EXPLORING INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS IN
SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

A Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

by

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An international field experience is an important way for social work students to gain knowledge of cultures other than their own. The demand for international social work internships is increasing. This study surveyed social work programs accredited by the Council on Social Work Education that currently offer international field placements, and in turn, identified best practices for developing international placements. The findings included the number and frequency of international placements, the countries where placements occurred, the model and development of international placements, funding opportunities, and the supervision and monitoring of international placements. Programs were also provided an opportunity to discuss reasons why they chose not to place students internationally.

Quantitative and qualitative data was collected using an online survey tool, Survey Monkey. The survey was sent to 482 accredited schools of social work, with 228
programs responding. Results were compared to a similar study completed in 2002 by Panos, Pettys, Cox, and Jones-Hart. The results from this recent study indicated an increase in programs offering international field placements and an increase in social work programs developing international placements. A lack of relationships with international schools of social work and field sites surfaced as one of the main challenges to developing international placements.

The aim of this study was to provide social work programs interested in developing international placements with resources and best practice methods for developing international field practicum sites. The benefits and challenges to offering international social work placements were identified and sustainable resources for promoting the development of international placements discussed.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

The demand for international internships is growing. The National Society for Experimental Education noticed a 6% increase in the number of students completing international internships between 2004 and 2007; this number continues to increase (MacDonald, 2007). An international experience is an important way for social work students to gain knowledge of cultures other than their own. Students who have participated in international service learning have reportedly reduced their degree of ethnocentrism, developed a greater globalcentric way of thinking, and expanded their view of themselves as citizens of the world (Mapp, McFarland, & Newell, 2007). Current literatures have discussed volunteer opportunities and programs that allow students to travel and study abroad, but little research has focused on international field placements.

The social work profession is defined by its core values. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) lists these values as “service, social and economic justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, and integrity and competence in practice” (CSWE, 2008, p. 2). Social workers must be able to practice in an environment of diverse cultures and this is emphasized by CSWE’s accreditation standards on global social work practice. These standards stress that students need to recognize the global context of social work (CSWE, 2008).
The concept of international social work is still evolving, and is being further developed by programs now offering international practice opportunities to their students (Gilin & Young, 2009). In 2005, approximately 26 social work programs in the United States reported working relationships with social work programs outside the country. Many of these programs offered exchange opportunities for students, although the exchange was not always for field placements (Gilin & Young, 2009). A recent survey showed 94 social work programs have placed either masters or baccalaureate-level students in internships abroad (Lager, Mathiesen, Rodgers, & Cox, 2010). It remains unknown how many social work programs are currently placing students in approved field education sites.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine which CSWE accredited social work programs offer international field placements and determine best practices for developing international placements. This study explored how social work programs are facilitating international placements and compiled recommendations for the future development of international programs. The study specifically identified the field practicum model used most often, and the efficacy of that model. It describes how social work programs originally developed the international placements, and if the placements have been sustainable. The study also determined how programs were being funded, and any challenges to providing international placements. Survey questions clarified why programs decided to offer international field placements and barriers encountered. The study also discusses other international opportunities available to social work students.
This information is to aid in the development of more international field placements for social work students. Finally, the study explored approach used in monitoring international field placements.

Limitations of the Study

This study used exploratory design with a mixed method approach to study the occurrences of international field placements. Therefore, it cannot be generalized to all social work programs in the United States as it is unknown whether the unrepresented programs offer international opportunities to their students. The breadth and depth of the study was feasible through the use of a mixed method approach, however some questions were skipped or unanswered by some participants that can affect the breadth and depth. Programs offered multiple types of international experiences, but this study focused on international field placements. Although other international opportunities were discussed, this study was not meant to be a comprehensive description of all international opportunities. Appendix B and C offer only a sample list of agencies used by responding programs, and is not an exhaustive list of all international agencies or placement sites used by social work programs in the United States.

Definition of Terms

International experiences are described using multiple terms in the literature. Terms such as “study abroad,” “working abroad,” “service learning” and “field placements” were ascribed to international opportunities for students, although these terms are not synonymous. Study abroad programs involve classroom education, with the student attending class in a cross-cultural context (Fairchild, Pillai, & Noble, 2006).
Working abroad refers to students working directly with the client population and may involve the student receiving compensation for the work (Fairchild et al., 2006). Service learning involves both academic achievement and community service. Academic preparation occurs prior to beginning the community work and a reflective component is integrated into the experience as students examine what has occurred during their community service (Missouri State University, 2010). International volunteer opportunities provide students the opportunity to experience the culture and to work with local communities without committing to a formal internship or completing academic requirements (Lager et al., 2010). The term field placement refers to a structured internship that meets the CSWE field practicum requirements. This study focused on field placements. The term internship was used interchangeably with field placement and the terms “abroad” and “overseas” were used when referring to countries other than the United States.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of International Opportunities

Social work programs must prepare students to work in a nation distinguished by its cultural diversity. Multicultural education teaches students to understand and value cultural differences (Cole, 1984). It is important for students to understand their personal values and biases; research has shown a strong positive correlation between accepting oneself and accepting others. Personal values affect how students view and appear to clients, values impact how one interacts with clients (Cole, 1984; Lindsey, 2005).

Studying abroad opportunities offered students an opportunity to examine their values and culture in relation to other cultures. Research has shown that being self-aware has a positive affect on the development of professional values (Royse & Riffe, 1999).

Practicing social work in other countries gives students the opportunity to observe the reality of politics in the host countries and develop a deeper understanding of the policies both internationally and nationally (Ahmadi, 2003).

Experiences abroad are meant to improve global and multicultural competence (Fairchild et al., 2006). Several studies have demonstrated the affects of international experiences on student’s lives, but few have focused on the affect these experiences have on social work students. Findings from previous studies found that participation in international service learning activities encouraged personal growth and
added to a student’s cultural competence, cultural sensitivity, and cognitive development (Evanson & Zust, 2006). Participation led to increased knowledge of social justice and global issues. Additionally, students were motivated by these experiences to continue doing service work (Evanson & Zust, 2006).

**Impact on Student Learning**

In a qualitative study done with Scottish and American social work students, participants reported the international experience opened their minds to new ways of thinking. Students acknowledged cultural differences and the need for more culturally sensitive practices. Also, the experience helped the students develop insight into their own values. Students became more aware of challenges to these values and to societal beliefs (Evanson & Zust, 2006).

In a study completed in 2005, Lindsey concluded that social work students who had previously interned abroad developed a deeper commitment to the social work profession and a lifelong global perspective (Lindsey, 2005). The experience allowed students the opportunity to study social problems in other countries. Learning how to identify these needs in other cultures increased awareness of societal needs within their own culture. The experience of being “the other” gave students the chance to understand the struggles involved with being from a different culture and trying to assimilate into American society. This led to a deepened sense of empathy and respect for those different from themselves (Gilin & Young, 2009).
International Field Placements

International Social Work programs date back to 1928, when the first International Conference on Social Work was held in Paris, France. Since this time, international social work has increased in popularity and social work programs have begun developing partnerships with agencies and universities abroad. Multiple types of international placements are available, ranging from short-term volunteer experiences to long-term agency based field placements (Lager et al., 2010). The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) identifies specific policies, procedures and criteria that social work programs must meet in order to award credit for field placements. CSWE requires students at the baccalaureate level to have a minimum of 450 field hours and students at the master’s level to have a minimum of 900 field hours (CSWE, 2008). CSWE requires one hour of field supervision per week, and prefers for field supervisors to hold a master’s degree in social work. However, in situations where a degreed social worker is not available to provide supervision, the social work program that placed the student can maintain responsibility for reinforcing social work values and ethics and ensure students demonstrate program competencies. An example of this type of collaboration might include a faculty field liaison providing additional oversight for the placement. CSWE also requires social work programs provide an orientation and field instruction training to participating agencies (CSWE, 2008). These requirements may serve as barriers to establishing international placements.

Prior Research on International Placements

In 1986, Healy surveyed 75 accredited social work graduate programs offering international course material. Out of the programs surveyed, 43% (n=32) of
programs offered international content within their curriculum. The most frequently reported approaches included offering a course on international social work or infusing content into an existing policy course. Healy (1986) found only two programs offered international social work as a degree concentration. Although several programs mentioned plans to develop this specialization, it is unknown if they were ever developed. Nineteen programs reported placing students internationally within the two years prior to the survey. The majority of these programs had placed two or fewer students, which represented individual student interest rather than an ongoing program commitment (Healy, 1986).

In 1992, Johnson (1996) surveyed 376 CSWE accredited social work programs. This survey focused solely on international opportunities for baccalaureate students and was administered to program field directors. With 167 responses, he found one-third (55 of 167) of respondents had placed students internationally for field placements. Most arrangements involved a limited number of students. Johnson also found that 12% of programs administer a travel or exchange program, not related to field work. The majority of programs (49%) traveled using a program sponsored by another unit of the college. An example would be a university’s study abroad office. Roughly 16% of programs reported students traveling with another institution, such as an outside volunteer agency (Johnson, 1996). Johnson’s research confirmed that there is an interest in international social work within programs. He concluded offering a course on international social welfare is essential to the development of the entire social work field (Johnson, 1996).
More recently, a telephone survey of over 300 CSWE accredited social work programs indicated that 29.1% of programs have placed students internationally (Earle, 1998). Earle’s survey intended to create an ongoing database of social work programs offering international field placements and the available international practicum sites. This database was to assist in the development of new international sites. This single survey provided future researchers with a list of social work programs placing students internationally. The list did not differentiate between BSW and MSW placements or how many students each university had placed (Earle, 1998).

Panos, Pettys, Cox, and Jones-Hart (2004) surveyed all 446 accredited social work programs ($n=446$). Their survey determined the length of placement, where students were placed, the number of students placed, if students were enrolled in a BSW or MSW program, and if the placements represented a long-term commitment by the social work department. The goal was to expand on the 1998 study completed by Earle. With a 100% response rate, 21.1% (94 of 446) of programs reported having placed students internationally between the years 1997-2002. Compared to Earle’s (1998) earlier study, there was an 8% decrease in schools placing students abroad. The authors also found an increase in programs committing to developing long-term international placement options. (Panos, et al., 2004).

The above survey revealed that 46 of the 94 programs placed only undergraduate students internationally, while 35 placed only graduate level students. Few programs ($n=13$) reported placing both undergraduate and graduate students. However, the majority of students placed were graduate level. In total, the programs reported placing 665 students, of these students 265 were undergraduates, while 400 were
graduate level (Panos et al., 2005). The majority of students interning abroad were placed in English or Spanish speaking countries (Menon, 2007).

Models of International Field Placements

Pettys, Panos, Cox, and Oosthuyen (2005) surveyed the 53 social work programs that were previously identified by Earle (1998) to offer international field placements. Twenty-one programs were still placing students abroad. The authors summarized the four primary models of field placements used. The models include the one-time/independent placement model, the neighboring country model, the on-site model, and the exchange/reciprocal model (Pettys et al., 2005).

One-Time placement/Independent model. This model described a one-time student placement made by a social work program due to a specific student’s interest. Because the one-time model is based off student interest, placements occurred in a wide variety of agencies. In-person site visits were rare. Agencies and proposed supervisors were explored through professional colleagues and professional associations. Typically there were no requirements for this model, because the international placements were developed for a specific student and introduced by a field director in response to an international opportunity for that student (Pettys et al., 2005).

Neighboring country model. These placements occurred in social work programs close to either the Canadian or Mexican border. With this model, students were placed internationally, however the physical proximity to the home university made it possible for the student to continue to participate in field seminars and traditional classes. Researchers noted, in most cases the field placement agency and university had a long-
term placement relationship and programs appeared committed to continuing these placements (Pettys et al., 2005).

**On-site model.** This model was identified as occurring when a faculty member or graduate of the program was working abroad and offered to supervise a student. The faculty member also frequently served as the field liaison. The student application and orientation process was more rigorous than students seeking local placements, requiring a special application to the agency in addition to meeting the social work programs’ general requirements (Pettys et al., 2005).

