Marketing Yourself for MSW Field Experience Opportunities
Career Services Mission and Team

The Walden Career Services Center aspires to be a cutting edge, global career services center preparing our learners to navigate career transition over a lifetime. To achieve this vision, we educate, coach, and advise our learners to proactively manage their careers.

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Agenda

• Define the purpose of Field Experience
• Provide strategies on how to conduct a proactive search
• Market yourself and Walden University
• Create tailored application materials that highlight your unique qualifications
• Develop a step-by-step plan to land your Field Experience site
Purpose of Field Experience

- Fulfillment of program requirements
- Development of social work practice skills
- Development of competencies & practice behaviors
- Opportunity to apply social work theory to practice
- Exposure to the social work field
- Networking, mentoring, and references
- Building marketability
Know Your Target
Know Your Target: Site Requirements

- Provide a variety of assignments to develop student competencies and practice behaviors
- Provide an opportunity to work with individuals, groups, families, and community
- Provide 1 hour of weekly supervision
- Provide adequate office space, supplies, and telephone access
- Provide opportunities for training (agency orientation, safety training, etc.)
Know Your Target: The Site

What are some ways to research a potential Field Experience site?
Know Your Target: Site Supervisor Requirements

• MSW is preferred
  – If an MSW is not available, the field liaison will provide the additional MSW supervision

• 2 years practice experience post MSW

• Social work license is NOT REQUIRED
How well do you know your professional brand?
Define Your Brand

• What is unique about YOU?
  • Interests/skills/personality/values
  • Academic achievements
  • Related volunteer/work experience
  • Professional contributions
  • Community involvement
  • Specialized knowledge
Market Walden University

- Candidacy status with CSWE
- Regional accreditation
- Social change mission
- Qualified faculty
- Diverse global perspective
- National (and international) student population
- Residency experience
- Rigorous curriculum
What is the most common method used by a site supervisor to fill a Field Experience position?
Is There a FIT?

• What values and contributions can you bring to the site?
• What knowledge and skills will be most useful?
• Do your qualifications match their needs?
• Will you fit in with the people/culture?
• Does the site afford you the opportunities you need to complete program requirements?
Winning Application Materials
Why a Career Portfolio?

A career portfolio:

- Sets you apart from other applicants
- Leaves a lasting impression
- Allows the site to learn more about you
- Includes accomplishments and achievements to reference during an interview
Creating Your Career Portfolio

• Cover letter
• Resume
• Walden-specific items:
  • Walden University Information
  • MSW Program Information (requirements and course descriptions)
  • Application Papers and Assignments (your materials only)
  • Letters of recommendation
  • Copy of the MSW Field Manual
OptimalResume – Portfolio Builder

Welcome to Walden University’s OptimalResume system!

We are excited to offer OptimalResume, a career management system offering self-guided tools to help you:

- Create high-impact materials including resumes and cover letters based on your career goals
- Present your materials online — with our easy-to-use website builder
- Download your materials in a number of formats
- Manage an unlimited number of career documents from one central location
- Share your credentials across your network and extend their reach to social networking sites

To get started, Create New Account using your Walden University email and password. To have any career materials reviewed, please schedule an appointment through your myWalden University Portal.

The Walden University Career Services Center hopes you find this resource useful as you build your career!

https://waldenu.optimalresume.com
Cover Letter:
Sample Contact Information

Jacqueline C. Thompson
XXXX State Street
Detroit, MI  48201
(XXX) XXX-XXXX
JacquelineC2@waldenu.edu

January 12, 2014

Jack Stevens, LPC
Lawrence Mental Health Facility
XXX Raymond Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201

Dear Mr. Stevens:


Cover Letter: Highlighting Your Brand

This serves as my letter of intent for a Practicum and/or Internship at your training site in order to complete my MSW field experience requirements. I am impressed with your reputation as a leading provider of mental health services in the Detroit area since 1978.

I am currently enrolled in an MSW at Walden University, a regionally accredited institution committed to counselor excellence. Faculty at Walden University are scholar-practitioners with credentials from top national universities. I have achieved a 3.5 GPA and completed coursework in Introduction to Social Work, Essential Skills for Social Work Practice, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, and Diversity, Human Rights, and Social Justice.
I bring knowledge of working with individuals, groups, and communities from a strengths perspective. I understand the NASW code of ethics and its importance to my work as a social work practitioner. I have volunteered at a domestic crisis center for over a year and I am certified in domestic violence advocacy. My technology, organizational and communication skills acquired during ten years of prior administrative experience will also help me contribute to your team of social work professionals.

As I approach the end of my graduate program, I am eager and ready to apply theory to practice. Enclosed you will find my career portfolio which includes a resume, a detailed description of the Master of Social Work program at Walden University, and Field Experience requirements.
I greatly appreciate your consideration of my application. If you have additional questions regarding requirements for the MSW field experience, Walden University, or the MSW program, you may contact the Director of Field, Dr. Sebrena Jackson, at Sebrena.Jackson@waldenu.edu. I’m looking forward to further discussing field opportunities at your facility.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline C. Thompson
# Resume: Your Marketing Tool

[http://careercenter.waldenu.edu/921.htm#Program-Specific](http://careercenter.waldenu.edu/921.htm#Program-Specific)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Master of Social Work (MSW) Webinars</th>
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<td>MSW Field Orientation 10/1/13</td>
<td>MSW Field Orientation (pdf)</td>
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<td>Dr. Sally Brocksen</td>
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| MSW Student Orientation 9/19/13     | MSW Student Orientation (pdf) |
| Dr. Sally Brocksen                 | Closed Captioning (pdf)     |
| Dr. Sebrena Jackson                |                            |

| Tailoring Your Resume for MSW Field Experience 1/27/14 | Tailoring Your Resume for MSW Field Experience (pdf) |
| Nicolle Skalski Andrea Obycki       | Closed Captioning (pdf)     |

