, always reminded of the importance, power, and effectiveness of using sport as an intervention to improve the quality of life for the millions who participate in organized sports and recreational activities.

The early 2000s saw a resurgence of interest among social workers about their role in athletic spaces. Several gatherings occurred on college campuses that supported the growth of the discipline. Programs that integrated sports and social work emerged including LifeSports, students and faculty at the University of Michigan and other colleges and universities across the US, hosted conferences dedicated to social work in sport. ASWIS grew out of a need to bring these many social work professionals together. As a result of these successful efforts to collaborate in raising awareness and providing education as to the effectiveness of using sports social work as an intervention, several schools of social work began to add sport social work training in the classroom and through sport-focused practicum opportunities.

ASWIS promotes social work from a sports perspective, grounded in social and economic justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion ((DEI), strengths-based approaches, and person-in-environment frameworks. ASWIS encourages the full range of social work practice in sports, from case management and clinical services to community outreach to advocacy and policy practice for every level and segment of sports. ASWIS finalized its incorporation in June 2016 and became an official 501(c)(3) in March 2017. The organization maintains an active and diverse membership of clinical professionals, community practitioners, researchers and scholars, students, and professionals from other disciplines equally committed to serving athletes and athletic communities. Members are primarily from the United States, yet increasingly from around the world. The organization is led by a membership-elected team and also maintains both a professional certificate program and advances scholarship through its academic journal, the Sport Social Work Journal.



## WHAT IS SOCIAL WORK IN SPORTS?

Sport Social Work is a subfield of social work that promotes social justice and social change by focusing on the unique needs of athletes at both an individual and environmental level. Sport social workers promote the health and well-being of athletes through direct practice, community organizing, advocacy, policy development, education, and research. Sport social workers use sports as an intervention to teach life skills to youth and seek to enhance the capabilities of athletes to address their behavioral health and psychosocial needs. They encourage athletes to be advocates for change and use sport as a platform to advance social change. They also encourage athletic organizations, communities, and other social institutions to recognize athletes at all levels as vulnerable populations and to join in the fight to reduce the challenges present in athletics. At the heart of these efforts is a focus on athlete development and wellness. A social worker achieves this focus through the competencies of the social work profession and adherence to the values and ethics of the social work profession (Moore & Gummelt, 2018).



### » MICRO

Social work in sports at a *micro* level involves providing interventions, support, and services directly to athletes, coaches, trainers, and other leaders in sports based on their unique needs and setting. The goals at a micro level would be to provide services **directly** to individuals or groups within a sports system that intersect with many of the same aspects of care (e.g., mental health, behavioral concerns, addiction, trauma, etc.) utilized by the general population but with the inclusion of the specific stressors and needs that are directly connected to the athletic population. Social workers can be employed either in case Management or supportive counseling/services roles. With advanced licensure and training, social workers can lead therapeutic alliances with athletes by providing clinical counseling, crisis management, and other mental health support. They may also facilitate various groups that offer support to athletes recovering from injury, build team dynamics, and promote mental well-being as examples.

### » MEZZO

Utilizing a *mezzo* approach to social work in sports, social workers focus on **implementing programs** and policies at the group, organizational, institutional, and community level that benefits and advocates for the positive promotion and overall well-being of athletes and others within the sports system. Such implementations can include services, resources, and/or practices that assist in creating positive change within the athletic community. In this context, social workers may serve as advisors or program directors of governing bodies of sport organizations at the youth, high school, collegiate and professional levels.

### » MACRO

Applying *macro* practice to social work in sports focuses on influencing and challenging **policies, cultures, and societies** to address issues of importance in the athletic community on a local, national, and even international front. Social work actions at this level include advocacy, organizing sports communities, or developing sport-specific programs and policies that assist to ensure social justice when addressing sports issues. Social workers can be seen in this context working with governing bodies of sport and also in advocacy/lobbying roles with organizations that support the advancement of advocacy for historically marginalized populations (e.g., LGBTQIA+) in sport. Social workers can also work in the sport for development/peace context.

## EXAMPLES OF TYPES OF SETTINGS

A variety of agencies and organizations can support a social work intern depending on the student's field of study (i.e., micro, macro, mezzo), and a particular area of interest. Some organizations can offer practicum opportunities in all three of these major fields of social work study.

**Micro:** high school, middle school, private practice, college counseling centers, college athletics counseling department, Department of Veterans Affairs, residential facilities for older adults, and counseling with youth participating in sport programs.

**Macro/Mezzo:** community recreation center, campus recreation center, local, state, or national sport organizations, high school, middle school, elementary school, healthcare settings, community senior center, assisted living facilities, agencies offering mental health services, Department of Veterans Affairs, rehabilitation sports such as Rock Steady Boxing for Parkinson's, organizations that support individuals with disabilities, youth sports clubs and community organizations.

## FIELD EDUCATION

As social work in sport is a newly rediscovered subspecialty of social work practice, imagining how social work students can use sports as a therapeutic intervention and meet CSWE competencies in sport-based field placements can be challenging. Therefore, the following sections provide specific examples of student tasks in a comprehensive example work plan. While all schools of social work train students in the areas of micro, mezzo, and macro practice, it is important to note that the exact definition of these areas may differ by institution. We have provided examples of micro, mezzo, and macro tasks based on our definitions of micro, mezzo, and macro practice in the above section.

Field Education is identified by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) as the signature pedagogy of social work (CSWE, 2022), and represents about 25% of the MSW training. The field education is guided by a core set of competencies designed to provide students with a wide range of learning opportunities to understand and learn what it means to be a professional social worker. "Social Work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being" (CSWE, 2022, p. 7). MSW programs are designed to ensure students' competence in the nine CSWE 2022 /EPAS. "Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, and in advanced practice and are followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components" (CSWE, 2022, p. 8). While all CSWE-accredited MSW and BSW schools are required to include standardized competencies in field education, schools can approach developing qualifying assignments and learning contracts that meet the requirements.

The following is a list of the MSW/BSW program, updated CSWE/EPAS as of 2022:

- **Competency 1:** Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
- **Competency 2:** Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- **Competency 3:** Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- **Competency 4:** Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice
- **Competency 5:** Engage in policy practice
- **Competency 6:** Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- **Competency 7:** Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- **Competency 8:** Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- **Competency 9:** Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

The following section provides a discussion of interprofessional practice in sport-based field education, followed by an example of a student work plan.



## **SOCIAL WORK AND THE INTERPROFESSIONAL TEAM IN SPORT**

As is expected in other subspecialties of the discipline, individuals who engage in sport-based field placements should expect to be members of an interdisciplinary team. As various members may work on the interprofessional team in sport settings, the social worker needs to have interprofessional cultural competence (Pecukonis et al., 2008). Thus, social workers and social work interns should educate themselves in the scope of practice of various disciplines they might be working with, including, but not limited to, athletic trainers, certified mental performance consultants (CMPCs), coaches, and academic counselors.

The 2022 EPAS published by CSWE also outlines the importance of using the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement, assessment, and intervention with clients. Further, the 2022 EPAS states specialized practitioners must use the knowledge and skills necessary for interprofessional collaborations. This also can occur at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Previous research has recommended parameters for sport-science-based professions to have beneficial experiences with interprofessional education. Learning opportunities for sport social workers should be intentional and strive to maximize collaboration and shared decision making whether it be through (a) case studies, (b) health promotion activities, or (c) workshops designed to foster integrated knowledge exchange.

Interprofessional teams are utilized to address gaps in care through coordinated and collaborative efforts to achieve improved outcomes. Placement settings that highlight interprofessional teamwork provide an excellent opportunity for students to use their knowledge and skills to bridge gaps in collaborative care whether in a micro, mezzo, or macro setting.

### **» MICRO**

Social work interns in a micro setting have a unique opportunity to assist other professionals in viewing athletes, coaches, administrators, or athletic trainers from a biopsychosocial framework. From the information reviewed on micro settings in the section above, practice on a micro level involves providing services directly to individuals or groups within a sports system. In a micro setting, such as a collegiate athletic department, an interprofessional approach might incorporate athletes, coaches, CMPCs, trainers, counseling/social work professionals, and instructors to produce positive outcomes. Another example of an interprofessional team on the micro level could be a local Boys & Girls Club that includes youth leaders, program directors, social workers, and high school/college athletic mentors to coordinate service offerings that create change and assist in achieving goals for improving youth behavioral outcomes.

For example, a graduate social work intern partners with the Director of Athletic Training (AT) to create a mental health first aid workshop for graduate Athletic Training students in their program that provides education to students regarding the top mental health crises experienced by athletes. AT students would be educated on the signs and symptoms of poor mental health, knowledge of how/when to intervene, and the identification of appropriate resources. Case studies would be used for applicational exercises. Additional interprofessional collaboration with available local resources and service offerings could be included as well for suicide awareness and safety plan education. As stated above, this example provides education for those in the athletic community with insight into the biopsychosocial aspects of athletes for a holistic approach to athletic care on a micro level.