**Exchange/Reciprocal model.** This model requires a program to develop a student and faculty exchange program with an international institution. This international institution was referred to as the host agency or university. This model was most commonly seen in university-to-university exchanges and the most time intensive and expensive. To aid in the development, faculty were often sent to the placement sites at the social work programs’ expense. Researchers noted scholarships were used to bring students and faculty from the host university to America (Pettys, et al., 2005).

With this model, faculty members from both social work programs were involved in the exchange. Faculty from the host university provided an orientation, field supervision, field seminars, and in some cases academic classes. Occasionally, the home faculty members served as guest lecturers when visiting the host university (Pettys, et al., 2005).
Development of Placements

The development of international field placements is time consuming and extremely difficult. There are a number of systematic and political barriers as well as planning issues that have to be overcome in order to establish an international program, requiring a strong commitment to the development and maintenance of placements (Ramanthan & Link, 2004). The CSWE Council on Global Learning, Research, and Practice promotes the integration of international content in social work curriculum. Social work programs are able to utilize CSWE for consultation and assistance in the development of international field placements (CSWE's Global Education Initiative, 2011).

Ramanthan and Link (2004) recommended on-site agency visits for international placements. In cases where the field director is unable to perform the visit, it was recommended another home university faculty member complete the on-site visit. Faculty should assess the agency and determine if it is a good fit for the student and program. The staff can also observe the host culture and learn county or agency specific information (Ramanthan & Link, 2004). It was also recommended faculty gather as much information about the placement as possible, including the different programs the student may be working with. Lager, Mathiesen, Rodgers, and Cox (2010) explained that obtaining this information prior to the start date ensures the field director does not extend effort into placements that will not provide proper learning experiences for the students (Lager et al., 2010).

It is the responsibility of individual social work programs to research the host country, including information on crime rates and accident rates. In recent years, there
has been an increase in students participating in educational international programs. Incidents involving student illness and in some cases death, have resulted in an increase in lawsuits both in state and federal courts to determine liability for students while they are abroad. Determining individual roles, responsibilities, and liability prior to placement is a critical step in developing international placements (Ramanthan & Link, 2004). American students are able to purchase an International Student Identity Card (ISIC) from the ISIC Association for $22.00. The card provides students with travel and medical insurance while traveling abroad. These cards are valid for one year (ISIC, 2008).

In the early stages of development, Ramanthan and Link (2004) recommended that the host university faculty or host agency staff visit the home university and social work program. Ramanthan and Link (2004) suggested introducing university administrators to host agency staff members will strengthen the relationship between the home university and host agency. This facilitates the development of placements and likely increases openness to future international placements. Also, a face-to-face meeting between those arranging the international placements is important for facilitating open communication (Ramanthan & Link, 2004).

The support of the university staff and administration is essential for a successful international placement. It was recommended that social work programs in the process of developing placements collaborate with university officials to gain their support. The university administration needs to be informed of where the program is in terms of development. Building this relationship will help address any institutional barriers the social work program may face while developing the field placement (Lager et al., 2010). If possible, it would be beneficial to have a university administrator visit the
host agency. The visit may positively influence how the university administration views the placement and their willingness to offer support (Ramanthan & Link, 2004).

**Type of Placement**

Two options for completing field hours were offered by social work programs that provided international placements. The most common model was a block placement. Students complete hours over the course of several weeks, after completing their required academic work. Students were placed full time in an agency (30 to 40 hours weekly) to complete the required number of hours.

The second option was a concurrent placement. In a concurrent placement, students completed both course work and their field placement throughout the academic year. Some programs with a concurrent schedule also allow students to complete a block placement over summer (Theriot, & Johnson, Mulvaney, Kretzschmar, 2006). Typically the individual social work program’s curriculum framework dictated the type of placement offered (Lager, & Leta, Rodgers, 2007).

**Specific Roles**

Ideally, before a placement is to begin, the host institution and home social work program would develop a contract that outlines the details of the placement. Such contracts address the start and end dates of the placement, and the total hours the student must complete. Policies detailing work days, sick time, and travel time would be included. It is recommended that a description of the faculty liaison role and the field instructor role be included in the contract, as role norms may differ among countries. For example, the role of supervision varies globally. If expectations are not defined prior to the placement, it could create a negative work environment for the student (Ramanthan &
Link, 2004). Costs and financial obligations to both parties must be understood from the beginning of the relationship for a healthy exchange.

**Social work program field coordinator.** While arranging placements, field coordinators must ensure placements align with the CSWE requirements for field education. Placements should be evaluated to determine if learning opportunities exist that introduce students to the practice of social work and more specifically to how social services are delivered in the respective host country. It is advised that placement agencies allow students to study the host countries policies and practices relating to social services (Ramanthan & Link, 2004).

**Field supervisor.** Although supervisors in the host country are not required to have an MSW, it is important international field supervisors hold a graduate degree and have practice experience in the field of social services. This is necessary to ensure supervisors are able to provide appropriate learning experiences and opportunities for students to demonstrate program competencies. Ramathan and Link (2004) noted the field instructor must have the ability to incorporate strengths from both cultures and have a working knowledge of the social work program curriculum and field requirements.

**Field liaison.** Field liaisons provided additional support to both the student and the agency field instructor at the onset of the placement and assistance throughout the duration of the placement. Authors noted a committed field liaison contributed to the success of a placement. The social work program has multiple options when assigning a field liaison, including choosing a faculty member who has an established relationship with the host agency, is willing to travel to the country and will maintain contact via phone and e-mail. The program can also choose a social worker residing in the host
country and familiar with the CSWE program requirements. The liaison would be contracted by the social work program to act as the field liaison (Lager et al., 2010).

Student. Ramanthan and Link (2004) recommended developing specific minimum requirements for students to meet in order to be considered for an international field placement. The authors related that a well-planned screening process is essential for the success of the placement. It is important the potential student be a good match for the placement, the agency and the field instructor (Ramanthan & Link, 2004). In order to succeed in an international placement, students need to have an open mind, the willingness to learn, and the ability to adapt to cultures other than their own (Mapp et al., 2007).

Funding

Funding has been identified as a primary barrier to implementing international programs. A study completed by Miah and Rodgers (2007) considered whether the financial burden was worth the benefits of international field placements. In 2006, the authors surveyed 200 MSW programs and received 37 responses. The majority of responding programs offered some kind of international activity for students. Few programs reported any financial assistance. Many of the respondents reported international activities were mainly self-supporting, or self-supporting with help from an external funding source. Twelve responding programs reported being completely self-supporting, while 14 reported being self-supporting while relying on an external funding source (Miah & Rodgers, 2007). Only six of the programs that reported receiving outside funding disclosed their funding source. It is unclear why many of the programs surveyed
were not willing to disclose their funding sources; the lack of potential funders and the competitiveness for these funds may offer some explanation.

The US State Department was identified by three out of the six as having contributed funding to the development of these international opportunities. Programs have also utilized non-government organizations such as the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) and the Kauffman Foundation. One program received financial assistance from the Fulbright Scholarship Program. With the continued shrinking of state funds, it is doubtful programs will be able to continue self-supporting international efforts. As a result Miah and Rodgers (2007) concluded this practice should not continue due to the high cost to both the school and the student (Miah & Rodgers, 2007).

Menon (2007) identified the lack of financial resources as a major challenge to providing international placements as well. His survey was sent to 420 individuals, with a response rate of 42% (n=178). The study assessed courses offered in international social work and identified which programs placed students abroad. Menon found 82% of respondents offered international opportunities to students (Menon, 2007). It is important to note that the surveys were sent to individuals and not specific departments. Due to confidentiality, it is unknown if more than one respondent represented the same program. Of those who offered international opportunities to students, only 18.5% had scholarships to help cover the cost. The remaining 81.5% of programs offered no financial assistance to the students (Menon, 2007). To maintain international internships, it is imperative social work programs start seeking outside funding sources. With only self-supported
funding, it is unlikely programs will be able to sustain international field placements (Lager et al., 2010).

Placement Models

University-to-University

Formal university-to-university arrangements occurred when two or more social work programs collaborated and developed an exchange program. With this model, the host university placed students in field practicum placements within the community. Students also attended university classes at the host university. In some cases, students were able to obtain course credit. These arrangements were worked through mutual collaboration between the involved programs. Most university-to-university arrangements provided longer exchanges. Longer exchanges included a summer or an entire semester. This was especially useful when the host country was located far from the sending program. The extended length also provided the student with more time to become acquainted with the new country (Lager et al., 2010).

One example of an ongoing university-to-university exchange is between Florida State University (FSU) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in South Africa. Currently, a social work faculty member at UKZN provides supervision for the student intern (FSU College of Social Work, 2006). Another example would be the exchange between San Diego State University and The School of Social Work in Tijuana, Mexico. This exchange utilizes a neighboring country, university-to-university model. Faculty at SDSU recognized the need for an exchange program, and slowly began to develop one. This reciprocal program began with students and faculty, university wide
participating in classes in Mexico. In turn, Mexican students and university faculty participated in classes at SDSU (Carrilio & Mathiesen, 2006). Over the years, this has developed into regular exchanges, and currently SDSU is developing field placements in Tijuana, Mexico (SDSU School of Social Work, 2010).

Some universities, such as FSU, are able to sustain international study centers. These centers can provide classrooms, computer labs, and housing for both the faculty and students. FSU has multiple study centers throughout the world, which are financed through the University Office for International Programs. In some cases, the university will loan out the study center when it is not in use. Sharing these resources can benefit universities from all over the United States and universities globally (Lager et al., 2010).

**University to Agency**

The university to agency arrangement occurred when the social work program or an agency wanted to form an ongoing formal relationship with the other. These exchanges varied in length. Coursework was not taken in the host country, and unless practicum hours were received, course credit was not given (Mathiesen, & Lager, 2007). Baylor University provided a good example of a university to agency arrangement. The social work program developed a relationship with Children’s Emergency Relief International and has placed students through this agency in the Republic of Moldova. These placements do not happen regularly, but instead Baylor provides opportunities such as this when students are interested (Baylor School of Social Work, n.d.).

**Third Party Agency**

Placements have also been arranged through the use of a tertiary agency, which is a host program that provides placements and supervision. These agencies
arranged housing, and offered in-country support. Often agencies provided travel insurance and absorbed the liability of having a student intern abroad. Although using a third party agency may be more expensive, it is a good option for social work programs looking into starting international field internships and for programs following the independent/one placement model.

An example of such an agency would include Cross Cultural Solutions (CCS). This agency has been used by California State University, Humboldt to provide successful MSW international field internships to students. CCS provides student interns with a placement supervisor, with who the intern meets a few times weekly for supervision. The typical student interns roughly 30 to 35 hours weekly, Monday through Friday. After work students enjoy cultural activities, off-site meetings with other agencies, research opportunities, and attend supervision meetings. The intern placements are five to 12 weeks in duration. CCS placement supervisors typically hold a master’s degree and are experienced in the social service field. Additional agencies capable of offering such internships are listed in the appendix C.

Patterns of a Successful Exchange

A review of the literature suggests many limitations to providing international internships. These include the difficulty with providing sufficient supervision and language and communication for those interested in internships in non-English speaking countries. The high cost of creating and maintaining programs create barriers as well. Liability and the time commitment involved in developing an international placement have also been identified as challenges (Rai, 2004).
Multiple sources have concluded the key to any successful international exchange is the development of a strong, open relationship. It is advised that international programs provide equal benefits to the student, the associated university, and the host country. The experience of hosting a student should be a positive experience for the host agency (Carrilio & Mathiesen, 2006). Recognition that the concept of social work differs throughout various countries and that services delivered by social workers in the United States may be performed by other community members in the host country is critical to developing an understanding of the learning opportunities available to students. It is important the exchange does not appear as colonization, which may include the subjugation of the host community. This would deter community members and the host social work program from further collaborative efforts. To avoid appearance of colonization, it is recommended that the social work program pay careful attention to the mutual needs of both parties and to the cultural context in which they will place students (Carrilio & Mathiesen, 2006).