- Tailor your resume for a specific site
- Strengthen your resume sections
- Learn general formatting tips
Resume: Main Sections

Contact Information
Summary of Qualifications
Education
Internships
Volunteer Experience
Professional Experience
Honors and Awards
Certifications
Affiliations
Resume: OptimalResume Samples

View Samples by Category:

- Social Work
- Community and Social Services
- Psychology

https://waldenu.optimalresume.com
Share Your CART Stories

- Challenge – What was the problem?
- Action – What did you do? Did you initiate it?
- Result – Who or what was impacted and how?
- Tie-In – How does this apply to your future role?
CART Story Example

• In 2007, I volunteered at Lawrence House, a facility for mentally ill and chemically dependent adults. During my time there, I recruited 10 patients to plant a permanent vegetable garden at the facility. My initiative helped promote physical activity, healthy eating, and sustainability, thereby improving both the physical and mental well-being of patients. As an intern at your facility, I hope to practice social work skills under supervision and further help adults who are mentally ill to take initiative in their daily lives.
Other Considerations
## Top 5 Search Methods

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<tr>
<th>Job Search</th>
<th>Field Experience Search</th>
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<td><strong>#1</strong> Take inventory on what you have to offer and what you’re looking for</td>
<td>Take a holistic approach to your search (identify interests/skills, goals, environments, sites, people, marketing your brand, etc.)</td>
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<td><strong>#2</strong> Working with others, identify subjects or fields of interest to you</td>
<td>Build network of social work professionals and ask for their input</td>
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<td><strong>#3</strong> By yourself, identify and contact organizations via phone or site visit</td>
<td>Research sites and contact via phone or site visit</td>
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<td><strong>#4</strong> Knock on door whether there is a vacancy or not</td>
<td>Reach out to any site that interests you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong> Ask your network for leads</td>
<td>Ask social work professionals in your network about field experience openings</td>
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(Bolles, 2009)
Gear Up for Your Search

• Create a powerful introduction:  
  http://www.internships.com/student/resources/prep/videointro/video-example

• Practice CART stories

• Strengthen your online presence:  www.linkedin.com

• Build field experience search skills:  
  http://www.quincareers.com/internship_tutorial/

Don’t wait too long to start your search!
Informational Meetings: Making the Initial Contact

Hi ________, my name is ______________________ and I’m a graduate student pursuing a master’s degree in social work at Walden University. I received your name from ___________________. I understand that you’re engaged in counseling clients with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. I am wondering if we could meet for 20 to 30 minutes to discuss your insights into your specialty and the possibility of my completing a field experience at your site.
Approaching Field Experience Sites: A Step-by-Step Plan

• Contact site supervisor directly (phone or in-person)

• Arrange an informational meeting
  – Face to face
  – Phone
  – Skype

• Dress professionally

• Provide targeted application materials
Approaching Field Experience Sites: A Step-by-Step Plan

• Meet with site supervisor (share stories, ask questions, bring articles, express interest)
• Leave career portfolio
• Follow up (thank you letter, email, phone)
• Land the field experience!
Still Need Ideas?

• Tell everyone you know you are searching
• Join special interest groups related to your field
• Connect with potential site supervisors through social media
• Ask experts for advice
• Expand your search
• Be open to new settings and populations
• Improve your professional image
• Practice, practice, practice!
Field Experience Office Assistance

- Reach out to the field office if you find you need additional consultation
  - Last names A-L: Dr. Donna McElveen
donna.mcelveen@waldenu.edu
  - Last names M-Z: Dr. Pete Meagher
peter.meagher@waldenu.edu
Career Services Center

Quick Answers
Type your question in the search box, and click Go.

Looking to advance in your career? Transitioning to a new job? Enhancing your professional development and network? We're here to help you navigate your career journey! We encourage you to set goals and assume active stewardship of your career progress from the very start of your academic program.

The Career Services Center offers
- paths to self-knowledge;
- resources for job opportunities and career information;
- resume and curriculum vita tips;
- guidance on networking and branding;
- strategies to help you prepare for interviews and land the job.

Career Services Website Tour

http://careercenter.waldenu.edu
Over 50 Career Services
Archived Webinars

OptimalResume Webinar Series
Part 1: Resume Builder
9/12/13
Andrea Obrycki

Getting to Know Your Walden University Career Services Center
2/26/13
Career Services Staff

Crafting Effective Resumes
10/21/10
Nicolle Skalski

Building Your Professional Brand
7/25/2012
Andrea Obrycki

Using LinkedIn to Build Your Professional Network
1/24/13
Andrea Obrycki
Nicolle Skalski
Denise Pranke

Tapping Into the Hidden Job Market
10/5/11
Nicolle Skalski

Mid-Life Job Search Strategies
1/25/12
Lisa Cook
Denise Pranke
Get Connected!

Join our Career Services LinkedIn Group

Follow us on Twitter

Read Walden student successes on our blog

Check out OptimalResume

Access everything from the CS website:
http://careercenter.waldenu.edu
Email: careerservices@waldenu.edu
Questions?
References

360Reach is a site that includes a professional branding assessment:  http://www.reachcc.com/360reach

Bolles, R. N. (2009). The job-hunter’s survival guide: How to find hope and rewarding work, even when “there are no jobs.” United States: Ten Speed Press.

Internships.com is a site for students seeking internship advice:  http://www.internships.com/student

Thank You for Participating!