

# Institute of Buddhist Studies

## Field Education Handbook



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## Introduction

As stated in the IBS catalog, the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program “prepares students to engage fully and with confidence in ministry, chaplaincy, and related professions as well as further academic work.” The program fosters a nuanced understanding of Buddhism in its aim to “develop skilled, thoughtful and effective leaders 6.” Field Education is critical to the aims of this program by providing an immersive approach to real world involvement. Field Education provides a platform in which theoretical study is integrated with practical application by way of a structured and mentored system. Regardless of your intended vocation, integrating Buddhist teachings while working in other institutions of service will enhance your skills and formation as a leader.

This handbook lays out the program, process, procedures, and policies of the IBS Field Education Program. You will find explanations, checklists, and information regarding site selection, registration, units, and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) should you choose this route. You will find all the information you need to be successful. I wish you well as your journey unfolds and you go out into the world as a spiritual leader in the making.

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## Field Education

Much of pastoral care education is based on the action-reflection-action model, in which one engages in a community and then reflects on that activity within the sphere of one's religious tradition. The intention behind field education (also known as "contextual education") is to cultivate an understanding of the relationship between real world situations and the development of pastoral competency within a professional context. The field site is a location of practical experience. This experience is then reflected upon through the lens of pastoral education and supported through concurrent coursework. The insights culminated are subsequently integrated back into community activity, thus completing the action-reflection-action model. Field education encourages students to generate their own meaning making and self-understanding through service experience.

Field Education (FE) at IBS focuses on community-based settings with student-driven placement and engagement at the heart of its operation. The goal in choosing a site is a placement that allows regular contact with people, not a placement where you work alone or have primarily administrative duties. The placement can be at various types of sites—temples, sanghas, healthcare settings, prisons, or community care-based non-profits, etc. Students must have oversight, guidance, and evaluation. Students can choose to do Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) to fulfill the FE requirement. CPE is covered in the second half of this handbook.

## Determining Academic Credit

Academic credit is earned based on the number of hours the student volunteers at their field site. Three (3) units of Field Education are currently required to earn a Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree at IBS. Students have the option of completing a maximum of nine (9) units of Field Education toward an MDiv degree.

For non-CPE sites, students enroll in the three (3) unit FE course, FE-2400: Concurrent Field Study – Self Placement. This course includes a Field Learning Class (1–1.5 hours of class, 3–3.5 hours of outside reading and reflection per week) and 4.5 hours per week (minimum) of on-site volunteering (flexible supervision). The FE-2400 course may be repeated for additional credit.

For CPE programs, one (1) unit of CPE is 400 hours of work. One (1) unit of CPE is equivalent to six (6) units of Field Education. CPE students should enroll in FE-3400: Advanced Field Study – CPE. For FE-3400, the site program is self-contained with no additional class at the IBS. The policies for Field Education are governed by the Field Education Policy in the IBS catalog.

## Tuition

Tuition for the field education course is billed at a different rate than other courses. See the IBS course catalog and/or the IBS website for the most current tuition rate.

## Eight Steps to Earning Field Education Credit at IBS

Students should:

1. Meet with the Field Education Director about whether conducting field education at this point in their academic career is feasible. Be prepared to discuss their intention to pursue field education, their desired outcomes, and what opportunities exist to meet those outcomes.
2. Determine a field education site. Consider whether to choose a site from the list of pre-approved field sites or propose a new field education setting. For all sites, students should discuss site placement with the Field Education Director and/or the Ministerial Program Coordinator. It is the student's responsibility to self-initiate and apply to the field site.
  - a. A list of pre-approved sites for chaplaincy students and pre-approved BCA temple sites for ministerial students is available on the IBS website.
  - b. If students do not find that the pre-approved sites fit their purposes, a new field education site may be proposed. When proposing a new site, the **New Field Site Authorization Form** needs to be submitted. Proposing a new field education setting requires discussion with and approval from the Field Education Director and the dean.
    - i. The work at the new field site should accommodate the learning goals of the student. In general, a new site should be an organization that engages the student in responsibilities that bring them in direct contact with the public, such as offering pastoral care, community support activities, or social activism. Examples: churches, temples, prisons, hospitals, nursing homes, college campuses; advocacy, environment, and social change groups.
3. Submit a **Field Education Proposal Form** to the Field Education Director, describing the work to be done and a draft of their learning goals. See section of this handbook on "Crafting Learning Goals for the Field Education Proposal Form."
4. Register for "FE-2400 Concurrent Field Study" course. This is a three (3) unit course that is graded on a pass/fail basis. Reference the "Field Education Policy" in the IBS catalog and contact the IBS Registrar for details. For information on tuition and reduction in fees, see "Tuition & Fees" on the IBS website.
5. Email the **Midterm Supervisor Evaluation** to their supervisor in time for the supervisor to complete and return it before Reading Week (or at the end of Fall semester if in a year-long program). It is incumbent upon the student to assure the Supervisor Mid-term Evaluation is returned on time. The supervisor returns the evaluation directly to the Field Education Director via email.
6. Submit the **Midterm Self-Evaluation** the Friday before Reading Week (or at the end of Fall semester if in a year-long program).

7. Email the **Final Supervisor Evaluation** to their supervisor in time for them to complete and return it by the last week of the term (or at the end of Spring semester if in a year-long program). It is incumbent upon the student to assure the Final Supervisor Evaluation is returned on time. The supervisor returns the evaluation directly to the Field Education Director via email.
8. Submit the **Final Self-Evaluation** by the end of the term (or at the end of Spring semester if in a year-long program).

## Approved Field Education Sites

See the IBS website for a list of Approved Field Education Sites for chaplaincy students and Approved BCA Temple Field Sites for ministerial students. For all sites, students should discuss site placement with the Field Education Director and/or the Ministerial Program Coordinator.

## Crafting Learning Goals for the Field Education Proposal Form

Field education is a vital component of pastoral formation and requires the student to deeply and honestly assess their strengths and areas for improvement. This is a matter of dharmalogical, vocational, and personal reflection in their process of discernment and development. The intention is for the student to develop an understanding of how they personally manifest the teachings of their tradition in the work of serving other human beings from a variety of backgrounds. With this framework, it is incumbent upon the student to lead the process of crafting goals with the advice and assistance of the Field Education Director. The student and Field Education Director meet to produce a proposal so that the parameters of the agreement all coalesce to achieve the learning goals of the student at this particular place and time in their formation.

Pragmatically, the forming of learning goals sets into shape what the student wants to learn and how they intend to learn it. The student needs to consider what outcomes they want from this experience and how the chosen site will help facilitate these goals. The Field Education Director is there to help the student tease out their strengths and “growing edges” by exploring the student’s fears, limits, apprehensions, and how the goals meet the student’s personal development. Ultimately, the learning goals need to be realistic, achievable, and measurable with direct correlation to the work being done at the chosen site.

In your Field Education Proposal Form, please briefly indicate what actions will enable you to achieve your learning goals. Keep in mind that your self-evaluation at the end of this experience is based largely upon how you are meeting your learning goals.

## Evaluating a Field Education Experience

What distinguishes field education from other work experience is the nature and focus on intentional goal setting and evaluation. By doing self-evaluation and sharing that experience through written expression with the Field Education Director, the student exposes their personal development to a witness and guide. This process deepens and solidifies the developmental understanding of the student's own pastoral role and leadership. Through honest and supportive dialogue with the Field Education Director, the student can assess how they are or are not meeting their goals, how these goals might change after experiential insight, and what clarity has been gleaned in terms of future vocational pathways. Ideally, the content related to the development of pastoral identity is related in some degree to the work taking place at the field site.