Multiple literature sources identified language development and communication as a barrier when working in the field, volunteering, or working with clients internationally. Some programs promoted offering language classes either before the placement occurred or during the placement. An example would include the exchange between SDSU and Mexico, SDSU offered students daily four-hour intensive language classes before the exchange occurred and during the exchange. This allowed both the American and Mexican students to practice language development, and to become more proficient in their host country language (Carrilio & Mathiesen, 2006).
Placing Students with Disabilities

This survey questioned respondents on how their program provided international placements that are inclusive to all students, including students with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees equal opportunities for individuals in public accommodations, education, transportation, telecommunications, and employment in both the private sector and federal, state, and local government agencies. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination of disabled persons and applies to any agency receiving federal funds (including educational institutions). Individuals may not be denied participation or admission based solely on their disability. Title I of the ADA extends to cover U.S. employers / agencies in international facilities, though agencies are only required to accommodate employees (O'Hara & Pope, 2005; Sygall & Scheib, 2005).

If a program is not operated by an American agency or does not receive federal funding it is not required to follow the ADA or Section 504 (Kanter, 2003). The Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights states that Section 504 and ADA, Title II programs do not extend extraterritorially, meaning the university is not required to provide services or accommodations in overseas programs. However, an American university with its own unaffiliated program abroad is required to adhere to the ADA and provide reasonable accommodations for students, because the program is still run by federal funding. Neither statute prohibits discrimination by an overseas program (Office of General Counsel, 2011). For students, unless otherwise stated, the ADA only applies on American soil.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Investigation

This exploratory study identified Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited social work programs that offer international practicum opportunities to their students and the field model used by these programs. The design of this project was similar to a study completed in 2005 by Panos, Pettys, Cox, and Oosthuysen. Their study outlined the programs that offered international opportunities between the years of 1997-2002 (Pettys et al., 2005). This current study determined which programs are currently offering international placements, and the structure of these placements. The study also explored reasons why social work programs chose not to offer international opportunities.

A qualitative and quantitative survey was used to collect information from social work program field directors. Data was collected through a survey administered by the online tool, Survey Monkey (SurveyMonkey, 2011). The survey included both multiple-choice questions and text boxes for open-ended qualitative questions (Appendix E). Respondents had the opportunity to freely express their opinions and add more information through the qualitative questions.

Target Population

Currently, there are 518 CSWE accredited programs. This survey was sent to 482 of the accredited social work programs. This study specifically looked at programs
located within the United States; seven programs were disqualified due to location. The remaining 29 programs could not be reached to identify a contact. This survey did not employ a specific sampling strategy; rather the target population included all social work program field directors. For schools without an identified field director, the program director was invited to participate. Thus, it was not a requirement that the field director complete the survey. Only one respondent was allowed to respond from each social work program. This sampling approach was used in order to obtain the most comprehensive information.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

The online tool Survey Monkey was used to gather information. Participants were initially contacted by an e-mail introducing the research project and the survey. A link to the survey was imbedded within the initial e-mail. In order to participate, recipients had to access the link. The first page of the survey contained an informed consent letter (Appendix A); it clearly explained that consent would be assumed if participants completed the survey. By clicking “continue,” participants indicated their willingness to participate in the survey. Participants were informed the survey would take approximately 5-30 minutes to complete, depending on the amount of information they choose to provide. Respondents had the opportunity to discontinue the survey at any point without repercussions. Upon completing the survey, participants were entered into a drawing for one of three Amazon gift cards of $50.00. To select the winners, each respondent was given a number, and three numbers were randomly selected.

Quantitative data was organized by Survey Monkey in the form of pie charts and bar graphs. Qualitative data was already in written format, and was organized using
both Dedoose software and Survey Monkey qualitative software. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize the information gathered and are presented in the form of tables, charts, and percentages. Thematic analysis was performed on the qualitative data. Patterns were observed and then sorted into categories where frequency was recorded. Themes were developed from the various categories. Common themes that emerged through the qualitative analysis were compiled with the quantitative findings. Participant’s names and contact information were confidential, but the social work programs were linked to the information participants provided.

Instrument Used

The survey consisted of nine sections (Appendix E). The first section asked participants to provide a general overview of their social work program. This section determined which programs offered international field placements, and to whom. It provided a broad outline of the placement structures and the number of students participating in placements. The first section determined how long the social work program had been offering placements and in what countries the students were placed.

The second section asked the respondents to describe how placements were initially arranged and the field model used to offer placements. This section focused on the arrangements of placements and determined who was responsible for organizing the placements. In this section, participants were prompted to share their personal opinion on the model offered.

Section three focused on the development and monitoring of the international placement. This section addressed the use of contracts between the home and host countries, and how the student was monitored throughout the placement. Participates
were asked to identify communication methods and rate the effectiveness of communication between the home and host programs.

The fourth section examined funding sources, including the use of outside funding sources. Section five referred to the supervision of students while interning overseas. This section asked participants about the manner in which students were supervised and the requirements of the supervisors. Reference was made to CSWE standards for supervision and questions were posed regarding how programs provide effective supervision if an MSW was not available to act as an agency field instructor.

The sixth section addressed how students were prepared for their international field placement. This section discussed the use of orientations, and the specific requirements for students to intern overseas. For example, one question asked how programs arranged international placements that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Throughout this section, the respondent was able to discuss their opinion regarding the preparation of the student. Section seven discussed the evaluation methods used. This included both student and program evaluations. Participants were asked to describe the evaluation methods used and rate the effectiveness of these evaluations.

The eighth section gathered qualitative information regarding the benefits and challenges of offering international placements. Section nine discussed other international opportunities offered by social work programs. These included opportunities to study abroad, volunteer abroad, and travel experiences led by the social work program. This last section gathered data on participant interest in international programs, and questioned why some programs chose not to offer these opportunities.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Presentation of the Findings

Demographic Characteristics

This chapter reports data collected through a qualitative and quantitative survey dispersed to 482 CSWE accredited social work programs. Both undergraduate and graduate programs were included. The survey had a response rate of 47%, a total of 228 programs responded to the survey. The survey was sent to program field directors. For programs without an identified field director, the survey was sent to the program director. Only one individual was allowed to complete the survey from each program to ensure there were no duplicate responses. Surveys were linked to individual e-mails, so it could not be forwarded. Respondents were not obligated to answer every question. The only required question was number one, determining whether or not the program offered international placements.

Of the 228 respondents, 51 reported offering international field placements. Twenty-two programs placed undergraduate students only, 14 programs placed graduate level students only, 12 programs placed both undergraduate and graduate level students, and three programs left this question blank. Students completed anywhere from 200 hours to 700 hours in an international field placement. The majority of programs had
been placing students for less than 10 years. Seven programs had been placing students for over 10 years, with one program placing students for over 20 years.

Model of International Placements

Development of Placement

The survey asked programs to identify how placements originated. The majority of placements were a result of a personal (43.3%) or professional (44.7%) relationship between a faculty member and an international agency. Thirty-three percent of placements were also developed out of a personal relationship between a student and a host agency.

Original Development of Placements

Location and Frequency

The majority (8%) of international placements were located in India. Placement sites were located mostly in English and Spanish speaking countries, with the exception of Romania. This resembles trends seen in research completed by Menon (2007), which concluded the majority of international placements took place in either English or Spanish speaking countries (Menon, 2007). Twenty-four programs (51.1%) reported placing students overseas annually. Fourteen programs (29.8%) only placed students when they requested an international placement and three programs (6.4%) reported placing students multiple times a year. Ten programs did not disclose how frequently placements were offered. On average, one to two students participated each time an international placement was offered, as reported by twenty-one respondents (44.7%). One program (2.1%) reported up to eight students participating in international
placements at one time. Table 1 displays placement location and the number of programs placing social work students in each country.

Table 1

*Location and Frequency of Placements*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Placements</th>
<th>Number of Placements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>Belize</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
Table 1. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Placements</th>
<th>Number of Placements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaziland</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<td>The Gambia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of Placement

Social work field programs typically offer either a concurrent or block field placement. A block placement is shorter in duration, with hours being completed over the
course of several weeks. Concurrent placements occur throughout the academic year, with students completing their field placement and academic work simultaneously. Students completing a concurrent placement intern for fewer hours per week then students who are on a block schedule. For international placements: 37 programs (79%) offered block field placements while only 10 programs (21%) offered concurrent field placements. Of these programs, 19 programs (40%) offered international placements over the summer. Sixteen programs (84%) offered summer block placements while three programs (16%) offered summer concurrent placements.

**Block Placements**

**Advantages.** The advantages of block placements include flexibility, a fit with the current program model, full immersion within the agency, and less expensive than concurrent placements. Block placements are offered in the fall, spring, and summer. Three programs reported having student’s complete courses while in placement. These programs required students complete a field seminar course while in placement; courses were completed online using technology such as Wimba or Skype.

**Flexibility & Current Model.** The block placement model requires students to complete coursework prior to starting the placement. This enabled students to focus solely on their field assignments. During block placements, students were placed in the agency full-time. This immersion decreased the amount of time required to socialize the student to the professional social work role. The full-time schedule allowed students to complete the CSWE required hours within one semester. This was exemplified by one respondent who stated, “block placements allow students to have an intensive experience that is just long enough to fully experience/appreciate the culture.”
Social work programs offering international block placements indicated the block placement fit with their current program model. With all students completing block placements, coordination of international placements was simplified. Programs using a concurrent placement model offered block placements in the summer so as to not disrupt the students’ academic year.

**Full Immersion & Cost.** Block placements allow students to become fully emerged within the agency, as one survey respondent wrote:

> Agencies and students benefit because students are immersed in the agency. When they start a client contact, make a phone call or need to be there when a case is being discussed- they are present to receive a returned call, or advise. Agencies are appreciative. Students feel very prepared and agencies agree since the students have had their practice courses, which include practical experience leading groups, macro projects and simulated client interaction.

Block placements were also reported to be less costly compared to concurrent placements because they are limited to one semester. Students spent less time in the host country. Two full semesters were viewed as too expensive for the student and the program. The block placement allows for concentrated focus in the host country, so the student can complete the CSWE required hours in just one semester.

**Disadvantages.** When asked about the disadvantages of block placements, the most prevalent theme that emerged was time constraints. Eight respondents relayed that one semester or 16 weeks is not enough time for students to develop an in depth understanding of their host culture. Survey respondents reported the block placement time frame elapses too quickly. Eight respondents in the qualitative data echoed this theme. One respondent feared that the, “experiences may lack depth.” This concern was described by the following respondent, “Being in another culture is a learning experience
in itself, so trying to learn all that one would learn in their own country, plus all the cultural nuances in one semester is a challenge.”

Although students may express interest in a yearlong placement, programs with block placements reported a longer placement would not coordinate with the structure of their program. Two respondents relayed having extended stays in the host country would be beneficial. According to one respondent the ideal placement is, “about 6 months on-site with wrap around curriculum.”

**Concurrent Placements**

**Advantages.** Although few programs used a concurrent schedule when placing students abroad, seven respondents discussed the advantages of using a concurrent schedule. A concurrent schedule provided the student a greater connection to campus through online courses and frequent contact with professors. One respondent relayed, state side students who were enrolled in an on line course with an international student benefited from the international experiences being shared by the student. Additional support from campus benefited both the student and the agency. Students were able to spend more time (2 full semesters) in the host country and agency, deepening their knowledge of the culture and customs of the host population. The extended length of time allowed for an extended orientation and more preparation time as well.

**Disadvantages.** Similar to block placements, time management was also identified as a disadvantage to concurrent placements. Respondents considered two semesters too lengthy. Students needed additional support and advising to complete two full semesters. Three programs identified extended time away from the cohort and other students as a disadvantage as well.
In certain host countries, internet services were reportedly unreliable and at times did not work. In addition to internet service challenges, the time differences between the host country and the home university also resulted in difficulty participating in the online courses. Online courses using software such as Wimba were reported to be offered at inconvenient times for students abroad. Lastly, seven programs with a concurrent model were unable to offer international placements because they were not able to coordinate required coursework with the international placement. When discussing concurrent international placements, one survey respondent stated, “There is no way that students could complete their required courses with a concurrent model - unless they delayed graduation.”

