

## RESOURCES Outside of Field

**University of Michigan Spectrum Center:**  
<http://spectrumcenter.umich.edu/resources>

**U-M SSW Queer Alliance**  
<http://studentorgs.umich.edu/group/10003669>

**U-M SSW Dean's TBLGQIA Initiative**  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/about/ssw-advantage/deans-initiatives/tblg-matters>



### REFERENCES

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Messinger, L. (2004). Out in the field: Gay and lesbian social work students in field placement. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 40(2/3), 187-204

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REACH OUT  
RAISE HOPE  
CHANGE SOCIETY

**For confidential support,  
guidance, and resources, contact:**



**Leigh A. Robertson, LMSW**  
Field Faculty & TBLGQIA Liaison  
[leigrobe@umich.edu](mailto:leigrobe@umich.edu)  
734.678.2805

**M**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**  
**FIELD INSTRUCTION**  
**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

1080 S. University, Room 1704  
Ann Arbor, MI 49103  
734.764.5331  
[ssw-fieldoffice@umich.edu](mailto:ssw-fieldoffice@umich.edu)

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**OUT**  
IN FIELD INSTRUCTION



transgender, bisexual,  
lesbian, gay, queer,  
questioning, intersex,  
ally students and social  
work field instruction

## Coming Out in **FIELD**

Social work graduate students want a field placement that will provide them with a good educational experience. They have the right to a safe and comfortable field environment. Transgender, bisexual, lesbian, gay, queer, questioning, intersex and ally (TBLGQIA) people may withhold personal information about their lives because they fear discrimination, rejection, or isolation. They also may decide to be “out” in all areas of their lives. This “Management of Disclosure” is a personal decision made by each individual student based on age or stage of life, length of time they have been aware of their sexuality, level of TBLGQIA community connections, along with the intersection of class, race, and abilities.



*“I was uncertain how I would be accepted by my clients, because I am a gay, multi-ethnic male. Out in Field helped me understand I have to do what feels appropriate for me. Since I am “out” at field, it has fostered discussions about the TBLGQIA community and has allowed me to be a resource for TBLGQI clients.”*

John McDowell, MSW Candidate, 2014



## Where We **STAND**

The University of Michigan School of Social Work (UM-SSW), Office of Field Instruction, faculty, and staff are committed to providing and nurturing a “safe zone” for our students.

UM-SSW has a nondiscrimination policy, which includes a commitment to inclusivity. We ask all fieldwork sites and field instructors to sign an Affiliation Agreement with the University and the School of Social Work that states they will “support the assignment of students without discrimination.”



### How to be a Fieldwork Site **ALLY**

- Have agency-wide diversity and human rights policies
- Provide an inclusive and physically friendly environment
- Support and encourage the presence of “out” staff
- Provide resources for TBLGQIA clients

### How to be a Field Instructor **ALLY**

- Assess your knowledge and skills
- Seek out learning opportunities
- Assess your agency for TBLGQIA friendliness
- Support diversity in hiring
- Advocate for equity and justice

*“My sexual orientation is a part of me that I am now allowing myself to get to know and is, at this point, my lightly guarded secret. Being able to introduce my queer identity—and my whole self—at my discretion, has been strengthening. I couldn't imagine having taken the steps I have without the guidance found through Out in Field.”*

MSW Candidate, 2014

## Finding **SUPPORT**

UM-SSW Field Faculty along with the Director of Field Instruction, want to hear from all students who may have questions or concerns about:

- TBLGQIA friendly field placements
- Experiences of heterosexism, homophobia, or transphobia within a fieldwork setting
- Support for disclosure of sexual orientation and gender identity within the field placement setting

### Talk to an OFI Field Faculty about your fieldwork site.

#### Does it have ...?

- A nondiscrimination policy that addresses sexual orientation and gender identity
- “Out” TBLGQIA staff
- TBLGQIA cultural competence training or TGLBQIA focused professional development opportunities for staff
- Policies/expectations related to staff self-disclosure with clients

*More resources are listed on the other side of this page.*