A student mid-term and final self-evaluation, as well as a site supervisor mid-term and final evaluation, are both required to earn academic credit for field education. In terms of self-evaluation, the student is encouraged to meet with the Field Education Director to discuss their findings prior to writing and submitting the work. The mid-term evaluation is a time for honest and forthright dialogue to determine if and how the student is meeting their goals and/or how the goals might change given what has been learned at that point. The final evaluation should reflect the culminating formation and conclusions resulting from the entire experience. In terms of supervisor evaluations, the student emails a copy of the evaluation to their site supervisor along with the email address of the Field Education Director. The site supervisor emails the completed evaluation directly to the Field Education Director to ensure confidentiality and honest feedback.

## Field Education Forms and Deadlines

- All forms are available on the IBS website.
- Fall or Spring assignments: midterm evaluations are due on the Friday before Reading Week. Final evaluations are due at the end of the semester.
- Year-long assignments: the midterm evaluation is due at the end of Fall semester and the final evaluation is due at the end of Spring semester.
- In some cases, the academic calendar does not coincide with the duration of volunteer work at the field education site. Certain sites may require a longer time commitment or may operate on their own schedule for training new volunteers. In instances when the start and stop times of field education hours fall outside of the regular semester cycle, students should consult with the Field Education Director regarding when required forms are due and the IBS registrar regarding when to register for the FE-2400 course.

## Field Education Checklist

\_\_\_\_\_ Meet with Field Education Director to discuss field education plans and site considerations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Choose a field education site in consultation with the Field Education Director and/or Ministerial Program Coordinator. Apply to the site.

\_\_\_\_\_ Submit Field Education Proposal Form and written documentation of acceptance at the FE site to the Field Education Director **at least one month prior to the start of FE-2400 course.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Register for FE-2400 course.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ensure that both midterm evaluation forms are submitted to the Field Education Director (student's self-evaluation and site supervisor's evaluation).

\_\_\_\_\_ Ensure that both final evaluation forms are submitted to the Field Education Director (student's self-evaluation and site supervisor's evaluation).



## Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is intentionally designed to provide the participant with the direct, hands-on, clinical experience of providing spiritual care to patients, families, and staff members in the context of an interfaith setting. Primarily established in the healthcare field, CPE can also take place in prisons, jails, military units, and an assortment of other locations. A cornerstone of CPE is the educational component involving peer group work, supervision, and reflecting on clinical encounters. In the process, students encounter personal challenges that become points of examination and insight into the competency of serving others. This is meant to be intensive work that promotes the development of pastoral identity and spiritual care. Integral to this formation is examining one's tradition and how the teachings inform your specific manifestation of care. Students are expected to identify, formulate, and articulate spiritual assessment and spiritual care from one's own tradition.

CPE programs accredited through the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) provide highly structured curricula and educational environments. An ACPE-certified educator will guide individuals and the group through the action-reflection-action model using a group process and individual direction. Each CPE unit requires approximately 300 hours of clinical practice and 100 hours of educational activities.

Students registering CPE units for academic credit through IBS will receive 6 IBS units for each CPE unit (6 IBS units/1 CPE unit). One completed unit of CPE fulfills the 3-unit field education requirement for Master of Divinity degrees at IBS, and supplies students with an additional 3 educational units. A unit of CPE can be completed in a 10-12 week intensive summer program or through a longer period of time known as an "extended unit."

Below are ways to learn about ACPE accredited sites, locally or nationally, as you consider where you may want to participate in CPE education.

- Recommended: Attend the annual CPE day at GTU in October to hear from and speak with programs in the Bay Area.
- Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) – Accredited CPE Centers Directory <https://profile.acpe.edu/accreditedcpedirectory>
- If you are interested in doing CPE in a non-hospital setting, speak with the Field Education Director.

## Considerations for taking CPE

One of the many requirements for becoming a board-certified chaplain through the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) is the completion of four (4) units of CPE. These units can be earned through a one-year paid residency or piecemeal through volunteer summer or extended units. Non-CPE field education units do not count toward CPE units for board certification.

As of January 2023, no more than 1 CPE unit completed for field education at IBS can be counted toward board certification. It is incumbent upon the student to verify this with APC. (See the BCCI FAQ on the [APC website](#).)