Development of Placements

In programs where a small number of students were placed internationally, respondents stated they did not need a specific field coordinator to facilitate international placements. However, schools that offered several international placements relayed benefiting from having a field coordinator who specifically focused on international opportunities. Twenty-four respondents (57%) who were field directors related arranging their programs international placements. Six programs (14%) reported having a field director who specialized in the development of these placements.

Social work programs partnering with an overseas agency accounted for 38% of international placements. A second method for developing international placements, the university-to-university model, accounted for 14% of international placements. Fifty-three percent of programs using a university-to-university model provided a reciprocal
exchange where international students were able to intern in the United States. Providing a reciprocal exchange was reportedly difficult due to the high cost associated with traveling and living in the United States. Two programs (5%) reported using a tertiary agency to arrange placements. Fifteen programs (36%) reported using one or more of the methods mentioned above.

Sixty-seven percent of international placements were reported to occur in a non-government organization (NGO), while 14% of placements occurred in a government agency. Within these placements, students worked in a variety of settings and with different populations. The most popular placements included working with children and families (24%) or in community organizing (17%). Other placements sites included: medical (10%), working with refugee populations (11%), school and education (5%), child welfare (7%), mental health (4%) and adoptions (4%). Figure 1 displays the agency setting used. Two programs did not provide the type and name of the placement agency and three programs did not work with a specific agency. When deciding which international agencies to place students with, two respondents reported evaluating the agency mission statement and services provided to ensure it aligned with the social work programs mission. The relationship between the agency and the program was also instrumental in developing a sustainable field placement.

Development and Monitoring

The respondents in this study related that prior to placing students internationally, a formal agreement between the social work program and the host agency was secured. Lager, Mathiesen, Rodgers, and Cox (2010) recommended hosting a
pre-placement meeting where the details of the placement are discussed. It is recommended that a contract between the host agency and school be generated to ensure everyone involved is aware of their requirements and responsibilities.

At the time of this study there were 51 social work programs out of the 228 respondents offering international placements, 29 programs (57%) reported having a pre-placement meeting to go over details of the placement. Within this meeting, 28 programs (80%) outlined the preferred method of contact, the role of the field supervisor, the role of the student intern, and expectations of the student; 27 programs (77%) identified the learning contract format and the role of the field liaison; 26 programs (74%) discussed the preferred method of contact and the evaluation methods used. Lastly, 25 programs (71%) determined the role of the field director.

Figure 1. Pie chart displaying the agency settings for international placements.
International placements were monitored using various communication mediums. Eleven social work programs communicated weekly by video chats and 14 programs communicated weekly by e-mail with the placed student. Social work programs e-mailed \(n=9\) and called the host agency \(n=6\) monthly to check on the placement.

Table 2 offers a summary of communication patterns during an international placement.

Table 2

*Communication Patterns Between the Field Placement and the Student/Agency*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Method</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple times a week by phone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-weekly by phone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly by phone</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly by phone</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once during a practicum by phone</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple times a week by e-mail</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Bi-weekly by e-mail</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly by e-mail</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly by e-mail</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once during a practicum by e-mail</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple times a week by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-weekly by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Weekly by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
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<td>Monthly by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Once during a practicum by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty-one programs (60%) rated their communication with the host agency as effective. Others viewed their communication as moderately effective \(n=5\) or in need of extra work \(n=5\). Four programs rated their communication as “other.” Of those who rated their communication “other,” three programs were still in the process of formalizing
their communication. While the remaining program relayed that communication with the host agency was primarily handled by the host social work program because language was a barrier. In this situation, the host social work program acted as a mediator between the home program and the agency.

**Funding**

Data gathered by the survey suggested that individual students incurred the majority of the expenses for an international placement. Expenses included airfare, housing, transportation, food, cultural activities, and in some cases, tuition at the host university. According to one respondent, “Students pay the same amount as they pay here for tuition, food and board. The only additions are airfare and activities they choose to do.” Twenty-eight respondents (87%) reported that the students who participated in an international placement were responsible for their airfare. In 23 programs (72%), students were primarily responsible for their housing, and in 26 programs (81%) students were responsible for their cultural activities (see Figure 2).

Social work programs and students also utilized grants and scholarships to assist with funding international placements. Ten programs reported using grants to help with funding, qualitative data suggests these programs utilized university grants, or funds within the university study abroad program. These funds ranged from covering a small portion of the costs to covering the duration of the placement. The qualitative data indicated a range of coverage by the university. This included allowing only $2,000 of
university scholarships to go towards funding international placements to covering 75% of the placement costs. One respondent reported that all participating students are offered university scholarships.

Four programs discussed students using their financial aid package to assist in covering international placement costs; this included their university grants and student loans. Three programs reported individual students securing outside scholarships to help cover costs, however these scholarships were not listed. Lastly, one program reported students doing individual fund-raising.

Supervision

Host Agency and CSWE Requirements

According to CSWE, field instructors do not need an MSW to supervise social work students (CSWE, 2008). To ensure the host agency understood the CSWE
requirements, twenty-one programs addressed them during the pre-placement meeting with the host agency. Twenty-two programs outlined requirements within a placement contract. In cases where the field instructor held an MSW from a CSWE accredited school of social work, there was reportedly less emphasis on the CSWE requirements because these field instructors were already familiar with the requirements. Three respondents reported offering the agency a field manual and three programs offered an online field orientation. In three programs, the field director or a faculty member travelled to the host country to meet with the host agency staff, and train the agency field instructor in person.

**Supervision of Students**

Seventeen responding programs (50%) required agency field instructors to have an MSW. When the field instructor did not hold an MSW, programs ensured the requirements set forth by CSWE were met in a variety of ways. Thirteen respondents reported having a faculty field liaison communicate with the student and agency weekly to ensure a social work perspective was being emphasized. To ensure adequate supervision, three programs had field liaisons travel to the host country to meet with the host agency staff in person. In university-to-university arrangements, nine programs had the host university provide supervision. While two programs reported they had offered field supervision over the phone or online while an on-site task supervisor oversaw daily tasks. Two programs discussed utilizing online weekly or bi-weekly seminars to aid in providing a social work perspective. In some countries, a BSW can become licensed at the government level (i.e. South Africa). The qualitative data revealed, six respondents use a BSW to supervise BSW students and with assistance to supervise MSW students.
To assist field instructors who did not hold a social work degree, three programs used online training modules developed for agency field instructors in conjunction with ongoing training, oversight and support by their liaison. Table 3 displays how social work programs ensured field supervision met the CSWE requirements when the instructor did not hold an MSW.

Table 3

*How Programs Ensured a non-MSW Field Instructor Met CSWE Requirements*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How programs ensured adequate supervision</th>
<th>Percent of Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The field director communicates with the student and agency weekly and enforces a social work perspective</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The faculty field liaison communicates with the student and agency weekly and enforces a social work perspective</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An MSW from a local university provides supervision for the student once weekly</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An MSW from a local agency provides supervision for the student once weekly</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirty programs that placed students abroad provided field supervision on-site. On-site, individual supervision was provided by 21 programs while nine programs provided group supervision. The field instructor provided individual supervision in 17 programs. Seven programs reported the field liaison provided individual supervision to the student. In three programs the field director provided individual supervision, and in two programs the host university staff provided this supervision.
In programs that utilized group supervision, five programs reported supervision was offered by the field instructor. Three programs used a field liaison, while two programs utilized the host university staff. Lastly, one program offered group supervision provided by the field director. Table 4 summarizes the models of supervision used and the person responsible for the supervision. Those programs unable to provide face-to-face supervision used either online video chat ($n=10$) or the telephone ($n=1$). One respondent reported using the Magic Jack™ to call students, referring to it as a “wonderful invention”. The Magic Jack provides users with an internet based phone service; users can call anywhere in the United States and Canada.

Table 4

*Delivery of Field Supervision*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>On-site</th>
<th>Off-site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Method</th>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Video Chat (ex: Skype)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision Provided by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preparation of Students

The data from this study indicated that one aspect in the success of an international program depended on the preparation of the student. Overall, 67.6% of programs related their students were prepared for an international placement ($n=23$) while 26.5% felt their students were well prepared ($n=9$). Two programs stated that their students were not prepared for the international placement. To ensure students were prepared, programs had students complete pre-practicum work including researching the host county, the organization, and the culture. Three social work programs required students complete a short to semester long course on international work before they began their practicum. Additionally, one program had students participate in a week-long field placement seminar prior to traveling abroad. Two respondents mentioned their preparation process needed to be improved and those who are new to placing students abroad stated that they had “much to learn” to adequately prepare students for international placements.

Several programs reported establishing criteria for students to participate in international placements. Criteria included the following: 14 programs (38.9%) required students to have knowledge of the host country language, 13 programs (36.1%) required a 3.0 grade point average or above and seven programs (19.4%) required the student be over the age of 18. Eight programs (22.2%) required potential students to have prior travel experience. Nine respondents (25%) reported their program required an interview where the field director or program director assessed if an international placement would be a good fit. During this interview, students were asked to identify educational goals, personal strengths and areas where growth was needed. One program (2.8%) reported
requiring students to have knowledge of “the country’s cultural make-up and current political climate” before approving the placement. Six programs (16.7%) acknowledged having no student requirements.

Orientation

Twenty-nine responding programs (83%) offered an orientation to the student. Sixty-eight percent (n=19) of these orientations were offered in the home country, and 28.6% (n=8) reported offering the orientation in the host country. The qualitative data revealed four programs (15.4%) provided an orientation before the student embarked and upon arrival in the host country. Thirteen respondents (50%) related the orientation was provided by the social work program, in seven programs (26.9%) the orientation was provided by the host agency, and two programs (7.7%) relayed the host university provided the orientation.

The qualitative data revealed the following was covered during orientations: what to bring to the host country, money exchange, medical coverage, and phone and internet services. Respondents reported hosting question and answer sessions prior to placements and one respondent discussed having this be part of the orientation. Four respondents reported covering culture, language and county specific customs during the orientation. One respondent related their program discussed places to avoid, safe locations within the host country, and communication protocols. Programs also reportedly covered current problems within the host country and travel advisories. Last, one respondent discussed visa extensions during the orientation. According to one respondent, an orientation “is probably one of the most important factors in a successful international placement.” Qualitative data revealed language was a strong component of
the orientation, “Students are expected to be able to speak the language of the country before beginning their placement.”

**Housing**

Twelve programs (40%) reported the student primarily responsible for arranging housing abroad. In nine programs (30%), the host agencies arranged housing for the students. Three respondents (10%) reported the social work program arranged housing for their students. Lastly, five respondents (17%) had the host university arrange housing for the students.

Twenty-five respondents answered a question regarding housing requirements, of those 40% (n=10) have housing requirements, while 60% (n=15) of programs do not have any housing requirements. A program without housing requirements relayed, “We do not have specific housing requirements but make sure that we feel comfortable with the way the placement agency arranges housing.” For programs where students arranged their own housing, the location varied, including multiple students in an apartment together, or students staying with family members.

In 33.3% of the programs, students lived with a host family (n=8). Respondents described this as, “Students are required to live with a host family. One person in the family must speak English on some level. Host families need to have space so that the student has their own room,” and “Students are strongly encouraged to take part in all family activities and travel on the weekends with the families (visiting family in the village etc.).” Three programs reported having students live in a campus dorm, while three programs had students live in agency housing. One program reported the development of new placements where students will reside in dorms. Only one program
reported using a tertiary agency to arrange student housing, in this situation, the student lived in the tertiary agency housing. Qualitative information revealed housing options varied depending on the location of the placement. One respondent related that it’s the students responsibility to arrange housing, stating this is a “Strong message from the lawyers,” indicating possible liability issues.