### **» MEZZO**

At the mezzo level, the social work intern can work with professionals from other disciplines and participate in a variety of learning activities that promote interprofessional collaboration and learning to address organizational and group needs. Students can participate in group supervision activities, facilitated by a field instructor. They also can engage in case studies and simulation activities where interdisciplinary collaboration is required to properly assist an organizational task group working to better serve athletic populations. It is important to stress that group dynamics and leaning into the strengths of others are critical in effectively serving athletes and establishing the important, yet varied role a social work professional may play in these settings.

### **» MACRO**

Social workers in a macro-setting have opportunities to engage in interprofessional collaboration in the development of policies and training to achieve constituency goals on local, national, and international levels. As an example, a social worker might collaborate with the university's athletic department and student counseling program to create universal mental health and substance use screening protocols for student-athletes. Another example might be to work collaboratively with the sport and performance psychology program to develop training for field instructors. Finally, social work interns can work at a macro level to identify and develop community resources in underserved areas and with populations that lack organized sport opportunities for youth.



## EXAMPLE WORK PLAN

The following offers examples of assignments that can be used to develop a field placement educational learning plan. As previously noted, field assignments at the MSW and BSW levels must meet the requirements of the CSWE/EPAS.

Assignments identified in this document are **suggestions** and can be modified according to the requirements of the sponsoring school of social work as well as the needs of the agency, field instructor, and student. Sample assignments are intended to serve as a basis for discussion and brainstorming between the student and field instructor when finalizing the educational learning plan.

Field education at the BSW level is most often referred to as Generalist or Foundation field. Field education for MSW interns in the first term is also referred to as Generalist or Foundation field while subsequent MSW field terms are referred to as Advanced field. At the MSW/Advanced level, many programs offer students the opportunity to specialize in micro, mezzo, and macro areas as well as specialized areas of practice, such as sport social work.

The suggested assignments provided in the following sample learning plan meet the requirements for both the Generalist/Foundation level and Advanced level in micro, mezzo, and macro social work. In instances where a field project has a major scope and serves as the primary field assignment, schools of social work may recognize that the project can meet the requirement for more than competency. For example, a student may be working on a Title IX project that meets the requirements for several of the CSWE competencies. Sport social work field training assignments provide an opportunity to support learning by building a strong basis for sport social work.

Sport social work field assignments should provide an opportunity for the student to build knowledge of how sport has been used as an intervention, advocating for social justice throughout the history of social work and as professional sports continue to evolve. Using sport as the intervention, the educational process also includes the student integrating classroom knowledge and theory into practice through field training. This educational process can be used in any setting where it may be appropriate to use sports as an intervention with clients and at the generalist/foundation and advanced clinical levels. Settings for sport social work field education may include but are not limited to community centers, programs/facilities that provide services to older adults, middle and high schools, college athletic departments, and professional and Olympic athletes.

» 1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain an understanding of the value base and ethical standards of the social work profession and how they apply to micro-level sport social work.</li> <li>Read the National Association of Social Workers (NASW; 2021) Code of Ethics and discuss the application to individual work with athletes and other sport stakeholders with your field instructor.</li> <li>Understand rules of confidentiality by reading Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and agency confidentiality policy and discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>Identify and discuss psychosocial issues and stressors experienced by athletes. These may include but are not limited to transitions into or out of sport, intersecting identities, on and off field stressors, time management, specific sport team culture, substance use, grief and loss issues related to career ending injury or other transitions.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain an understanding of the value base and ethical standards of the social work profession and how they apply to mezzo-level sport social work.</li> <li>Read the NASW Code of Ethics and discuss the application to mezzo-level sport social work with your field instructor.</li> <li>Understand rules of confidentiality within the organization by reading Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and agency confidentiality policy and discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>Review organizational policies as related to the NCAA rules and regulation, including Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL), Title IX, policies that address transgender participation in sports and other policies at the local state, and national level. Identify best practices. Discuss with your field instructor. Develop additional assignments as appropriate to your organization/department.</li> <li>Attend agency meetings and discuss with your field instructor.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain an understanding of the value base and ethical standards of the social work profession and how they apply to macro-level sport social work.</li> <li>Read the NASW Code of Ethics and discuss the application to macro-level sport social work with your field instructor.</li> <li>Understand rules of confidentiality by reading federal regulations, such as Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and agency confidentiality policy and discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>Review the federal regulations and NCAA rules and regulation, including Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL), Title IX, Policies that address transgender participation in sports and other policies at the local, state, and national levels. Identify best practices related to advocacy. Discuss with your field instructor. Develop additional assignments as appropriate to your organization/department.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use reflection, self-regulation, and clinical supervision to identify personal values/bias, issues of privilege and how these may influence your professional practice as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and other practice guidelines as appropriate to your setting.</li> <li>Interview at least 2 sport social workers from different types of settings and discuss their role, issues addressed, assessment tools, interventions used, and evaluation methods used to measure the effectiveness of their practice. Prepare a brief and discuss with your field instructor and other staff as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use reflection, self-regulation, clinical supervision to identify personal values/bias, issues of privilege and how these may influence your professional practice as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and other practice guidelines as appropriate to your setting.</li> <li>As a representative of your organization, identify and meet with community groups who provide youth sport and other activities for possible organizational partnerships. These may include but are not limited to the Police Athletic League (PAL), the Miracle League, Boys and Girls Clubs, the YMCA, and Girls on the Run.</li> <li>Identify elements of a culturally sensitive and humble approach when working with community groups. Discuss how you will integrate these in your practice within the community.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use reflection, self-regulation, clinical supervision to increase awareness of personal values/bias, develop a culturally sensitive and humble approach to working with other staff inside and outside of your organization.</li> <li>Interview at least 2 sport social work administrators from different types of settings. Discuss their role, issues addressed, assessment and intervention and tools used to evaluate the effectiveness of their practice and programs. Prepare a brief and discuss with your field instructor and other staff as appropriate.</li> <li>Research the roles of compliance officers, athletic academic advisors, athletic administrators, and other key personnel in a college sports program, or similar personnel in other sport organizations. Write up an assessment of how they integrate Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) into their services. Discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>As a macro social worker, use reflection, self-regulation, and clinical supervision to identify personal values/bias, privilege and how these may influence your ability to maintain professional practice as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) guidelines.</li> </ul>



➤➤ 2. Advance Human Rights, and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>
<b>MICRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify how sport social work and professional athletics have served to advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice throughout the history of sport. Watch a sports documentary on the subject and describe from a social worker point of view how diversity shaped the athletes' life.</li> <li>Demonstrate competence in multicultural awareness with LGBTQI+ sensitivity, knowledge, transgender individuals, responsiveness, and application.</li> <li>Recognize how athletic participation can lead to the exploitation of athletes and factors impacting their health and well-being. Watch professional webinars and/or Ted Talks on the subject and write a summary to share with your field instructor.</li> <li>Through individual research, gain an understanding of the role athletic culture and identity have on athletes' biopsychosocial development. Discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>Interview staff at agencies that work to provide sport and recreational activities to under-resourced areas and populations. Discuss results with your field instructor.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain an understanding of how social justice Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is integrated into the services provided at your organization.</li> <li>Attend a diversity, equity, and inclusion event at your organization.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and coordinate a social justice, diversity equity and inclusion in-service for your department or agency or organization.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>
<b>MICRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with the client to develop culturally-competent, appropriate and mutually agreed on interventions and treatment goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths/capacities, challenges, needs of the client.</li> <li>Interview at least 2 current or former college or professional athletes about their experiences with sports using a social justice lens.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and prepare grant applications to funding sources for agency youth sports program. Examples could include but are not limited to the Wilson foundation and the Knights of Columbus.</li> <li>Develop an in-service presentation in collaboration with the agency's DEI committee.</li> <li>Join and participate in the agency's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research international policies and/or regulations that are meant to protect vulnerable people from exploitation and present it during a supervision hour and develop an in-service presentation.</li> <li>Work with an athlete organization, within the professional organization, athletic department, middle/high school, or education board that advocates for social justice and DEI, and work on advocacy efforts.</li> <li>Assemble a panel of athlete, and present at agency' sin-service training. This could include historical information on social justice advocacy by athletes and personal stories from the athletes with a focus on their experiences in engaging with sports and other influences within their social environment.</li> <li>Review the policies that your youth sports organization have developed to provide protection factors for athlete participants. These may include but are not limited to child abuse and neglect information and safe sport practices. Discuss with field instructor and develop in-service trainings.</li> </ul>