## Earning CPE Credit with IBS

Interested students should:

- Consider, in consultation with the Field Education Director, if they are ready for the experience. Determine when, during the course of their studies, they can sustain the demands of CPE (during a particular semester for an extended unit or during the summer).
- Attend the annual GTU CPE Fair in October, if in residence, or online, if available.
- Check the ACPE website for accredited locations as an alternative to above:  
<https://profile.acpe.edu/accreditedcpedirectory>
- Apply for programs.
- Upon formal acceptance to the student's chosen CPE program, send written documentation of program acceptance to the Field Education Director.
- Register for "FE-3400 Advanced Field Study-CPE" course using the form available on the IBS website. This is a three (3) unit course. For the six (6) IBS units allowed toward a CPE unit: 1) register for the course twice in a single semester or 2) register for one course in each semester. This course is graded on a pass/fail basis. For students registering for an extended CPE unit over two semesters, an "In Progress" grade will be given at the end of the first semester and a pass/fail grade given at the end of the second semester. Review this with the Field Education Director.
- Reference the "Field Education Policy" in the IBS catalog and contact the IBS Registrar for details. For tuition information and reduction in fees, see "Tuition & Fees" on the IBS website.
- Provide a copy of their CPE supervisor's evaluation and CPE unit certificate to the Field Education Director by the last day of the term.
- Please note that the academic calendar does not necessarily coincide with that of your CPE program. Should the CPE supervisor not be ready to write the final evaluation by the last week of a given term, the student may take one of the following options:
  - If the CPE unit will conclude within the three weeks subsequent to the end of term, you must submit a Petition for Incomplete and then submit the evaluation upon receipt.
  - If the CPE unit extends more broadly across two terms, you may opt to register for credit only in the latter term, OR;
  - Split the credit across the two terms. In this case, in order to process the credited units at the end of the first semester, the CPE supervisor needs to provide either a midterm evaluation or an alternative statement about satisfactory work. The final evaluation can be presented in the second term.
- Discuss your CPE final evaluation at your next advising meeting.
- A standard 400-hour CPE unit is equivalent to 6 IBS field education units.

## Clinical Pastoral Education Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ Research accredited CPE centers (attend annual GTU CPE fair in October)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit CPE application 4-10 months in advance of start date
- \_\_\_\_\_ Interview at CPE site
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send documentation of CPE acceptance to IBS Field Education Director
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete the FE-3400 Registration Form (available on IBS website)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit copy of CPE final supervisor evaluation and final self-evaluation to FE director

## Expectations of the Field Education Student

Students are expected to self-initiate and give their field education participation and placement thoughtful consideration. Students should read through the field education handbook and relevant material in the IBS catalog. After this is done, students are expected to meet with the Field Education Director to share thoughts and ideas about FE participation and when might be an appropriate time and placement. Filling out of all the forms needed and in a timely manner is solely the responsibility of the student. This includes articulating the nature of the work to be done, the formulation of goals, the adjustment of goals, midterm and final self-evaluations, and assuring the fulfillment of supervisor evaluations. As in any professional environment, students are expected to behave in a professional manner when engaging their responsibilities and relationships within field education.

This will include:

- Ownership and embodiment of goals from their infancy, through their evolution, and to their conclusion
- Cultivating a mutually beneficial relationship with site supervisor and co-workers, soliciting and engaging in constructive feedback
- Adhering to professional standards of confidentiality
- Adhering to professional and personal boundaries
- Engaging in constructive criticism and encouragement with maturity and integrity
- Identifying, articulating, and engaging in self-care practices
- Communicating to your Field Education Director about concerns in the workplace and appropriate responses

## Institutional Policies

Students and the sites they serve are bound by the policies outlined in the IBS catalog. These standards should be reviewed by all students. We are dedicated to the safety and support of our students and all of our relationships are guided by these policies as well. While we are confident in the professionalism and mutual respect engendered in our relationships, these policies are our commitment in the rare instance of unprofessionalism.