The American’s with Disabilities Act

A question pertaining to the American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) in international placements received only 25 answers. Eleven responding programs (44%) reportedly do not have policies in place to address the act, while 8 programs (32%) stated they had not placed students with disabilities. Common themes that arose included: student accessibility, ADA compliance, and needed accommodations.

Student Accessibility

Fifty-two percent (n=13) of respondents stated that all students are considered for placement. Students with disabilities were reportedly screened in the same manner as students who did not report disabilities. If a student was in need of accommodations, programs reportedly ensured accommodations were met when possible. Of the 13 programs responding to this area, only one described an accommodation stating, “We place deaf students in situations where they are working with deaf people.” Although another program stated “Students with a wide range of disabilities have been involved in international placements” it is unclear the type of disabilities presented and how accommodations were made. Two programs reported collaboration with disability support services on their campus to assist in making accommodations. To ensure student
needs were met, two programs required the needed accommodations in writing and discussed them in a pre-placement meeting.

**ADA Compliance**

International agencies are not required to abide by the ADA. Two programs discussed the difficulties with placing students with disabilities abroad. These programs describe the difficulties as, “there is a lot of independent travel and travel that may require long distances without automobiles or buses. This would make it difficult for some students with certain disabilities to participate in the international placement” and “students must be able to handle all aspects of the travel and participation in the field experience and be accepted by the host organization.” Although programs reported efforts were made to make reasonable accommodations for these students, it was indicated that at times, international placement is not possible.

Programs who have not experienced this or do not have policies for placing students with disabilities abroad stated that they utilized the university policies. Six of the programs without specific policies, or who have not addressed this said they would follow the ADA, and ensured no laws were broken. Programs did not explain how they would comply with ADA, when it does not apply in international countries.

**Accommodations**

Four participants reported the host agency is responsible for making reasonable accommodations for students. If the host agency is unable to make accommodations, the student cannot participate. When placing a disabled student, the most important steps were reportedly finding out their needs and then working closely with the host agency to see if they could accommodate those needs.
Evaluation Methods

Thirty-five respondents reported using evaluations to assess international placements. Twenty-two responding programs (73.3%) reported using an online questionnaire to evaluate the student, 17 programs (68%) used an online questionnaire to evaluate the agency, while 11 programs (61.1%) used an online questionnaire to evaluate the field program. Evaluations were also conducted by an in-person interview in 18 programs and over the telephone in five programs. Evaluations of the student occurred most frequently at selected intervals during the placement and upon completion of the placement, as reported by thirty respondents. The placement agency and field program were evaluated prior to the start of the program, at selected intervals during the program, and upon completion of the placement.

Seven programs reported using the same evaluation tools used in domestic placements. One program uses the Baccalaureate Education Assessment Package (BEAP) to evaluate international placements. Another program reported using the Field Placement/Practicum Assessment Instrument (FPPAI) when evaluating international placements. Both tools measure core competencies in field education (Buchan, et al., 2010).

Benefits and Challenges with International Placements

Benefits

Common themes that emerged when describing the benefit of international placements include the following: increased interest in global social work, expanded opportunities for students, and exposure to diverse cultures.
Increased interest in global social work. Qualitative data suggested that completing an international practicum prepared students to do international social work. Students gained a global perspective for social work both here and abroad. Respondents viewed international placements as mind opening, according to one respondent, international placements “expose students to different cultures and the ways social work is performed throughout the world.” Eighteen respondents noted that completing a field practicum abroad expands students’ ability to think and practice globally. After completing an international field placement, students expressed interest in international issues, and were more aware of global policies and practices. Thirteen programs believed students gained a “global perspective” and international placements offered students hands on experience. According to one respondent, “International field placements expose students to different cultures and allows them to consider how they may begin to practice within diverse cultures as opposed to simply reading about these cultures in a textbook.”

Four respondents believed offering international field practicum placements provided students with an experience they would not be able to get locally. An international placement, “gives students a broader perspective, and brings an interest in international issues to all students.” Thirteen respondents stated that for students who expressed interest in international social work, this opportunity gave them experience in their preferred area of practice. One respondent stated, “Students have a better understanding of social work practice in a global society, they have a better understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.”
**Expanded opportunities for students.** Thirteen respondents reported international placements expanded the opportunities for social work students. Respondents noted the experience expanded the student’s knowledge outside their own culture, to include international comparative policy and practice issues. Students experience what it’s like to be a minority, and gain a better understanding of the struggles experienced by minorities. Struggles included language difficulties and cultural differences (food, religion, housing, and transportation). One respondent noted an international practicum provided students with a diverse learning experience which expanded the students understanding of cultural differences.

Two respondents reported, that for students who completed international placements in their home country the experience may lead to employment once the student graduates. In addition six programs stated that for students interested in pursuing a career in international social work, the experience can lead to future employment opportunities in the field. Students also had the opportunity to network and meet other social workers from their host country. This contact was beneficial to the student as well as the social work program, which learned from these practitioners and infused new material into the curriculum. Reportedly, these relationships assisted in broadening the international program.

**Exposure to diverse cultures.** Twenty-one respondents relayed the international placement exposed students to diverse cultures, and to the international service delivery system. Students developed a greater appreciation and a deeper understanding of different cultures. Social work is not preformed the same way throughout the world, and experiencing the various roles of a social worker allowed the
student to become a well-rounded practitioner. Nineteen respondents emphasized the impact an international placement had on a student’s understanding of diversity; cultural immersion can lead to a deeper sense of cultural acceptance and competency, or “intercultural competence.” According to one respondent “There appears to be more personal growth in students who do international placements, they develop stronger critical thinking skills, students come back changed individuals.”

Challenges

The two main challenges with offering international field placements included cost and supervision. Other themes identified include cultural differences, communication issues, lack of resources, safety, and the preparedness of students.

Cost and supervision. Respondents discussed how international placements may cause financial strain to both the student and program. Two respondents indicated, at times, the faculty arranging the placement had to complete extra work because time was not allotted within the program budget. As mentioned previously, the majority of programs were unable to offer financial support to their students, and with few scholarship opportunities, students had to finance their own placement. Completing an international placement therefore was not an option for many students. Two respondents related that while students are interested in participating in international placements, the high cost and time demands act as disincentives. One program reported, finances and time demands make recruiting participants difficult.

According to 11 respondents, the distance between the international placement and the home university made it difficult for the social work program to ensure supervision met CSWE standards. It was difficult for programs to ensure students
received the same level of experience they would in a local placement. One concern included, “the field placement must meet all requirements for a skill building field placement. It is not to be confused with a study travel seminar,” while one respondent indicated, “I’m not sure that international field placements teach students the skills they need. Too often the student is just interested in the travel and not the development of skills.”

**Barriers.** For 12 programs, it was difficult to convey educational expectations, and monitor the placement from a distance. Eleven programs relayed international agencies may also have different role obligations, making it difficult for the agency to fulfill the requirements. The social worker may have different responsibilities that don’t align with CSWE expectations. Three programs noted staff shortages and a lack of resources within an international agency led to inadequate supervision. The lack of structure within some international agencies became problematic to both the student and the social work program, which required a structured placement. One respondent reported, “The lack of structure and differences in concepts of time often frustrates students.” Three programs identified safety as a concern as well.

Fifteen programs had experienced difficulty related to language and noted language barriers between the host agency, the field director, and the student can lead to miscommunication and the agency misunderstanding the requirements. One respondent relayed, “One student participated in a test program but found her foreign language skills (Spanish) inadequate.” Three programs reportedly solved communication issues by requiring students speak or have some understanding of the host country language
Other International Opportunities

One hundred and forty programs offered other international opportunities to students. Thirty-two percent (n=63) of these programs offered study abroad opportunities, 7% (n=13) offered volunteer abroad opportunities and 13% (n=25) offered travel opportunities to social work students. Twenty percent (n=39) of respondents choose “other” to describe their international opportunities for students. When prompted, these programs reported offering lectures with international content and international courses.

Seventy-eight respondents reported the social work program directly offered the international opportunities. Eighty-nine respondents indicated the university study abroad department offered international opportunities, while fourteen programs utilized a tertiary agency. Appendix B provides a list of tertiary agencies used.

Student Participation

When questioned about student participation, 52% (n=98) of the respondents reported students participate regularly in international opportunities. Once again, cost was identified as the main barrier to participation (n=17). Respondents indicated that although students may be interested in participating, many drop out because of financial and time constraints.

Five respondents reported students are interested in shorter, service learning trips that are less costly and not so demanding. Programs that do not offer international placements indicated students have inquired about international placements and in some cases have looked for them independently. One respondent stated, “Many students are interested in all types of experiences, several participate in shorter-term service learning trips, but not as many end up doing a practicum due to time, financial and other reasons.”
International Social Work Specialization

Only six responding programs (3.2%) offered international social work as a specialization. However, 90% ($n=168$) of respondents reported offering international content within the social work program curriculum. Content was most often incorporated into required courses. Twenty-two programs (13%) reported offering an International Social Work course as an elective, and forty-nine programs (29%) offered international material by incorporating it into both a standard course and offering electives. International material was most often infused in the following courses: Social Welfare Policy and Services ($n=23$), Human Behavior and the Social Environment ($n=11$), Introduction to Social Work ($n=10$), Social Work Practice in Multicultural Contexts ($n=14$), Social Work Theory & Practice ($n=5$), Research Methods ($n=3$), or an International Social Work course offered as an elective ($n=22$).

Professional Interest in International Social Work

Fifty-six percent ($n=107$) of respondents reported having “some interest” in international social work and field placements, with 29% ($n=55$) of respondents having extensive interest. Only five respondents reported no interest. Respondents described their level of interest through qualitative answers. One respondent stated, “We are able to learn from other countries as well as understand how social issues are global and not exclusive in nature.” Thirty-one respondents interested in international placements believed placements offered students a good learning experience. One respondent stated: “I think that the opportunity to travel deeply broadens student’s perspectives on social
problems, diversity, social justice, etc. and gives them a greater appreciation and context for the values of social work as a profession.”

Those respondents who expressed little to no interest in international placements cited the great local need and cultural diversity within the community as the main reason for not wanting to travel abroad \((n=9)\). As one respondent reported, “Multiple opportunities exist for students to interact and work with diverse populations within our geographic area.” One respondent captured the essence of this theme:

My opinion: We have many students who have international experience and we are located in a large urban area - so much diversity here and so many challenges with immigrants right here. Also, we have enough trouble placing all of our students so do not realistically have the resources to spend extra time on international placements.

A lack of resources also emerged among 14 programs not interested in international field placements. Other themes included time and skill development. Programs relayed there is little time to focus on developing international placements, especially in smaller programs. Respondents also expressed concern about instruction within international placements, students may not receive the social work skills needed for positions once they return from the international placements.

Plans for the Future

Seventy-six respondents (40%) reported the program is planning to incorporate more international curriculum, while 23 programs (12%) have no plans to incorporate international content. Eighty-seven respondents (56%) were unsure if their social work program would incorporate more international curriculum in the future. To develop international placements, social workers are beginning to collaborate with
international peers. Social work programs described visiting potential placement sites and partnering with other departments within their university. One respondent described this process as:

I'm bilingual and teach a summer workshop in Mexico and have taught in studies abroad--not directly or specifically as part of the structure of social work program/curriculum--but through the university, therefore incorporating field placements and a structural programmatic component for the School of Social Work is my interest.

Five programs identified course schedules and the current curriculum as a barrier to offering international placements. In order to offer international placements, these programs described exploring ways to alter the curriculum. For two programs this included exploring block placements, while others relayed they are increasing technology in order to offer classes online. One respondent described the addition of technology as, “we are offering more on-line courses and as we have easier access to technology, we are having more conversations about the feasibility of an international field placement program.” In order to meet the needs of non-traditional students, one program stated:

We are actively developing short-term study abroad trips (1-4 weeks), for which students can receive academic credit (and financial aid assistance). Short-term, because so many of our students are "non-traditional" students with significant responsibilities at home. We offer one short-term study abroad trip led by a social work faculty member most academic years. We would like to expand these opportunities, both in terms of the number of students involved and the number of host country options.