### » 3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of historical and contemporary forms of privilege, power, depression, discrimination, and or marginalization and their impact on clients and constituencies.</li> <li>• Explore strategies that eliminate structural barriers that leave athletes susceptible to behavioral health and psychosocial risks. Identify and describe what some of the structural barriers are and explain how these barriers affect athletes on and off the field.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain an understanding of how Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice are integrated into the services provided within your organization.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain an understanding of the history of sport social work and professional athletics and how those histories influence the present in terms of social justice. Conduct research/literature review and prepare a brief on the history of one college or professional sport.</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of historical and contemporary forms of privilege, power, depression, discrimination, and or marginalization and their impact on clients and constituencies.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and apply interventions that are consistent with person-centered practice and recognize that each person is the expert of their own experience.</li> <li>• Develop a culturally sensitive and humble approach to working with athletes individually and/or in groups. Discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>• Gain an understanding how diversity can individually shape athletes' experiences and their identity. Examples could include but are not limited to focus groups and/or support groups. Include athletes from different sports.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a windshield survey of community sport and recreational activities available to individuals served by your community agency. After identifying, discuss any gaps in quantity and quality of available opportunities for sport and recreational activities within your general geographic area and discuss in supervision. Develop additional assignments as appropriate.</li> <li>• Collaborate with community groups and local government to develop sport and recreational activities in under-resourced areas.</li> <li>• Collaborate with coaches and other staff as appropriate to arrange competitive sport and social activities for athletes that expose youth to diverse groups.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a committee that addresses youth sport participation at the organization, local, state, or national level to address diversity equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the areas of program and policy development.</li> <li>• Organize a workshop and discussion of the impact that racism can play, resulting in inequitable opportunities for sports participation.</li> <li>• Collaborate with athletes in a focus group discussing their sport stories and experiences in the areas of power, privilege, social justice, and antiracism. Have the athletes make a video of these discussions and offer the presentations to community groups.</li> </ul>

## » 4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select several best practice approaches frequently used at your organization and develop a presentation to be discussed with your field instructor.</li> <li>• Review articles and research that identifies psychosocial issues and stressors experienced by athletes. These may include but are not limited to transitions, intersecting identities, on and off field stressors, time management, specific sport team culture, and substance use. Discuss in supervision.</li> <li>• Review research articles that address the use of positive psychology, and a strength-based approach when working with athletes.</li> <li>• Conduct a literature review that relates to social work practice and/or intervention strategies, to see what methods of service delivery are currently being used by sports social workers and the effectiveness of the intervention.</li> <li>• Conduct qualitative interviews with athletes to determine their preferred approach to receiving counseling and/or other services from a sport social worker. Present findings during supervision.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a literature review focusing on how older adults can maintain their identity and connection to sports and recreational activities for seniors who are in daycare, assisted living, or extended care facilities. Prepare an in-service presentation and contact community programs that may be interested in listening to the presentation.</li> <li>• Conduct a literature review citing best practices for community organizers when entering a community.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with administrating and/or community outreach staff in the agency to discuss best practices from an administrative and policy perspective.</li> <li>• Research best practice standards in developing programs that address the psychosocial needs of athletes.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a literature review on the protective and risk factors of participation in organized sport. Discuss with field instructor and prepare an in-service for other athletes and staff within the organization.</li> <li>• Design a biopsychosocial, strengths-based approach to working with athletes and/or athletic organizations.</li> <li>• Conduct a single-subject design project on the topic of athlete well-being and present findings to the field instructor.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a focus group with student athletes at the middle, high school, or college athletic department addressing the protective and risk factors associated with participation in organized sports. Present findings to field instructor and other agency staff.</li> <li>• Learn how the organization provides education on the protective and risk factors associated with participation in organized sports. Identify gaps and discuss with your field instructor. Develop further programs as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with other administrating and/or community outreach staff in the agency to discuss best practices from an administrative and policy perspective.</li> <li>• Complete a literature review on the protective and risk factors of participation in organized sport. Discuss with field instructor and prepare an in-service for other middle and high school staff within your organization/department.</li> <li>• Research best practice standards in developing large-scale community outreach programs that address the psychosocial needs of athletes.</li> </ul>

## » 5. Engage in Policy Practice

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain an understanding of policies and regulations that may influence the health and wellness of an athlete. These may include but are not limited to transgender participation in organized sports at all levels, Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL), High school athletic associations, NCAA policies, Olympic and or professional regulations and policies.</li> <li>Research a separate policy/regulation that protects athletes, then write a summary of that policy/regulation and how it does or does not stand up to the values and ethics of social work.</li> <li>Review the governance flow charts for the NCAA, NAIA, and the major professional sports leagues and determine the governance structures in which sports social workers can best influence policy.</li> <li>Identify the current state of athletics, from youth sports to professional sports; note what the strengths are and where support can be added. Write about how they see athletes being impacted at each level. Then, verbalize understanding of how policy changes can improve and athletes experience at each level.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify community and local government policies that affect the development, maintenance and delivery of sport and other recreational activity services in your area</li> <li>Identify agency policies that ensure safety, encourage protective factors, and minimize risk factors for sport participants.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review legislation in home state that is related to the health and well-being of athletes. Identify areas these policies address. Identify current gaps in policies.</li> <li>Advocate for policies that promote athlete well-being at the organizational and governmental levels.</li> <li>Work with the organization's committee(s) that regulate and evaluate organizational policies that affect athlete participation. This may include but is not limited to Title IX, transgender student athlete participation, state high school athletic associations, and school district review boards.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate policies and regulations that may influence the health and wellness of an athlete. These may include but are not limited to transgender participation in organized sports at all levels, Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL), High school athletic associations, NCAA policies, Olympic and or professional regulations and policies.</li> <li>Discuss relevant policy issues with clients as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with interns from the Alliance of Social Work and Sport, and/or interns from schools of social work to research, and evaluate policies that promote or restrict athlete participation. These may include but are not limited to title IX, transgender athlete participation, LGBTQ+, policies that discriminate against BIPOC student athletes and other populations who may experience oppression, marginalization.</li> <li>Work with the organization's committee(s) that regulates and evaluates organization policies that affect student athlete participation and organize sports this can include but are not limited to Title IX, transgender student athlete participation, State high school athletic associations, and school district review boards.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research and evaluate policies that promote or restrict athlete participation. These may include but are not limited to title IX, transgender athlete participation, LGBTQI+, Policies that discriminate against BIPOC student athletes and other populations who may experience oppression, marginalization.</li> <li>Prepare a fact sheet, and a policy brief to present to government officials and community leaders at the local, state and national levels demonstrating the importance of on the Social Justice and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</li> <li>Identify the influence that social, cultural, economic, organizational, and environmental factors have on policies developed to address student athlete well-being. Collaborate with additional social workers and other staff in determining determine if these factors are helping or hindering athlete well-being by using a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion framework.</li> <li>Serve on a statewide committee that addresses issues that affect athlete participation and well-being. These may include but are not limited to Title IX, transgender participation, policy influence on populations that have been traditionally oppressed and discriminated against.</li> </ul>

## » 6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of how theories of human behavior and the social environment provide a framework for engaging athletes in discussion about their well-being.</li> <li>• Research how different social work theories are used in practice, identify how these may be helpful in sport social work practice and discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>• Gain an understanding of the use of an ecological systems model when working with an athlete. Discuss application to practice with your field instructor.</li> <li>• Explore strategies for engaging with athletes of culturally diverse backgrounds. Discuss with your field instructor.</li> <li>• Gain an understanding of how a strength-based approach can be used to build trust-based relationships with athletes.</li> <li>• Identify personal strengths and how strengths can be used to develop a trust-based relationship with an athlete. Discuss in supervision.</li> <li>• Engage an athlete in their environment to better understand their social, psychological, cultural, biological, and spiritual dimensions. This may include observing an athlete in a practice session or in a contest in their sport.</li> </ul>	
<b>MEZZO</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with community organizations and leaders to gain an understanding of resources available in the community that provide sports and other activities for community members across the lifespan. This includes but not limited to youth sports organizations, schools, community service centers, and the YMCA.</li> </ul>	
<b>MACRO</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with other agency organizational staff that provide program services to student athletes. These may include but are not limited to, program managers, department directors, athletic directors, coaches, and teachers.</li> </ul>	

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact/consult with sport social workers from other organizations that provide services similar to yours and discuss engagement techniques.</li> <li>• Interview 2 or 3 sport social workers from different types of settings and discuss their role, issues addressed, assessment tools, interventions used and evaluation nothing used to evaluate effectiveness of their practice. Prepare a brief report and discuss with your field instructor and other staff members as appropriate.</li> <li>• Engage in a role-playing simulation where each student takes on one role (doctor, social worker, athlete). Based on assigned role, discuss what professional, moral, and ethical values/principles they must implement and follow while working to improve the student athletes' well-being, and ensure a continued interprofessional collaboration.</li> </ul>	
<b>MEZZO</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with the Alliance of Social Work and Sports (ASWIS members and interns) in order to develop a project as deemed appropriate.</li> <li>• Facilitate a day of community service with athletes at your agency/school at a community-based agency. This may include, but not limited to, community cleanup day, can and bottle drives.</li> </ul>	
<b>MACRO</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with sport social work staff and interns through the Alliance of Social Work and Sports and develop a macro-level project as deemed appropriate.</li> <li>• Collaborate with the coordinator/ outreach coordinator at an organization that provides organized sports participation opportunities for youth with disabilities. Examples may include but are not limited to a chapter of the Miracle League or other organization providing these services.</li> </ul>	

