



STATE OF SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION NATIONAL SURVEY REPORT 2020

METHOD

A survey was sent to all 43 Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE-ACFTS) accredited institutions asking field education coordinators (FECDs) and directors about program details, program and staffing models, resources, FECD activities, and their perspectives on the state of field education in Canada

PURPOSE

To gain a better understanding of the state of social work field education in Canada

GOAL

TFEL aims to prepare the next generation of social workers in Canada by creating training and mentoring opportunities for students, developing and mobilizing innovative and promising field education practices, and improving the integration of research and practice in field education

KEY FINDINGS



A majority of CASWE-ACFTS accredited programs participated in the survey with **39 of 43 FECDs**, or **90.7%** completed the survey

MSW programs have greater full-time equivalents (FTEs) for a fewer number of students

The number of FTEs for the "onsite" program rose as the number of students increased

1 FACULTY MEMBER LIAISON MODEL was the most common model

2 SESSIONAL FACULTY LIAISON MODEL was the second most common model

Most institutions **94%** have **1.0 FTE** or less in administrative assistance/office support assigned to field education

37% of institutions with BSW & MSW programs reported have **5.5 or more FTEs for the "onsite" program**

The average # of FTEs reported to adequately staff onsite programs was **2.5**, with BSW programs reporting a greater average of FTEs needed at **2.9, greater than MSW programs**

36% of institutions with BSW & MSW programs reported having **less than 2.4 FTE's or more FTEs** for the "onsite" program who match or place students

Almost all universities offered:

- **97%** Urban Placements
- **51%** Placements on Reserve

Universities with **2 employed field personnel** have programs with **250-499 students**

2/3 of universities offered **BSW & MSW programs**

44% offered programs in an **online or blended** format, but had very few designated staff assigned to manage these programs

75% of respondents worked at English speaking programs
26% worked at French speaking programs



FIELD COORDINATOR DUTIES

Field Education Coordinators (FECD) are responsible for building relationships with agencies & organizations to support student placements

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS EXIST WITHIN



PROVINCIAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES



LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS



GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES

DIVERSE FIELD RELATED ACTIVITIES EXIST WITHIN

DEVELOPING FIELD MANUALS



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH AGENCIES



PARTICIPATING IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT



FECD REPORTED THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR MORE ACTIVITIES (AVERAGE 16-37) THAN OTHER FACULTY STAFF (AVERAGE OF 8-33) INVOLVED WITH THE FIELD TEAM



OF INSTITUTIONS REPORTED HAVING CONTENT FOR FIELD INSTRUCTORSHIP IN THEIR PROGRAMS



FIELD COORDINATOR/DIRECTOR CHALLENGES & PERSPECTIVES

MOST COMMON CHALLENGES FACING FECD WERE STUDENT DYNAMICS, PRESSURES TO INCREASE STUDENT ENROLLMENTS, AND MEET STUDENT DEMANDS

OTHER CHALLENGES INCLUDED:
 LOW STAFFING NUMBERS
 LOW LEVELS OF FUNDING AVAILABLE
 DIFFICULTY RECRUITING FIELD PLACEMENTS

CONFLICT EXISTS BETWEEN THE INCREASE OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMS AND IN STUDENT ENROLLMENT.
 THIS ADDS PRESSURE ON FECDs

COVID-19 WAS A CHALLENGE THAT EXACERBATED:
 FINANCIAL CUTBACKS
 ABILITY TO SUPPORT FIELD PLACEMENTS
 FECDs FEELING OVERWHELMED

Limitations

- o This study is specific to the Canadian context, capturing only CASWE-ACFTS accredited universities
- o Surveys can either reflect the combined experiences of all field staff in that specific institution or the personal experience of the individual that completed it
- o French responses did not always correspond to the English titles of field instructors, liaisons, and coordinators/directors
- o Some of the findings were inferred based on FECD responses

Next Steps

TFEL will use the results to inform the development of sustainable models for social work field education and the development of resources for students and field educators

For more information:
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