Twenty-four programs are currently working to expand the international content within the curriculum. According to respondents, this included offering courses on international issues or offering international field placements. Programs are adding international content as they revise their mission statements, renew their curriculum, and
create their strategic plans. This was described as, “We revised our curriculum to incorporate more information. We have talked about creating an elective around International Social Work,” and “We are beginning to look at curriculum renewal for our next CSWE reaffirmation and a number of faculty want more international content.”

Discussion of the Findings

The International Experience

This study revealed that there has been a slight increase in programs offering international field placements compared to a study completed by Panos, Pettys, Cox, and Jones-Hart (2004). Panos, Pettys, Cox, and Jones-Hart (2004) found that 21.1% of social work programs had placed students internationally between the years of 1997 and 2002. This current study found that 22.3% of programs are currently placing students. Although there has been a slight increase in international placements, there is still a significant decrease in placements compared to Earle’s 1998 survey, which indicated 29.1% of programs were placing students internationally (Earle, 1998 & Panos, et al, 2004). Six responding programs offered International Social Work as a specialization; this is an increase from Healy’s 1986 study where only two programs offered this specialization (Healy, 1986).

Menon (2007) found that 82% of surveyed programs offered international opportunities to their students. Menon’s (2007) survey had 178 responses, with 146 programs offering international opportunities to their students. This current study indicated 171 programs out of the 228 respondents (75%) offered international opportunities to their students. International opportunities included study abroad,
volunteering, and travel opportunities. There appears to be an increase in programs planning to add more international opportunities, 76 respondents stated their program planned to add more opportunities or curriculum. Future research can access if these programs have added more international curriculum. Similar to this study, Menon (2007) reported most international content was incorporated into Social Policy, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Introduction to Social Work, Social Work Practice, and Research courses (Menon, 2007).

**International Placement Models**

This study indicated that placements are facilitated using a variety of models, respondents reported partnering with international universities, placing students in a neighboring country, and using a tertiary agency. Analysis of the data collected suggested programs are using three of the four models identified by Pettys, Panos, Cox, and Oosthuyen (2005). No programs reported using an on-site model, where an on-site adjunct faculty member supervised the international placement.

**Independent/One-Time placement model.** Fourteen programs that were unable to develop continuing international placements used the one-time placement model. This most commonly occurred in smaller programs where students did not express as much interest. Placements were arranged when a student requested an international practicum. To arrange these placements, social work programs used tertiary agencies (appendix B), partnered with international agencies, or utilized international universities.

**Neighboring Country Model.** Ten programs used a neighboring country model, placing students in either Canada or Mexico. One program noted that it is currently not placing students in Mexico, due to the travel advisory. The analysis of data
collected indicated programs using a neighboring country model had been placing students longer then programs that place in other international locations. Reportedly, two programs had been placing students over 12 years, and three programs had been placing students for 8 to 10 years. Currently there are no programs that have been placing students for less than three years. This data suggests that universities placing students internationally have developed long-term placement relationships. Five programs placed annually, and two reportedly placed multiple times a year. The remaining three programs only placed students when they requested an international placement.

Qualitative analysis indicated the neighboring country model allowed for more student participation, with three of the programs having over six students placed. Six programs offered a concurrent schedule; these programs reported having students take courses on campus while placed internationally. Programs using the neighboring county model reported a higher interest among their students (66.7%) then the interest level reported for all survey participants (51.6%).

Exchange/Reciprocal Model. Twenty-seven programs utilized the exchange/reciprocal model, making this the most popular model used. Seventy percent \((n=19)\) of the exchanges were arranged through a “faculty to agency” relationship, with 37% \((n=10)\) of programs using a “university-to-university” model. Eighty-nine percent \((n=24)\) of these programs reported placing students annually. Nine respondents (33.3%) reported their program placed 3 to 5 students annually. Due to distance, 85.7% of programs reported using block placements, with students completing hours over the course of one semester or during a summer.
Ten programs reported using a university-to-university model, of these programs seven provided reciprocal exchanges (70%). However, respondents reported students from the host university rarely participated in the exchange. Mainly, cost prohibited international students from participating in the exchange. When developing long-term placement relationships, participants identified the relationship and mutual collaboration as key. One respondent wrote, “Personal connections with agencies abroad is one of the key factors.”

Cost

Cost was identified as the main barrier to offering international placements. The student, university, and the host agency all incurred the cost of international placements. If students received course credit for the practicum, they were reportedly able to use financial aid to help cover costs, but students without aid had to absorb the travel costs, making it difficult for them to participate. To sustain international placements, programs need to identify financial resources. In a previous study by Miah and Rodgers (2007), 50% of respondents would not share their funding sources (Miah and Rodgers, 2007). In this current study, respondents simply stated scholarships or financial aid were from within the university, no respondent identified an external funding source. The lack of outside funding opportunities presents a serious concern for those programs trying to develop sustainable international placement opportunities. It was suggested that social work programs publicize their efforts towards international placement development. Publicity will bring attention to the program, and help with the recruitment of students from all over the United States (Lager et al., 2010).
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

This study indicated that placing students who experience disabilities in international placements is complex and may be challenging. Seventy-six percent of responding programs stated that they either do not have specific policies in place or have not placed students under the ADA. While American universities are required to adhere to the ADA, including some study abroad programs neither university policy or the ADA apply to international agencies unaffiliated with the university. In this situation, placement decisions and accommodations are up to the host agency (Office of General Counsel, 2011).

Legalities aside, all students should have the opportunity to participate in international placements. Social work programs should make it clear to host agencies and host universities that attention to inclusion is expected. When arranging international placements or exchanges, the legal approach may not be the most successful approach. A positive student experience often comes from a strong relationship between the social work program and host agency, with the social work program providing information and resources to the host agency. According to Silvia Yee, “American schools or universities must take proactive steps to encourage their overseas program partners and organizations to provide physical and program modifications, auxiliary aids, and other accommodations” (Yee, 2010, pg. 2).

Qualitative data revealed only 52% of survey respondents acknowledged considering all students for placements. While 44% of survey respondents reported not having policies in place to address the ADA. One program was able to describe accommodations, while another stated their program has accommodated students in the
past. To aid in placing students with disabilities, respondents reported partnering with international agencies that served that population. In this case, students were placed in familiar settings, and were able to complete an international placement.
CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS AND
CONCLUSIONS

Program Development

Occasional or One-Time Placement Model

Due to time demands and the complexity in planning international placements, programs considering a one-time placement model would likely benefit from working with a tertiary agency that can broker the exchange. Respondents reported using agencies such as Cross Cultural Solutions (CCS), 123 International, and Best Semester to arrange international exchanges. Although the cost is higher, (the Best Semester, Uganda Social Work Practicum Semester is roughly $10,900 without travel), these programs include housing, transportation to and from the airport, boarding, and in some cases, in-country transportation, food, and laundry facilities. Because field instructors are not required to have an MSW, programs are able to be flexible when arranging these placements. According to Alexandria Raab, with CCS, students are provided with a supervisor, and the majority of CCS supervisors do hold masters degrees (personal communication, July 8, 2011). With additional support, these supervisors are able to supervise social work students.

Another option for programs that are unable to develop continuing exchanges is to partner with other universities who are also interested in developing international
field placements. One respondent developed their international program through a consortium grant linking universities in 3 countries. Members of the International Association of Schools of Social Work are able to apply for a $4,000 grant to assist with project funding. For programs looking to partner with different social work programs, this can help alleviate some of the expenses (IASWW, 2011).

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project funding. For programs looking to partner with different social work programs, this can help alleviate some of the expenses (IASWW, 2011).

Social work programs are also able to partner with other departments within the university. This option would open up exchanges to other university students. San Diego State University is an example of a university that implemented international placements using a developmental model for international exchanges. The program began with seven students from various programs including Latin American Studies, International Business, and Anthropology. The social work program arranged an exchange where the students visited La Paz, Mexico. Students participated in Spanish classes and went on field trips, in order to gain a better understanding of Mexican culture. The next year, the program placed more emphasis on identifying social issues and social concerns, with 17 students participating. The international program developed from these experiences (Carrilio and Mathiesen, 2006).

Long-Term Sustainable Placements

Developing a long-term, annual international placement takes time and planning. Without sufficient planning, programs run the risk of an unsuccessful placement. It is important when developing the placement to be aware of university wide policies pertaining to international education. Involving university officials and faculty members in the planning process is a critical first step. Faculty members who are educated about the international program will be able to promote the program to students, increasing student participation. Options for developing the placement are endless, but the most common include partnering with an international agency or university. More respondents partnered with international agencies when arranging placements, programs
reported developing relationships with these agencies to ease the placement process. Students were placed with the same agencies annually, see appendix C for a list of specific agencies. It may be beneficial to reach out to agencies that have already supervised social work students.

Programs with international placements have identified the block schedule as more convenient for both the program and the student. Block placements can occur during the spring, fall, or summer sessions. For those programs that are unable to provide block placements, a concurrent schedule may work too. Students can take classes online while participating in an international placement. To aid in online classes, respondents identified the following software: Macromedia Breeze, Illuminate Live, HorizonLive (Wimba), Skype, and also reported using Interactive Video Networks (INV). Other virtual classroom systems include: Interwise, LearnLinc, Lotus Learning Space, Webex, and Placeware (Schullo, 2006).

**Pre-Placement.** Although not all responding programs have a meeting prior to the placement start date, it is recommended. During a pre placement meeting, the following should be discussed: the preferred method of contact, the learning contract, the role of the field instructor and any supports they may need, the role and expectations of the student intern, the cost associated with the placement and who is responsible for the cost, and language requirements.

Both undergraduate and graduate level students are able to participate in international placements, but the majority of programs do have requirements \( n=30 \). The most common requirements include: a 3.0 grade point average and some knowledge of the host country language. These requirements are recommended to all programs.
considering international placements. Although language proficiency is dependent upon
the country, agency and client population, it is necessary for the student to have some
knowledge of the host country language. This requirement has resulted in the majority of
field placements occurring in English and Spanish speaking countries. For other
placement sites, programs can offer language classes or require students take an outside
language class.

**Supervision.** In order to sustain an international placement, the program must
identify a supervisor / field instructor. Half of the responding programs require
supervisors to hold an MSW. Programs that do not require supervisors to hold an MSW
must work closely with the agency to ensure CSWE requirements are met. If the potential
supervisor does not hold an MSW, it is the programs responsibility to enforce social work
values throughout the duration of the placement. It is recommended the program provides
an orientation to potential supervisors, or when possible, train supervisors in person.
Programs should provide supervisors and staff with field manuals. The program should
occasionally send administration or faculty to the placement site to do field visits in
person (this does not have to be annually). All requirements should be discussed with
potential supervisors prior to arranging the international placement. Programs can also
use Wimba and the telephone to provide additional supervision.

**Placing Students with Disabilities**

Program policy needs to address what accommodations the program is able to
make when placing students with disabilities in international agencies. In some settings,
full accessibility by American standards will not be possible. When developing
placement policy, programs must have accurate information about the placement
agencies and the host community. Placement organizers should make their expectations regarding accommodations for students clear prior to the start of any placement. If needed, the social work program can educate the agency on creative ways to provide accommodations (Sygall & Scheib, 2005). For instance, if the program uses home stays, ask the agency to specifically recruit families with a disabled family member to include in the home stay family pool. Participants with and without disabilities can stay with this family.

Social work programs can also develop placements in countries that have country based anti-discrimination laws, such as: the Australian Disability Discrimination Act (ADDA), the United Kingdom’s Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), or in Costa Rica, the Equal Opportunities Law For Persons With Disabilities (Sygall & Scheib, 2005). Participating students must be made aware that if providing accommodations invoke undue hardship or are beyond what is considered readily achievable for the social work program, a placement may not be feasible. In this case, students can consider alternative study abroad options.