» 7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify, assess and discuss psychosocial issues and stressors experienced by athletes. These may include but are not limited to transitions into or out of college sports, intersecting identities, on and off field stressors, time management, specific sport team culture, substance use, grief and loss issues as a result of career ending injury or other transitions.</li> <li>Become familiar with assessment and diagnostic tools used by the organization/department in assessing strengths, risks, and needs of athletes. Discuss how these tools reflect cultural considerations and humility when working with athletes.</li> <li>Using the departmental standard assessment tool(s), write a brief health and wellness plan for a hypothetical athlete.</li> <li>Create an intervention spreadsheet on how sport social workers might help athletes across the lifespan, from youth sports to older adults</li> <li>Shadow your field instructor for at least one biopsychosocial assessment of a student athlete and discuss in supervision.</li> <li>Determine the similarities and differences between protective and risk factors among the various sport team cultures.</li> <li>Gain an understanding of the procedures for identifying and referring athletes who show signs of diminished mental such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, low self-esteem, stress disorders, eating disorders, and suicidal ideation and substance use issues.</li> <li>Meet with other clinical professionals within your organization and discuss what physical/emotional signs they look when meeting with a student athlete. Identify helpful techniques and questions they ask when meeting with a client.</li> <li>Develop role-play scenarios portraying the sport social worker and the athlete who presents with a mental health concern. Discuss strategies and techniques with the field instructor and other role-play participants as one way to establish best practices.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify community resources that provide organized sport and mental health services available to youth within the community.</li> <li>Gain an understanding of policies and regulations that may influence the health and wellness of an athlete. These may include but are not limited to transgender participation in organized sports at all levels, Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL), High school athletic associations, NCAA policies, Olympic and or professional regulations and policies.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain an understanding of the program assessment methods and tools used by administrators.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop ability to conduct clinical assessments, individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, and sport performance intervention.</li> <li>Shadow, observe and be observed in conducting clinical assessments with athletes. Discuss during supervision.</li> <li>Complete a strengths/needs-based assessment with an athlete to first determine exactly what type of intervention is needed and how well-suited the strategy is to the athlete's particular strengths.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess community opportunities for youth sports participation using asset mapping, windshield survey, force field analysis, and /or cost benefit analysis.</li> <li>Develop an organization/department survey/needs assessment to identify mental health and other support services are available to athletes.</li> <li>Conduct a needs assessment/survey of athletes at your community center to identify sport and recreational activities participants would like to see your agency offer.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare information sheets and order brochures that identify organized sport activities as well as mental health and other support services available within the community for individuals and family members participating in sports. Share with community stakeholders.</li> <li>Identify regulation and oversight rules that may affect the organization. These may include but are not limited to accreditations, and certification.</li> </ul>

» 8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>
<b>MICRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the other professionals who make up an interdisciplinary team working with athletes and interview staff to gain an understanding of their interventions.</li> <li>Attend at least two trainings that focus on therapeutic interventions that are used by department clinical staff. These could include but are not limited to understanding the issues and needs of transgender athletes, understanding the needs and issues of LGBTQI+ athletes, positive behavioral psychology and strength-based approach, and substance use among athlete populations.</li> <li>Develop competence in using interprofessional collaboration to achieve beneficial practice outcomes for athletes.</li> <li>Conduct mock interviews with athletes utilizing aspects of various intervention strategies.</li> <li>Practice utilizing the substance and alcohol abuse screening tools.</li> <li>Create eco-maps to illustrate and discuss the different roles and relationships associated with interprofessional teams and the benefits of working in an interprofessional setting.</li> <li>Attend and observe interdisciplinary team meetings that may include athletic trainers, sports psychologist, and team physicians to promote the health and well-being of student athletes.</li> <li>Facilitate individual and group discussions that address transitions for athletes.</li> <li>Describe what successful goal attainment might look like for a client/athlete and write out a termination plan for them.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify community resources/guest speakers who can provide presentations on issues affecting athletes' on and off field performance. Specific topic presentations will be determined between the student, field instructor, and other organization/department staff.</li> <li>Intervene on behalf of an athlete and/or department to support the athlete navigating systems including but not limited to criminal justice, foster care, communal, familial, and peer networks.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with athletes in conducting a focus group discussing their sports stories and experiences with mental health and mental health stigma. Have athletes create a video of these discussions and offer the presentations to community groups.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>
<b>MICRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact/consult with sport social workers from other organizations that provide services like yours, in order to discuss interventions used in working with student athletes.</li> <li>Facilitate an athlete lead support group on transition issues including but not limited to grief and loss issues resulting from career ending injury, transitions into or out of sports at the high school, college or professional level.</li> <li>Develop appropriate and mutually agreed on intervention and program goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths/capacities, challenges, needs of the client. These can include, but are not limited to, emotional and behavioral issues, racial justice, health disparities, gender, sexual orientation, intersecting identities, and substance use.</li> <li>Conduct biopsychosocial interventions and collaborate with clinical staff from other disciplines who provide counseling to athletes as indicated.</li> <li>As a youth sports coach, and using positive behavioral psychology, develop techniques that are consistent with strength-based approach.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form an older adult advisory board to explore and discuss activities that would provide an opportunity for seniors to maintain their identity and connection to sports. These might include Sport Reminiscence Leagues, sport watch parties, facilitating a group consisting of youth and seniors sharing their sport stories and video game platforms. Settings for this assignment could include but are not limited to adult daycare facilities, assisted living and extended care facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of agency policy and programs designed to deliver sport and recreation activities. Prepare a brief that evaluates content of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, discuss with your field instructor, and advocate to address gaps.</li> </ul>

» 9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Sport Social Work Activities for each Practice Behavior

<b>GENERALIST</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify tools used to collect data used to evaluate the effectiveness of direct service interventions used by the organization.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey athletes to identify resources, in addition to counseling, that social workers can make available to support the mental health and well-being of student athletes. These could include services like education, advocacy, community outreach, and program development.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with other organization professionals and evaluate organizational policies and practices.</li> </ul>

<b>ADVANCED CLINICAL</b>	
<b>MICRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess intervention and practice effectiveness and refine practices accordingly.</li> <li>Apply practice evaluation methods to assess biopsychosocial intervention effectiveness.</li> <li>Meet with your field instructor and other clinical staff in order to collaborate on a departmentwide evaluation approach to the effectiveness of services offered to athletes.</li> </ul>
<b>MEZZO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate a collaboration with several community groups that provide sport and recreational activities within the geographic area. Using an analytic tool to evaluate the results and advocate with community leaders to address gaps.</li> </ul>
<b>MACRO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in research opportunities and pilot programs within the behavioral medicine team at your organization.</li> <li>Communicate evaluation results to the appropriate audience(s) within your department/organization.</li> <li>Identify the quantity, quality, and availability of mental health services for student athletes within your organization. Identify gaps discuss with field instructor and make recommendations to administration as appropriate.</li> <li>Use an analytic tool to evaluate the overall effectiveness and integration of program services to social work values and ethics. These could include but are not limited to Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, and Logic Models.</li> </ul>