Areas for Further Research

Future research should focus on identifying funding sources for international placements, with special consideration given to surveying the interest level of large global agencies to help fund international social work placements. Additionally identifying possible international agencies that can offer placement opportunities for students with disabilities, placing emphasis on country policies regarding equality of services for those with disabilities. The field would also benefit from research on how
social work programs can better collaborate to develop international opportunities. Developing a pool of potential international organizations that provide placements may make it easier for programs to send students abroad.

Future researchers should assess the cultural relativity of international placements. Placements should respect the host culture and should not reflect colonization. Situations where the host counties cultural approach differs from a student’s own culture should be discussed prior to placement. Researchers must also identify student opinions of international field placements, documenting any changes in students’ worldviews or understanding of international social work practice. The community and host agency experiences should be documented as well. Research that documents the outcome of international field placements may help promote the use of international placements. Finally, future researchers should assess if those programs that expressed interest in developing international placements have developed them, and if not why programs may have chosen not to.

Conclusion

Researchers have previously documented international opportunities and participation rates among schools of social work. This study further identified how international placements are delivered and offers structural recommendations for programs interested in developing international placements. The research describes different placement models and includes details such as supervision, housing, orientation, and student requirements. Currently, only a small number of students are able to take advantage of international placement opportunities. The benefits of an international
placement are invaluable, as one respondent stated, “Students gain a perspective they cannot gain here. The learning is immeasurable.”

The concept of international social work is evolving, and students are beginning to express more interest in international placements. Social workers have the opportunity to work with diverse populations throughout their career. Cultural humility along with a solid grasp on multicultural issues is imperative for a successful career. This study provides basic structural recommendations for programs developing their own international placements as well as identification of tertiary programs that provide international placements. Software programs that support online education that accompanies international placements is also discussed. Ultimately, this researcher hopes to encourage programs to collaborate and share resources to increase student accessibility and the number of social work programs offering international field experiences.
REFERENCES


DOI: 10.1177/002087289603900207


DOI: 10.5175/JSWE.2005.200303110


DOI: 10.1177/0020872805051705


APPENDIX A
Dear Field Director:

This survey is to evaluate international field placements; specifically looking at which accredited social work programs have international field opportunities as part of the field education component. The study will also explore other international opportunities offered by social work programs, to gain a better understanding of what is being offered.

If your social work program does not offer international field placements please answer 'no' on the first page. Any and all information is helpful!

The purpose of this study is to learn which schools offer international field placements, and the design of these programs. This study will compile a list of international field programs and identify how international placements are offered. Survey results will be disseminated through scholarly articles and presentations to provide information to aid in other program’s development of international field placements and volunteer experiences.

This survey will take approximately 15-30 minutes to complete. Please assist us by sharing your frank and candid responses to the various items in the survey. Your input is important and valued.

Your answers will be analyzed without your identifying information except for affiliated university, and programs offered. The Survey Monkey computer program will provide a qualitative and quantitative analysis. The researchers will complete additional analysis to gather greater depth of the quantitative and qualitative responses.

Possible Risks/Benefits:

There are no risks for your participation in this study. Your participation in this project is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. You may refuse to answer any questions and may stop participating at any time. Your refusal to answer a question or to withdraw from participation will have no repercussions.

Your consent shall be assumed if you complete the following survey. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Caitlin Hollis, Principal Investigator, at (510) 301-1551 and/or <chollis2@mail.csuchico.edu>

Thank you for your time and important feedback!
If you choose to participate in the survey, you will be entered into a drawing for one of three $50 gift cards from Amazon.com. You will be notified by email in December of 2011 regarding your status in the drawing for the gift cards.

In order to progress through this survey, please use the following navigation links:
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- Throughout this survey, “abroad” and “overseas” will be used interchangeably, both referring to countries other than the United States.
- “Host country” refers to the international country visited by the student.
- "Home program" refers to your social work program.
- Study abroad programs involve students attending classes in the host country, and participating in cultural events.
- Working abroad refers to students working directly with the client population, but not receiving academic credit.
- Service learning involves both academic work and community service. This would include internships that do not meet CSWE requirements.
- International volunteer opportunities provide students the opportunity to experience the culture and to work with local communities without committing to a formal internship. There is no academic requirement.
- Field placement refers to a structured internship that meets the CSWE field practicum requirements – the focus of this study.
- Intern refers to students who are completing their field placement.
TERTIARY AGENCIES

The list below shows agencies used by surveyed social work programs to arrange international placements. This author is not endorsing or vouching for any of the following agencies. The list is not inclusive and the description provided was taken from the agency mission statement.

Cross Cultural Solutions
http://www.crossculturalsolutions.org/

“Our Mission is to operate volunteer programs around the world in partnership with sustainable community initiatives, bringing people together to work side-by-side while sharing perspectives and fostering cultural understanding. We are an international not-for-profit organization with no political or religious affiliations.”

Best Semester
http://www.bestsemester.com/usp/overview/page/social-work-practicum-brochure

“BestSemester.com is the portal for the off-campus study programs offered by the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU). There are a total of eleven semester programs and one summer program designed to serve the academic interests of CCCU member institutions.”

Brethren Colleges Abroad
http://bcanet.org/programs/

“Since 1962, BCA Study Abroad has been committed to helping students understand the complexities of the contemporary world by providing challenging academic programs and cross-cultural learning in locations around the globe. From its start, BCA has focused its educational mission on engaging students with ideas that matter. As a result, students who participate in a BCA program gain a more comprehensive and precise understanding of the world.”

Nexos Voluntarios
http://www.nexosvoluntarios.org/about.html

“Nexos Voluntarios (NeVo) promotes social development in Peru through impact-driven voluntary activity in projects related to public health, education, human
rights, the environment, and business and development, that involve the participation of a range of social agents (universities, companies, multilaterals, students and professionals) ensuring volunteers have an integral and well-supported experience of social immersion."

123 International
http://www.connect-123.com/

“Connect-123 has vast experience matching people from around the world with incredible internship, volunteer and study abroad programs in our five international locations - Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Dublin and Shanghai. With our network of local companies, organizations and universities we work to design international programs with you in mind.”

Global Service Corps
http://www.globalservicecorps.org/

“Global Service Corps (GSC) is a non-profit leader in service learning and overseas volunteer programs and international internships in Thailand, Cambodia and Tanzania offering international volunteer opportunities including Volunteer Vacations, 2 week Introductions to Service Learning, 4-6 week Short-term Volunteer Abroad Assignments and 9 Week to 6 month International Internships and Overseas Volunteer Assignments.”

World Learning, SIT programs
http://www.sit.edu/studyabroad/studyabroad.htm

“World Learning provides education, exchange, and development programs that cultivate the global leadership and social innovation needed in a shrinking world. Our comprehensive portfolio of programs is enhanced by a worldwide network of hundreds of thousands of alumni, staff, partners, and friends, including Peace Corps founder Sargent Shriver and Nobel Peace Prize winners Wangari Maathai and Jody Williams.”
INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

The list below includes international agencies identified by survey participants. The list is not inclusive and only provides a sample of the agencies used. Most are larger organizations that place within their affiliated agency. The description provided was taken from the agency mission statement.

Common hope
http://www.commonhope.org/about-us/mission-values/

“Common Hope promotes hope and opportunity in Guatemala, partnering with children, families, and communities who want to participate in a process of development to improve their lives through education, health care, and housing.”

Veritas
http://www.veritas.ro/veritas.php

“Veritas is a Christian organization that seeks to make a positive difference in the lives of the people of Sighisoara through service to the community, a variety of educational programs, and intercultural exchange.”

Discover Hope
http://www.lendhope.org/

“Discover Hope provides an opportunity for women in poverty to create their own prosperity through microcredit, entrepreneurship and training. We exist so that women who live in developing nations on $2 a day can shape their own destinies. Our priority is wealth creation from within communities so women can radiate hope and impact future generations.”

Pan De Vida in Ecuador
http://www.pandevida.ec/

“To gather the resources needed to help the less fortunate of Quito to come to a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and to develop to the fullest their God-given potential.”
Red Cross
http://www.icrc.org/

“The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance.”

Mahila Samakhya
http://www.mahilasamakhyaup.org/

Mahila Samakhya provides “women and adolescent girls with the necessary support structure and informal learning environment to create opportunities for education. Enhance the self-image and self-confidence of women and thereby enabling them to recognize their contribution to the economy as producers and workers.”

World Relief
http://worldrelief.org/

“We practice principles of transformational development to empower local churches in the United States and around the world so they can serve the vulnerable in their communities. With initiatives in education, health, child development, agriculture, food security, anti-trafficking, immigrant services, micro-enterprise, disaster response and refugee resettlement, we work holistically with the local church to stand for the sick, the widow, the orphan, the alien, the displaced, the devastated, the marginalized, and the disenfranchised.”

International Justice Mission
http://www.ijm.org/

“International Justice Mission is a human rights agency that brings rescue to victims of slavery, sexual exploitation and other forms of violent oppression. IJM lawyers, investigators and aftercare professionals work with local officials to secure immediate victim rescue and aftercare, to prosecute perpetrators and to ensure that public justice systems - police, courts and laws - effectively protect the poor.”

Reach the Children
http://www.reachthechildren.org/index.cfm

“Reach the Children facilitates self-reliance in communities dedicated to the well-being of underprivileged children. This mission is accomplished by mentorship through Community Empowerment Initiatives in education and enterprise.”
APPENDIX D
This list is not comprehensive. This list only contains self-identified programs. Respondents that did not identify their affiliated university were not included in the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Program has been placing for:</th>
<th>Placement countries</th>
<th>When placements occur</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baylor University</td>
<td>8 to 10 years</td>
<td>Moldova, Africa, Cambodia, Singapore, Malaysia, Canada</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigham Young University</td>
<td>Since 1995</td>
<td>India, China, South Africa, Ghana, Germany, Switzerland, Guatemala</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>3 to 5 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabethtown College</td>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>England, Northern Ireland, India, Ecuador, The Gambia</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>3 to 5 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallaudet</td>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>Cameroon, Guatemala, Costa Rica</td>
<td>Upon request, but we are working on something that is more routine with a school in Guatemala.</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malone University</td>
<td>5 to 8 years</td>
<td>Romania, Denmark (new), and Uganda (new)</td>
<td>Annually - when there is student interest</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millersville University</td>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Only in the spring semesters</td>
<td>3 to 5 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minot State University</td>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>Norway, and possibly England in the future.</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>Costa Rica, Ghana</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>Only when requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivet Nazarene University</td>
<td>8 to 10 years</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rust College</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Louis University</td>
<td>Over 20 years</td>
<td>India, Mexico, Panama, Ghana, Haiti, and others</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Texas at Austin</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>2011-12: Ghana, S. Africa, N. Zealand, Switzerland, Germany, Peru, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Brazil</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>12 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulane University School of Social Work</td>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>South Africa, Rwanda, Belize, Jordan, India</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>6 to 8 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
<td>Guatemala, Honduras, India</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>Only when requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Houston</td>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine Presque Isle</td>
<td>Since the late 90's</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>3 to 5 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Missouri</td>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>Albania, Ireland, Indonesia, India, Ghana</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Montana</td>
<td>5 to 8 years</td>
<td>Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Romania, Scotland, South Africa Swaziland Ukraine</td>
<td>Multiple times a year</td>
<td>3 to 5 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin - Madison</td>
<td>8 to 10 years</td>
<td>Uganda, Kenya, Egypt, Peru, England, Switzerland, Nepal</td>
<td>Multiple times a year</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>3 to 5 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Michigan University</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>Ireland, Tanzania, Ecuador</td>
<td>Upon request</td>
<td>1 to 2 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Field Placements

1. INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Field Director:

This survey is to evaluate international field placements, specifically looking at which accredited social work programs have international field opportunities as part of the field education component. The study will also explore other international opportunities offered by social work programs, to gain a better understanding of what is being offered.

If your social work program does not offer international field placements, please answer "no" on the first page. Any and all information is helpful.