## HOW TO'S OF FIELD SITE DEVELOPMENT

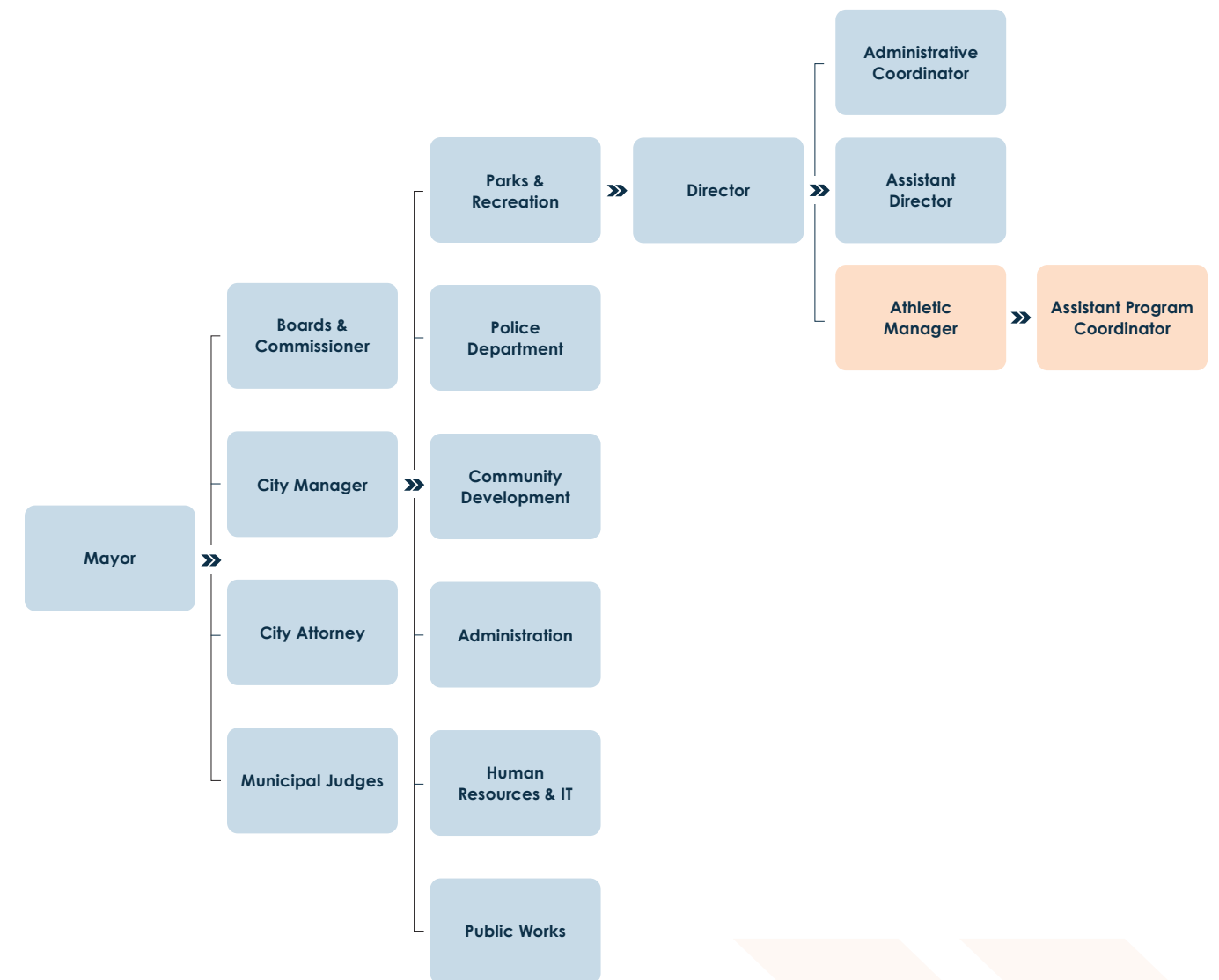
Schools of Social Work have developed processes for approving field education training sites that meet the CSWE (2022) standards and the NASW (2021) code of ethics and this should be followed by the school/agency when establishing a new sport social work site. Additionally, schools of social work offer support to the agency and field instructor through individual and group training as well as field instructor and student meetings with a field liaison from the sponsoring school of social work. In some situations, the School of Social Work field instructor and other agency staff may decide to seek outside support through consultation.

The following sections address the major steps in developing potential field sites used to train social work interns. These include who to contact to establish a social work training site, field site supervision models, licensure/qualifications per NASW Standards in Social Work Supervision, establishing a legal contract, often referred to as field affiliations agreement, with a school of social work, and ends with general tips on working with sport organization.

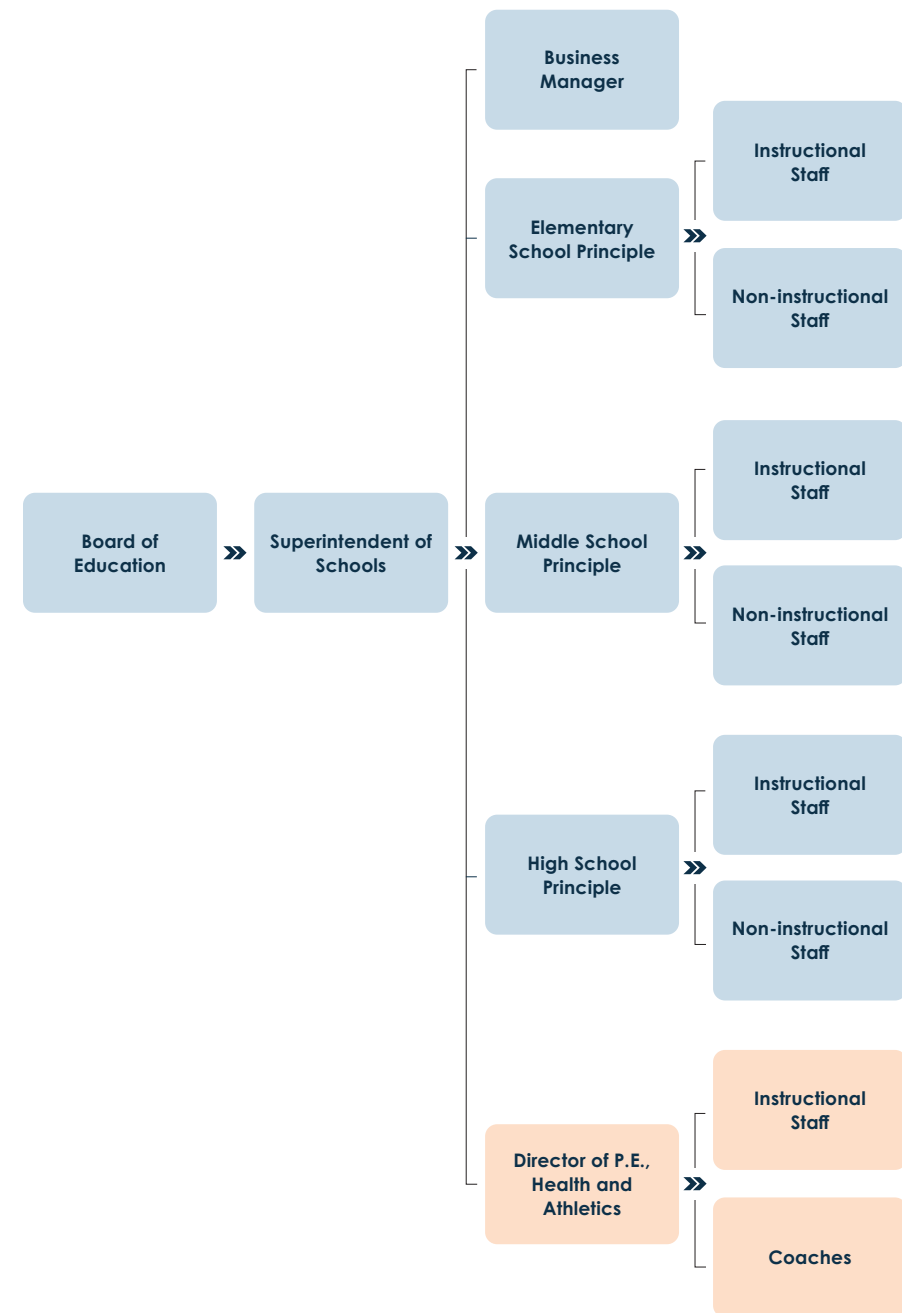


## Who Do I Contact to Establish a Field Placement?

In community settings, the organizational structure is often dependent upon the size of the community. The titles listed provide a basic view of what a community structure might entail. Collaboration on potential field experience options would include individuals that oversee the various athletic programs and might also be under headings such as Leisure Services, Parks & Recreation, etc. To the right is an example of a community organizational chart. As you can see, several types of roles support the community as well as the athletic sector. Initial communication might begin with program coordinators, athletic managers, and directors, but field placement approval might also need to be gained from city managers or community board members.



In secondary education settings, collaboration on potential field experience options would be limited to a small set of individuals. Below is an example of a high school organizational chart. It is important to note that secondary education settings do have an Athletic Director! As you can see, several types of roles support the overall educational organization. Initial communication might begin with coaches, staff social works, and Athletic Directors, but approval might also need to be gained from principals and superintendents.

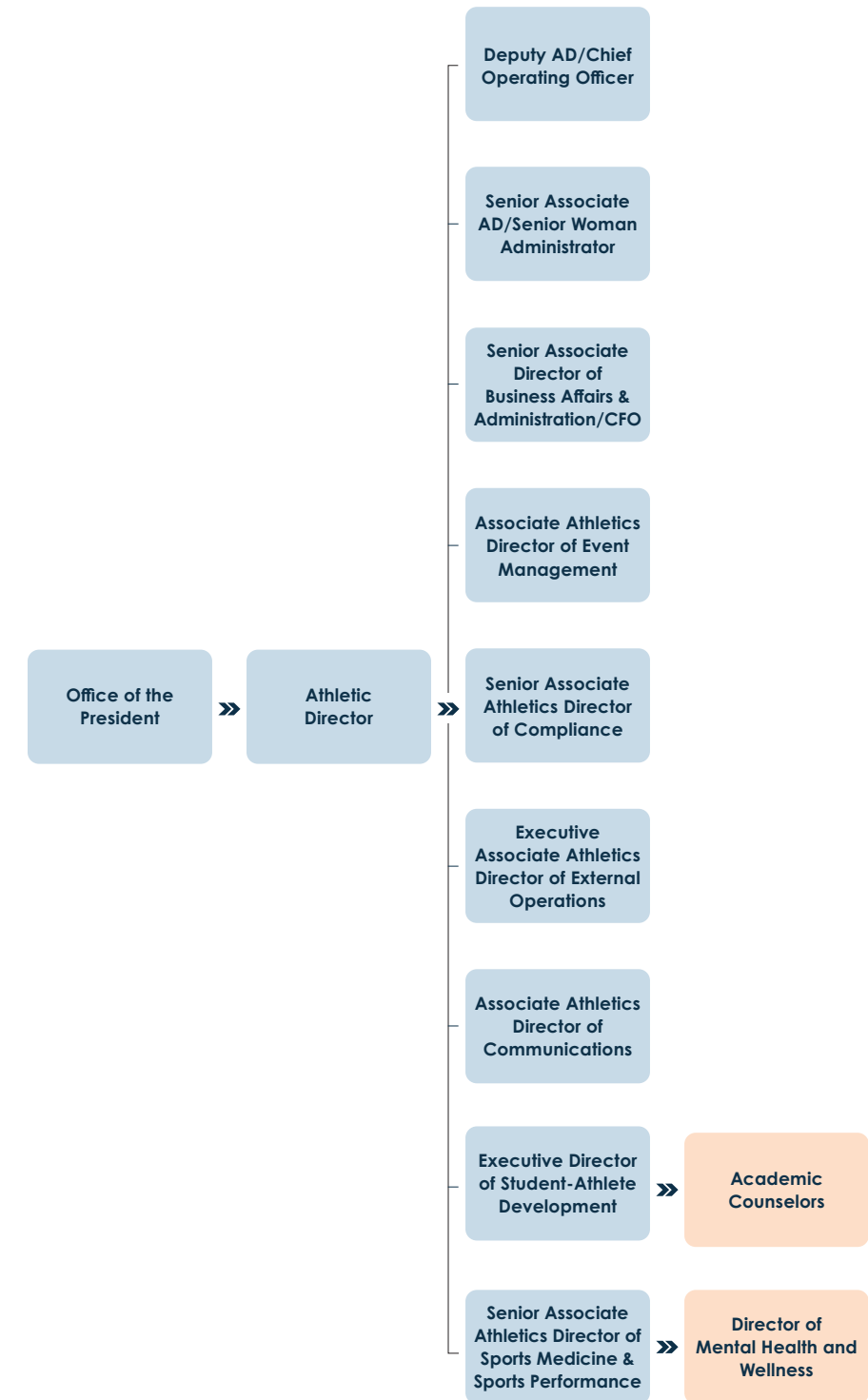


College athletic departments offer a variety of different field placement opportunities. However, there are various types of institutions in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), all of which have slightly different organizational structures. No matter the type of institution, initial communication might begin with coaches, staff, and assistant directors, but approval might also need to be gained from the Athletic Director and individuals in the president's office. The titles that are highlighted are indicative of individuals that would be potential options to first connect with for collaboration on field experience opportunities.

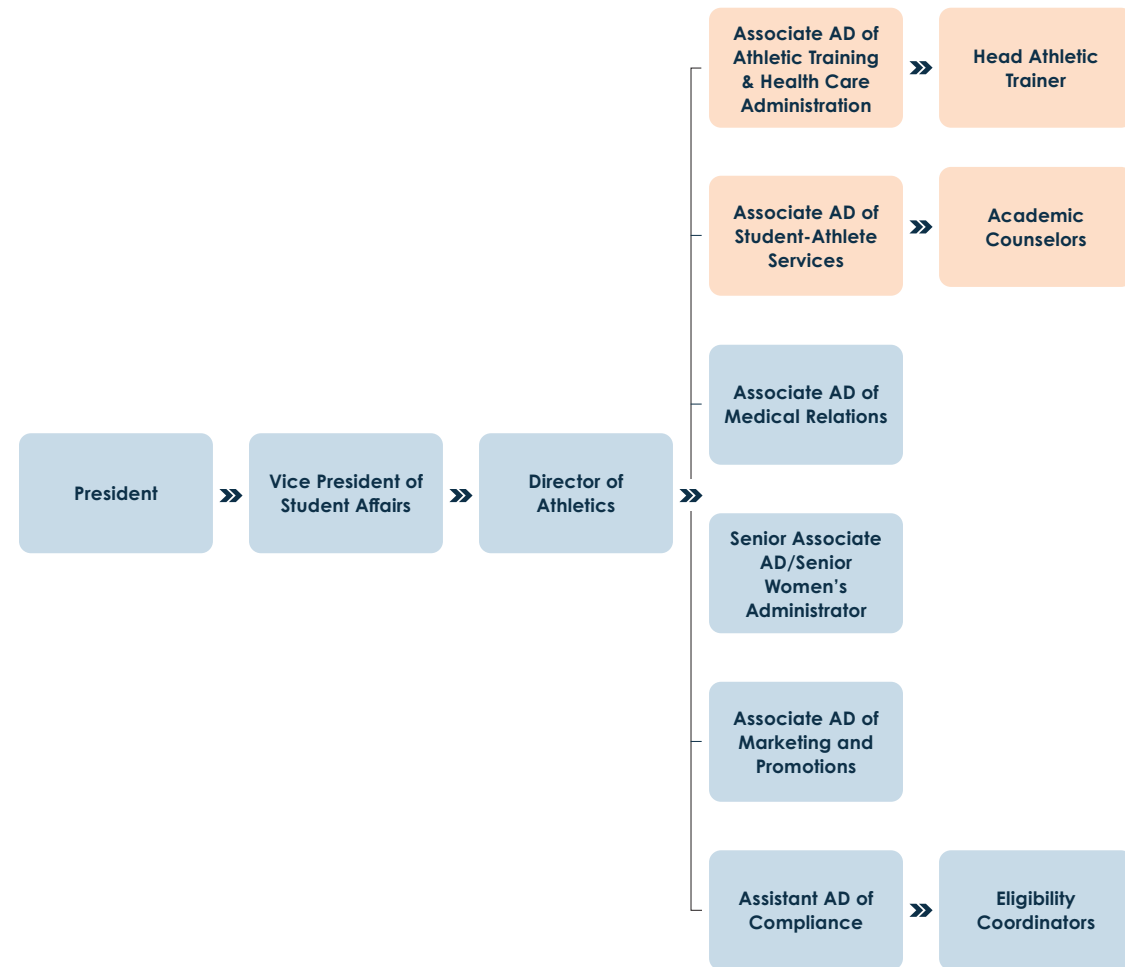
To the right is an example of an athletic organizational chart from the Power Five universities. Power Five universities are members of the NCAA Division I, and compete in the Football Bowl Series (FBS), which is considered the highest level of competition in the NCAA. These conferences include: Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC); Big Ten Conference; Big 12 Conference; Pac-12 Conference; and Southeastern Conference (SEC). Due to the increased revenue and resources in DI Power Five Institutions, there is a large staff. In this example chart we have condensed the number of executive-level staff, to highlight just the staff you can think about contacting; for reference, at one large Power Five institution, here is the list of just the executive-level team... this does not include department heads:

- Director of Athletics
- Deputy Athletics Director/Chief Operating Officer
- Deputy Athletics Director of Championship Resources
- Deputy Athletics Director of Competitive Excellence
- Senior Associate Athletics Director/Senior Woman Administrator
- Senior Associate Athletics Director/Chief of Staff
- Senior Associate Athletics Director of Revenue Generation & Strategic Initiatives
- Senior Associate Athletics Director of Business Affairs & Administration/CFO
- Associate Athletics Director of Event Management
- Senior Associate Athletics Director of Compliance
- Associate Athletics Director of Administration
- Associate Athletics Director of Executive Operations
- Executive Associate Athletics Director of Development
- Senior Associate Athletics Director of Administration
- Executive Associate Athletics Director of External Operations
- Associate Athletics Director of Communications
- Senior Associate Athletics Director of Sports Medicine & Sports Performance
- Senior Associate Athletics Director
- Associate Athletics Director of Facilities and Capital Projects

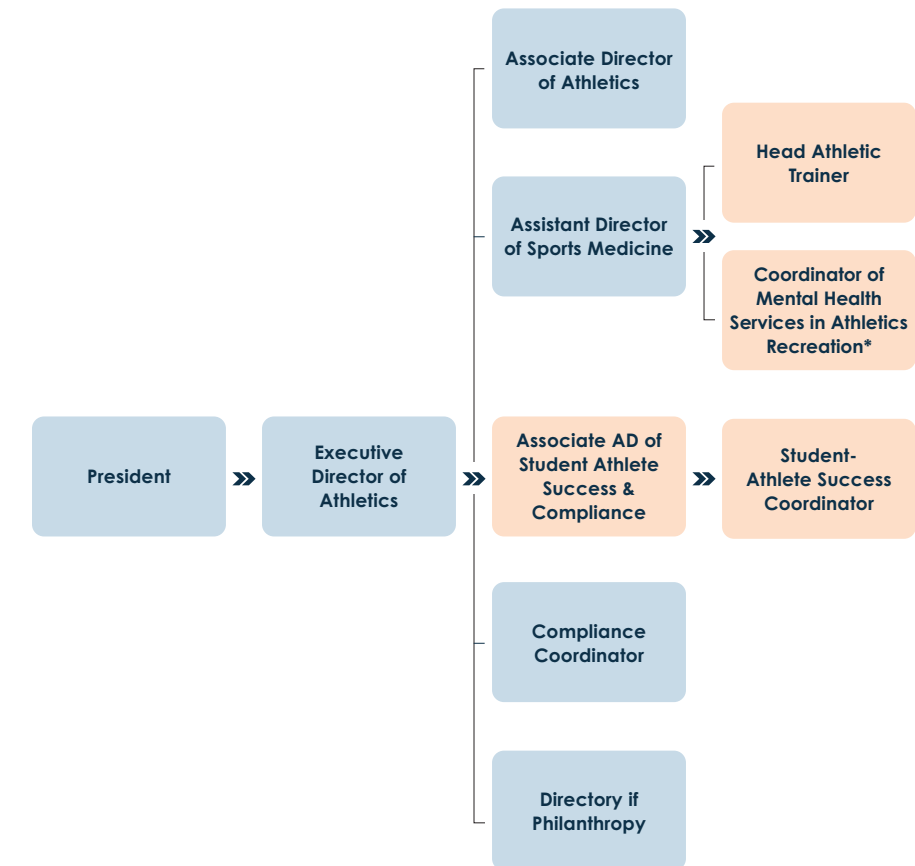
The best strategy is to get your foot in the door with lower-level staff!