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This study will compile a list of international field programs and identify how international placements are offered. Survey results will be disseminated through scholarly articles and presentations to provide information to aid in other program's development of international field placements and volunteer experiences.

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International Field Placements

- Service learning involves both academic work and community service. This would include internships that do not meet CSWE requirements.

- International volunteer opportunities provide students the opportunity to experience the culture and to work with local communities without committing to a formal internship. There is no academic requirement.

- Field placement refers to a structured internship that meets the CSWE field practicum requirements – the focus of this study.

- Intern refers to students who are completing their field placement.

Thank you for your time and important feedback!

2. THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

The following questions refer to your school’s social work program.

**1. Currently, does your social work program offer international field placements that meet the CSWE requirements?**

- Yes
- No

3.

2. International field placements are available to:

- BSW Students
- MSW Students
- Both
International Field Placements

3. Originally, how were the international placements developed?

Example:

Professional refers to colleagues who have previously worked together, or who met at a professional conference. Professional can also refer to arrangements made by foreign faculty members, who have set up field placements in their home country.

Personal refers to arrangements developed out of individual relationships to either a university or agency. This can include a foreign student who requests to be placed in their home country at a specific agency they are familiar with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University to University</th>
<th>Faculty to University</th>
<th>Faculty to Faculty</th>
<th>Faculty to Agency</th>
<th>Student to University</th>
<th>Student to Faculty</th>
<th>Student to Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. How long has your social work program offered international field placements?

- Under 1 year
- 1 to 2 years
- 3 to 5 years
- 5 to 6 years
- 8 to 10 years
- Other (please specify)

5. In what countries are students placed?
(Please list specific countries, e.g. France, Germany, and Italy instead of Europe)
International Field Placements

6. How often does your program offer international field placements?
   - Multiple times a year (for example: every quarter or every semester)
   - Annually
   - Every two years
   - Every three years
   - Only when students request them
   - Other (please specify)

7. On average, how many students participate in international placements each time your social work program offers these opportunities?
   - 0
   - 1 to 2 students
   - 3 to 5 students
   - 6 to 8 students
   - 9 to 10 students
   - Other (please specify)

4. MODEL OF INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS

The following questions refer to the model used for international field placements.

8. How are international placements offered in your social work program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block placements</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Winter break</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block placements</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Winter break</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concurrent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please provide details on block or concurrent placements. Such as length in weeks and how courses are offered.
International Field Placements

9. Please describe the advantages to this model:

10. Please describe the disadvantages to this model:

11. When are students eligible for international placements?
   - Undergraduate students are eligible
   - Foundation year of an MSW program
   - Concentration year of an MSW program
   - Both

   Please specify hours completed for foundation year and concentration year practicums:

12. Within the social work department, who arranges the international field placements?
   - Student
   - International field supervisor (an in-agency supervisor abroad)
   - Director of Field (within the social work program)
   - The International Field Director (A field director within the program who specializes in international field placements)
   - Other (please specify)

13. Placements are currently arranged through:
   - A university to university relationship
   - A university to agency relationship
   - Through a tertiary agency (a host program that provides placements and supervision, such as the Cross Cultural Solutions: social work internship abroad program)
   - Through two or more of the above
   - Other (please specify)
International Field Placements

14. If placements are arranged through a university to university relationship, is the exchange reciprocal?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If not, please explain:

6.

15. How do you determine which agencies to place students with?

7.

16. Please provide the name(s) of the tertiary agency used:

8.
**International Field Placements**

17. Which agency or agencies are students placed with, and what is the setting of this placement?

Is this agency a non-government organization (NGO) or governmental?

Example:

**Governmental** would be the United Nations, a country social service agency, or any agency associated with a specific government, such as US Aid.

**An NGO would include non-profit organizations such as Amnesty International, missionary sponsored programs such as Mercy Corps or The Salvation Army and any agency that is not sponsored by a specific government.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agency 1</th>
<th>Agency 2</th>
<th>Agency 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child welfare</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child and family</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoptions (or working with orphaned children)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community organizing</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and advocacy (outside of a school setting)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee populations</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please name agencies and describe settings: 

18. Please add any other information regarding how placements are arranged:

9. **DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING**

The following questions refer to the development and monitoring of the student agency collaboration.
International Field Placements

19. Does a pre-placement meeting occur between the student, faculty supervising the placement, and the host agency?

What is addressed during the pre-placement meeting:

(Check all that apply)

☐ Learning contract format
☐ Preferred method of contact
☐ Preferred frequency of contact
☐ Evaluation methods used
☐ Role of the field supervisor
☐ Role of the field liaison
☐ Role of the student intern
☐ Role of the field director
☐ Expectations of the student intern
☐ Other
☐ A pre-placement meeting does not occur

If a pre-placement meeting does not occur, how are the parameters of the placement developed and planned?
# International Field Placements

20. Please specify the pattern of communication between the social work program and the student and agency over the course of a practicum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern of Communication</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple times a week by phone</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-weekly by phone</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly by phone</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly by phone</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once during a practicum by phone</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple times a week by e-mail</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-weekly by e-mail</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly by e-mail</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly by e-mail</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once during a practicum by e-mail</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple times a week by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-weekly by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once during a practicum by Skype (or online video chat)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. How would you rate the communication between your social work program and the agency?

- [ ] Effective
- [ ] Moderate: The social work intern has experienced minor problems related to miscommunication (Example: the intern was not picked up from the airport)
- [ ] Needs work: The program experiences regular problems similar to the above and these problems are related to miscommunication
- [ ] Not effective: There is no communication
- [ ] Other (please specify)
International Field Placements

10. FUNDING

The following question refers to how international internships are funded within your social work program.

22. How are the international placements funded?

Please check all that apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Airfare</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Transportation to &amp; from placement</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Cultural activities</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home university</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host university</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships or grants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please specify which scholarships or grants have been used:

11. SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

The following questions address how supervision is provided in international field placements.

23. Does the program require international field supervisors to have an MSW?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
International Field Placements

24. If not, how do you ensure field supervisors meet the requirements specified by CSWE (see below)?

Accreditation Standard 2.1.6: “Specifies the credentials and practice experience of its field instructors necessary to design field learning opportunities for students to demonstrate program competencies. Field instructors for baccalaureate students hold a baccalaureate or master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. Field instructors for master’s students hold a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. For cases in which a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective and describes how this is accomplished.”

(Please check all that apply)

☐ The field director communicates with the student and agency weekly and enforces a social work perspective
☐ The faculty field liaison communicates with the student and agency weekly and enforces a social work perspective
☐ An MSW from a local university provides supervision for the student once weekly
☐ An MSW from a local agency provides supervision for the student once weekly
☐ Other

Please describe how your program ensures supervision meets the CSWE requirements:

12.
### International Field Placements

25. How do you ensure the host agency understands the CSWE requirements for field placements?

(Please check all that apply)

- [ ] CSWE requirements are addressed in the pre-placement meeting
- [ ] The requirements are outlined in a contract
- [ ] The field director goes over the requirements with the agency
- [ ] The field director goes over the requirements with the field supervisor
- [ ] The tertiary agency communicates the requirements with the agency
- [ ] The field supervisor holds an MSW from a CSWE accredited institution, and is familiar with the requirements
- [ ] The requirements are discussed in an orientation, and it is mandatory for the field supervisor to attend
- [ ] Other

Please add any additional comments on how you ensure the placement meets the requirements of CSWE:

**26. How is field supervision provided?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>On-site</th>
<th>Off-site</th>
<th>Provided by</th>
<th>Delivery method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video chat (ex. Skype)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home university field liaison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home university field director</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified community member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host university</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Field Placements

27. Has there ever been a problem relating to individual roles within the field placement?

For example: language barriers, unclear expectations, role confusion between the student and field supervisor

☐ Yes
☐ No

If so, how was this handled within the agency and your social work program?

13. Preparation of Student

The following questions refer to how students are prepared for their international field placement. This includes the requirements to be placed abroad, any orientation information, and housing arrangements.

28. Overall, how would you rate the preparation of students for international placements?

☐ Well prepared
☐ Prepared
☐ Not well prepared
☐ Not prepared

Comments:
29. What are the requirements for students to be placed abroad? Check all that apply:

☐ Must speak the host country language fluently
☐ Must have a working knowledge of the host country language
☐ Must complete a language course prior to interning abroad
☐ Prior international travel experience (either for leisure or volunteering)
☐ Prior study abroad experience
☐ GPA requirement: 3.5 and above
☐ GPA requirement: 3.0 and above
☐ GPA requirement: 2.5 and above
☐ Age requirement: must be over 16
☐ Age requirement: must be over 21
☐ Age requirement: must be over 24
☐ No requirements
☐ Other (please specify)

30. Please add any other information regarding student requirements:

31. Is an orientation provided?
☐ Yes
☐ No
### International Field Placements

**32. If yes: how is the orientation provided?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation is held:</th>
<th>Orientation is arranged by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the home country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the host country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your social work program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The host university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The host agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tertiary agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please describe the structure of this orientation:

---

### 15. Arrangement of Student Housing

**33. Are there housing requirements?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**34. Housing is arranged by:**

- [ ] The student
- [ ] Your social work program
- [ ] The host university
- [ ] The host agency
- [ ] A tertiary agency
- [ ] Other

Please describe any housing requirements:

---

**35. Students are housed:**

- [ ] In a campus dorm
- [ ] With a local family
- [ ] Off-campus housing with other students
- [ ] In agency housing
- [ ] Students arrange their own housing
## International Field Placements

36. How is the American's with Disabilities Act addressed in your programs international placements?

### 16. EVALUATION METHODS

The following questions refer to assessment methods used to evaluate both the program and the student.

37. Do any evaluations take place during the internship?

Including: field instructors evaluation of the students field performance, field instructors evaluation of the field program, a student evaluation of their field performance, and the faculty liaisons evaluation of the field sites.

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify)

38. If yes, what type of evaluations are completed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation of Student</th>
<th>Online questionnaire</th>
<th>Telephone interview</th>
<th>In-person interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the International Field Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a particular assessment tool is used, please specify.

39. How often are evaluations completed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation of Student</th>
<th>Before the start of the program</th>
<th>At selected intervals during the internship</th>
<th>At the completion of the internship</th>
<th>All of the above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the International Field Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Field Placements

40. Who completes the evaluations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation of Student</th>
<th>The field liaison</th>
<th>The field supervisor</th>
<th>The student</th>
<th>The field supervisor and the student</th>
<th>The field director</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the International Field Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

The following questions refer to the benefits to offering international field placements, and the challenges that present.

41. What are some of the benefits of offering international field placements?


42. What are some challenges to offering international field placements?


43. Is there any other information you would like to add regarding international placements or international program development?


18. OTHER INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The following questions refer to other international travel opportunities your social work program has available to the students.

44. Does your social work program offer any other international opportunities for students? (Check all that apply)

- [ ] No
- [ ] Study abroad
- [ ] Volunteer abroad
- [ ] Travel abroad
- [ ] Other


International Field Placements

45. If yes, these opportunities are offered through:

(check all that apply)

☐ The social work department
☐ The university study abroad department
☐ A tertiary agency

Please specify programs and agencies:

46. In your opinion, is there a high interest in these international opportunities? (High interest meaning students participate regularly and ask for more international opportunities)

☐ Yes
☐ No

Do students participate regularly?

19.

47. Does your social work program offer an International Social Work specialization?

☐ Yes
☐ No
### International Field Placements

**48. Is there international content within the social work program curriculum?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Offered as electives</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Does not apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please specify course(s):

---

**20.**

**49. Please rate your personal interest in international social work and international field placements**

- Extensive interest
- Some interest
- Little interest
- No interest
- Other

Why this level of interest?

---
International Field Placements

50. Are there any future plans to incorporate more international material into the social work program?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure
☐ Other

Please describe:

51. Any other information you would like to add:

52. Name of the university you represent:

21.

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey! You will be notified if your e-mail is pulled for one of the Amazon gift cards by December 15, 2011.

Press Done to submit your answers