Below is an example of an athletic organizational chart from the Group of Five universities. Group of Five universities are members of the NCAA Division I, but compete in the Football Championship Series (FCS), which is considered one step below the competitive level of the Power Five Schools. These conferences include: American Athletic Conference (American); Conference USA (C-USA), Mid-American Conference (MAC); Mountain West Conference (MW); and Sun Belt Conference (SBC or Sun Belt).

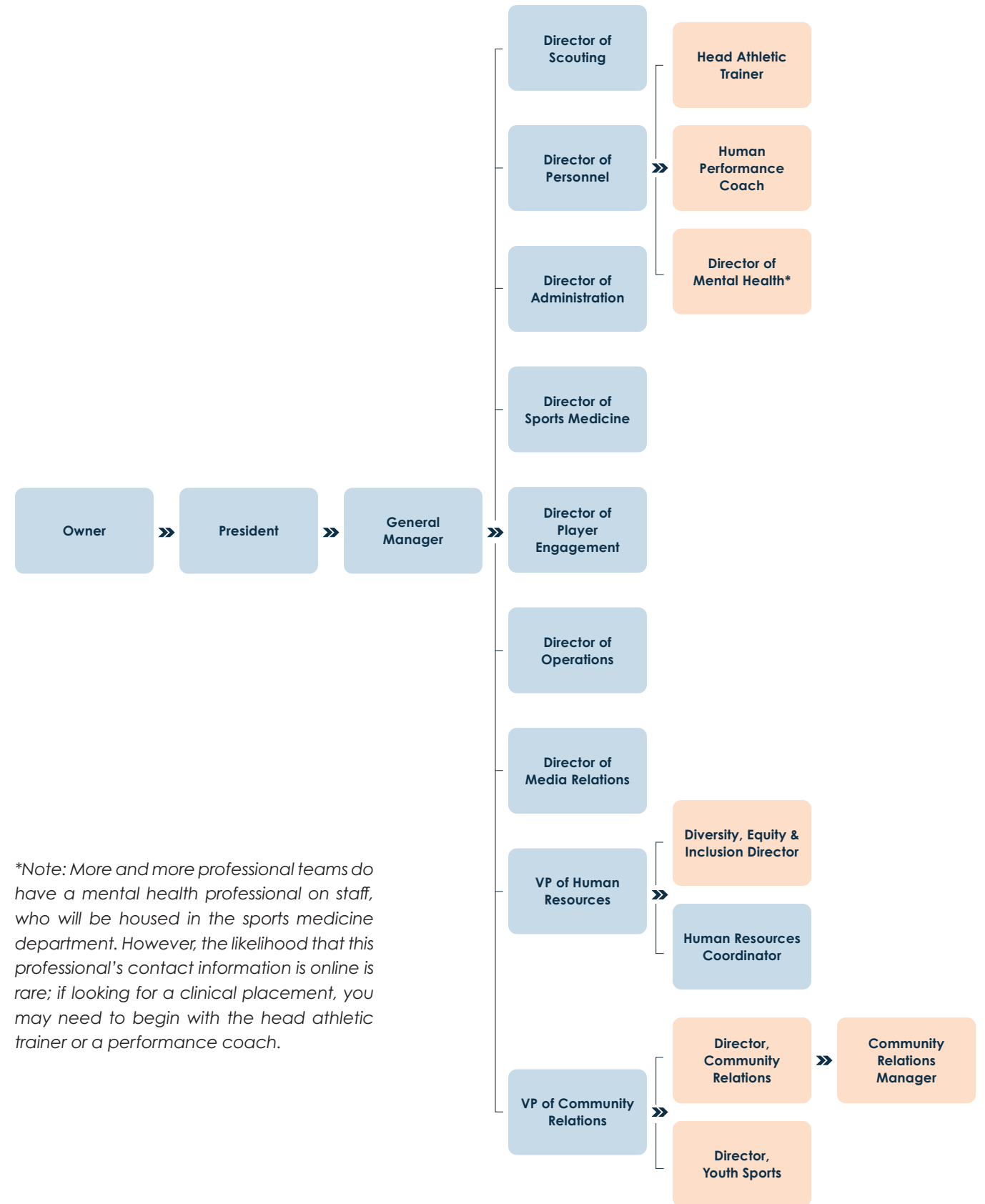


Below is an example of an athletic organizational chart from a NCAA Division II or Division III institution. DII schools do not compete at the DI level, but they do offer partial athletic scholarships. Division III schools do not compete with DI or DII schools, and they do not offer any athletic scholarships.



*\*Note: Unlike DI schools, not all DII/DIII schools will have a mental health-specific position. If there is not a mental health professional on staff, begin with the head athletic trainer or the student-athlete success staff.*

In professional sport organizations (i.e., NFL, NBA, WNBA, MLB, NHL), there are multiple opportunities for field placements, including both clinical placements, which would usually be housed in the Sports Medicine department, or macro-level placements focused on organizational policies and community relations. Below is an example of a professional team's organizational chart.



Once the social work program has made initial contact with the sport organization, the next step of establishing the field placement is setting up the logistics. Research suggests (Beasley, 2022) that one of the most challenging logistical issues that field staff have in their work with sport organizations is supervision, as many organizations may not have a social worker on staff. The following section thus reviews important information about supervision.

## » SUPERVISION

Effective supervision is one of the key components of successful field placement for all involved. Thus, the following section provides information on supervision, including tips for different models of supervision as well as supervision and confidentiality concerns. All information is written in language that could be directly shared with a sport organization staff who may be unfamiliar with social work generally and with field experience.

### What is Supervision

Social work student interns must receive weekly, field supervision from an individual who holds a master's degree in social work and from a CSWE-accredited program and who has at least 2 years of post-master's social work degree practice experience in social work. Examples of topics to be discussed in weekly supervision include but are not limited to administrative issues of the agency and School of Social Work, integration of social work knowledge and theory into practice feedback to the intern on their skill development, and next steps for advancing field training. There are two main models of supervision, depending on the structure of the sport organization, also known as the "host organization".

- 1. On-Site Supervision:** If the sport organization has a qualified social worker on staff, they can serve as the intern's field instructor. The student will meet with their field instructor for a minimum of 1 hour per week for supervision. The on-site social worker, field instructor, and student will collaborate to develop assignments for each CSWE competency per the NASW Code of Ethics and use the specific learning plan approach preferred by the sponsoring school of social work. The field instructor will also mentor the social work student. The social work supervisor can work voluntarily or be compensated by the agency, and they may receive continuing education credits from the sponsored college or university for their role as supervisor.
- 2. Off-Site Supervision:** If the sport organization does not have a social worker on staff, an off-site supervisor, who meets the criteria to be approved as an on-site supervisor, must provide 1 hour of weekly supervision to the social work student intern. It is best practice that this social worker be acquainted with and have a working relationship with the agency. The off-site model of supervision also requires an on-site task supervisor to assist in achieving the learning contract activities and managing daily tasks. It is a best practice that the task supervisor is in a client-facing role that is somewhat similar to the social work intern's role; for example, athletic trainers, academic counselors, program coordinators, and community outreach specialists may all be appropriate task supervisors.

The off-site supervisor can provide supervision voluntarily or the social work program or the host organization can compensate the social work supervisor when they need an off-site social worker. Many times, the off-site supervisor is a faculty or staff member of the social work students' educational program; however, there are times when the social work supervisor will not be employed by the educational institution. The supervisor may also be a retired MSW who maintains an active license. In instances where an off-site supervisor is part of the student training, it is suggested that the school and the off-site field instructor develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) In this model, the MOU identifies the duties and responsibilities of the off-site field instructor, task and MSW supervisor.

### Licensure/Qualifications per NASW Standards in Social Work Supervision

The qualifications for an approved social work supervisor are specified in the licensing statutes and regulatory standards of each jurisdiction and may include specifications for each level of social work practice. Qualifications for a field supervisor may also be universal, with one set of qualifications for all practice levels. The general qualifications for supervision may include the following:

- 1.** A current license to practice at the specific level or above the level in which the supervision will be provided, and in the jurisdiction in which both the supervisor and the intern are practicing
- 2.** A degree from an accredited school of social work
- 3.** Specified coursework in supervision, a minimum number of continuing education hours in supervisory practice as required by the jurisdiction, or both
- 4.** A minimum of two years (or more if required in licensing statutes) of post-master's practice experience
- 5.** Continuing education hours as required for maintenance of supervisory credentials in the practice jurisdiction
- 6.** Being free from the sanction of the licensing board for violation(s) of practice standards.

In addition, social work supervisors should have experience and expertise in the practice arena and with the population of the supervisees' practice, such as addictions, children and adolescents, mental health, older adults, and community organization. Supervisors should have competence in the theories and various modalities of treatment and maintain currency through the use of professional journals and continuing education.

Effective supervision requires knowledge of the principles of supervision and the ability to demonstrate necessary skills such as addressing both strengths and challenges faced by the intern, modeling and discussing ethical practice, and providing support and encouragement in the learning context. Supervisors should be familiar with the administrative and organizational structure of the agency or practice domain of the supervisee.

## Confidentiality is Protected under the Social Work Interns' (On-site or Off-site) Supervisor's License

Confidential information includes but is not limited to:

- FERPA/Student Records
- Employee records in violation of the University's Personnel File Privacy Policy or state or federal laws
- Internal discrimination/harassment investigations when such information is required to be kept confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis
- HIPAA /ADA/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or FMLA

The NASW clearly outlines a social worker's commitment to confidentiality. If a licensed social worker or an intern practicing under a licensed social work supervisor break any of these ethical responsibilities of confidentiality, the licensed social worker could lose their license! Below is a summary of the NASW Code of Ethics around confidentiality:

### 1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients:

#### 1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

(d) If a social worker plans to disclose confidential information, they should (when feasible and to the extent possible) inform clients about the disclosure and the potential consequences before disclosing the information. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information based on a legal requirement or client consent.

(h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third-party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

(u) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to the disclosure of confidential information.

(v) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to the disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.

### 2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues:

#### 2.02 Confidentiality

Social workers should respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions. Social workers should ensure that such colleagues understand social workers' obligation to respect confidentiality and any exceptions related to it.

### 5. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession:

#### 5.02 Evaluation and Research

(m) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.

(n) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting to identify information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing the disclosure.

It is also considered best practice to also include intern requirements and expectations regarding confidentiality in the affiliation between the host organization of the social work educational program. See Appendix A for sample wording for the affiliation agreement, and Appendix B for a sample email disclosure for confidential information.

The concluding section provides general tips for working with sport organizations.

### Tips for Working with Sport Organizations

Working with sports organizations requires an understanding of the system and the utmost professionalism. There continues to be a need for education on what a social worker, or clinical social worker, can do in benefiting sports organizations. Below are helpful tips for working with sport organizations.

### Types of Agencies to Consider

- Collegiate athletic departments
- School social workers (particularly high schools)
- Community after-school programs
- Youth development programs
- Park and Recreation agencies
- Organizations serving persons with developmental or physical disabilities

## » Having the Conversation and Approaching an Organization

HELPFUL	NOT HELPFUL
Try and use a connection to someone you know who uses sport as an intervention in their practice	Expecting to be helped by someone in the organization
Inform how a sports social worker can add value to their team, with evidence-based information	Using too many references from media to educate, and not enough evidence-based methods on how to add value to the organization
Review agency website and be familiar with their mission, programming, and client base	Not being familiar with the organization, and not being clear on the organization's mission and where a social worker can meet the organization's needs
Be professional and respectful	Unprofessionalism or being pushy
Follow up and communicate appreciation	Not following up, or following up to frequently
Educate yourself on the culture of sport and connect with your own "sport story"	Approaching the agency as you would any other field site without an understanding that work with sport organizations has unique cultural considerations

CONCERN	STRATEGY
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain ethical boundaries</li> <li>• Inform of your ethical and legal obligations to confidentiality</li> <li>• Demonstrate how you maintain ethical boundaries</li> <li>• Obtain proper release of information when indicated</li> <li>• Understand and follow agency confidentiality policies</li> <li>• Don't talk or post about anything that someone could guess who you are working with as a client</li> </ul>
Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss and stay within student hour requirements</li> <li>• Share resources for supporting the student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison, field instructor, task supervisor</li> <li>• Utilize a problem-solving model</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Learning first model</li> <li>• Supervision requirements</li> </ul>
Learning Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frame social work principles with agency mission/goals</li> <li>• Learning contract examples</li> <li>• Student first learning, based on their strengths</li> <li>• Look to find learning opportunities for the student</li> </ul>
Chain of Command	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate regarding communication structure and expectations</li> <li>• Provide examples and education of ways to effectively communicate within the system</li> <li>• Explain nuances of communication within the system</li> </ul>
Flexibility of Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athlete schedules can be fluid, find time for the social work intern to provide services that fit in the student's schedules</li> <li>• Try not to flex student hours too much, as this can create a relaxed boundary</li> <li>• Athlete schedules and programming can allow for alternative hours/days for student experiences, so always ensure a supervisor is present</li> <li>• Discuss projects that can be worked during downtime of athlete schedules</li> </ul>
Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat people professionally and with dignity and respect</li> <li>• Do not "fan", such as take pictures, ask for autographs, ask for swag, etc.</li> <li>• Do not over-explain your story or share too many personal details with clients or administration</li> <li>• Be mindful of countertransference</li> <li>• Maintain professional boundaries especially with social media, working hours, personal relationships, etc.</li> </ul>
Interdisciplinary Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working within a sports system may require collaborating with multiple types of professionals, coordinating care as needed</li> <li>• Understand agency communication expectations and chain of command</li> </ul>

Overall, when establishing a new field placement training opportunity for social work students it is critically important for the agency and potential field instructor to **communicate directly** with the sponsoring school of social work's office of field education to ensure success in providing field training for social work interns.



## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this guide is to provide the foundation for establishing social work field education through developing partnerships with sport organizations. It is important to note that each university and each organization will have unique needs and processes for internships and practicums. Thus, use this guide as a starting point to spark ideas for new field opportunities and turn to it for strategies on how to make field partnerships successful for you, the student, and the organization. Delivering direct service to athletes, using sport as an intervention to work with diverse populations within the community, and meeting BSW/MSW program requirements, will be a win for all involved in student field education.

The remaining question is: what's next? As the social work in sport practice area continues to grow, social work field education is essential for future sport social workers. Social work interns can also expose sport organizations to the benefits of hiring a social worker. Thus, we firmly believe that field experiences are one of the best ways to educate both the sports world and the social work world about the role of social work in sport. Long before Nelson Mandela famously said, "...sport has the power to unite people in a way that little else does..." Jane Addams and colleagues put this idea into action through Hull House. As we follow in their footsteps, let's do what social workers do best—keep educating and advocating for social work in sport!



## References and Suggested Readings

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Council on Social Work Education. (2022). *Educational policy and accreditation standards*. <https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/standards/2022-epas/>

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Pecukonis, E., Doyle, O., & Bliss, D. L. (2008). Reducing barriers to interprofessional training: Promoting interprofessional cultural competence. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 22(4), 417-428. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13561820802190442>

Reynolds, J. F. (2017). Jane Addams' forgotten legacy: Recreation and sport. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, Special Issue, 11-18. <http://csri-jiia.org/jane-addams-forgotten-legacy-recreation-and-sport/>

## Appendix

### Appendix A.

#### Field Affiliation Agreement with School of Social Work:

2.5 Require Students to Adhere to Agency Rules/Policies/Laws. To inform students that they will be expected to comply with the applicable policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the Agency and University, including, but not limited to, the use of personal protective equipment, the rules of client confidentiality, and the procedures relating to record documentation. University agrees to advise all participating Students of the importance of complying with all relevant state and federal confidentiality laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and amendments thereto, and agrees to have Students sign a Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Statement emphasizing their responsibility to maintain patient confidentiality. University will advise Students and faculty of the importance of complying with the agency's policies and procedures, including those relating to HIPAA. The university agrees to report to the agency any unauthorized use or disclosure of protected health information obtained from access to clients or records of the agency that it becomes aware of.

2.6 Student Use of Client Information. To inform Students and University faculty that they must not submit for publication any material relating to the field education experience without the prior written approval of the University and the agency. University and the agency acknowledge that students and faculty may use clients' information for educational purposes at the agency and University, provided such information is appropriately de-identified (per HIPAA guidelines) to remove all data that may be used to connect such information back to the client to whom it relates, or provided Agency otherwise gives written permission.

### Appendix B.

#### Example Email Disclaimer:

CONFIDENTIAL HEALTH INFORMATION ENCLOSED/ATTACHED Health care information is personal and sensitive information related to a person's health care and is protected under federal and/or state privacy laws. Your unauthorized use or disclosure or failure to maintain the confidentiality of the attached information may subject you to criminal or civil penalties under applicable federal and/or state laws. IMPORTANT WARNING: This message is intended for the use of the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged and confidential, the disclosure of which is governed by applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible to deliver to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this information is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately and destroy the related message.

