

# **SOCIAL WORK STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

Department of Sociology  
Mississippi State University  
Mississippi State, Mississippi 39762

Revised Fall 2022

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Inquiries regarding the social work program should be addressed to Social Work Program Director, Social Work Program, Department of Sociology, P.O. Drawer C, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS 39762, or [socialwork@msstate.edu](mailto:socialwork@msstate.edu).

Information in this handbook concerning various areas of Mississippi State University has been directly derived from the currently posted web content at the time of revision.

***Mississippi State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, pregnancy, gender identity, status as a U.S. veteran, and/or any other status protected by applicable law.***

## INTRODUCTION

### Overview

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Social work is a challenging and rewarding profession with the primary goal of enhancing individual functioning and promoting human rights and social and economic justice. The Bachelor of Social Work graduate is prepared to pursue graduate social work education or to work as a generalist social work practitioner in a variety of practice settings. These include but are not limited to the following: child welfare service agencies, family services, medical hospitals, mental health clinics, public health clinics, home health agencies, nursing homes, industries, juvenile and family court, shelters for battered women and children, and neighborhood and community services.

The Social Work curriculum is grounded in a liberal arts perspective. This liberal arts perspective enhances the person-in-environment focus of generalist social work practice. According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), professional social workers assist individuals, families, groups, and/or communities to restore or enhance their capacity for social functioning, while creating societal conditions favorable to their goals. The practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior, of social, economic, and cultural institutions, and of the interaction of all these factors.

### Brief History

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University was granted permission to offer a baccalaureate social work degree (BSW) in December 1989, by the Board of the Institutions of Higher Learning. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) granted candidacy status to the Starkville campus program in June 1992. The Social Work Program was granted initial accreditation effective fall 1995.

In February 2000, the Social Work Program's accreditation status was reaffirmed through June 2008. In June 2008, CSWE reaffirmed the Social Work Program's accreditation status through June 2016. Reaffirmation was again successful through 2024.

## SOCIAL WORK

### Social Work: Is It For You?

You are encouraged to discuss your questions and concerns about the social work profession with social work students, graduates, employers, and faculty. Consider visiting the MSU Career Center at <https://www.career.msstate.edu/> for assistance in defining your career goals and visiting relevant professional websites, such as the National Association of Social Workers at <https://www.socialworkers.org/> and the Council on Social Work Education at <https://www.cswe.org/> to obtain more information. The following questions may facilitate an

awareness of your interest, desire, and commitment to social work:

1. Are you interested in improving society?
2. Do you believe in the worth of each person in society, regardless of cultural, physical, racial, social, economic, or sexual differences?
3. Do you get along well with people, viewing conflicts as challenges?
4. Are you patient, persistent, genuine, responsible, and resourceful?
5. Are you interested in personal growth and learning ways to effectively evaluate interactions with others?
6. Are you interested in learning the interactions of various systems and how they impact individuals?
7. Are you interested in continuous growth and being a part of a recognized profession?

Affirmative answers to these questions serve as the basis of the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University.

### **National Association of Social Workers**

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics further reinforces the important professional roles that social workers have in society.

Teaching the NASW Code of Ethics is an integral part of the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University. The entire NASW code of ethics may be found at

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

### **Definition of Generalist Social Work Practice**

The MSU Social Work Program recognizes that generalist social work practice must be grounded in the following professional values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Generalist social work education at MSU incorporates the primary content areas regarding fields of practice through course content and community engagement: values and ethics, diversity, populations at risk and social and economic justice, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field education. Generalist social work practitioners at the undergraduate level may assume a wide range of professional roles but typically work under supervision. They apply critical thinking skills and evaluate their service outcomes. With these issues in mind, MSU embraces the following definition of generalist social work practice:

Generalist social work practitioners apply an eclectic knowledge base and a range of skills, grounded in a strengths perspective and using a planned change process with a focus on empowerment, to target systems of any size in a variety of settings.

## **MISSION STATEMENTS**

### **Mississippi State University**

Mississippi State University is a public, land-grant university whose mission is to provide access and opportunity to students from all sectors of the state's diverse population, as well as from other states and countries, and to offer excellent programs of teaching, research, and service.

Enhancing its historic strengths in agriculture, natural resources, engineering, mathematics, and natural and physical sciences, Mississippi State offers a comprehensive range of undergraduate and graduate programs; these include architecture, the fine arts, business, education, the humanities, the social and behavioral sciences, and veterinary medicine.

The university embraces its role as a major contributor to the economic development of the state through targeted research and the transfer of ideas and technology to the public, supported by faculty and staff relationships with industry, community organizations, and government entities.

Building on its land-grant tradition, Mississippi State strategically extends its resources and expertise throughout the entire state for the benefit of Mississippi's citizens, offering access for working and place-bound adult learners through its Meridian Campus, Extension, and distance learning programs.

Mississippi State is committed to its tradition of instilling among its students and alumni ideals of diversity, citizenship, leadership, and service.

### **College of Arts & Sciences**

The educational mission of the College of Arts and Sciences is two-fold: to provide students with a liberal education which will facilitate intellectual development and stimulate a life-long pursuit of knowledge, and to give students an in-depth education in at least one specialized area necessary to prepare them for a career or for advanced study.

The College offers curricula in the fine arts, humanities, mathematics, and natural, physical, and social sciences. The curricula are designed to introduce students to the basic methods of inquiry in diverse disciplines, to develop their analytical abilities, to improve their skills in writing and speaking, and to broaden their perspectives on humanity and culture in the natural and technological worlds. Additionally, they provide intensive preparation in one or more specific academic disciplines.



A liberal education attained in this context should ensure that graduates of the College have gained an understanding and appreciation of human culture. They should have examined the social, historical, political, philosophical, and economic dimensions of the human condition and humankind's perception of the world as it is expressed through the arts, language, and literature. They should have learned the use of quantitative and scientific methods and should have participated in the universal quest to comprehend natural phenomena and to utilize this knowledge beneficially and ethically. For more information about the College of Arts and Sciences, please go to <https://www.cas.msstate.edu/>

### **Department of Sociology**

The mission of the Mississippi State University Department of Sociology is to integrate our research, service and teaching into a holistic educational experience, as suited to the land-grant mission of a research-intensive university. We provide a high-quality undergraduate education to students majoring in criminology, social work, and sociology within the liberal arts education mission of the College of Arts & Sciences. Our graduate programs train sociology students at the master's and doctoral levels, integrating students into academic research. We foster an intellectual environment for professional growth and development that prepares students to be critical thinkers with strong communication skills for use in the global environment, preparing them for careers and/or graduate studies.

The Department of Sociology resides within the College of Arts and Sciences, although its members have historically carried out research and service through the Mississippi Food Insecurity Project, the Social Science Research Center, Nsparc, Southern Rural Development Center, Crime and Justice Research Unit, the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision, as well as other research entities. The Department offers the B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in sociology, B.S. in criminology, and the BSW in social work.

The Department has developed longstanding emphases in rural sociology, community development, criminology, social demography, and social inequality. The Department is one of the larger concentrations of sociological expertise in the Southern region as evidenced in the number of graduate faculty, the enrollment of graduate students, the placement and success of doctoral graduates, the number and frequency of publications, the level of funding for grants and contracts, the facilities, and other infrastructure for sociological research and education. We have a concentration of research expertise and programmatic activities focused on Mississippi and the Deep South broadly. In the area of learning, we embrace the two-fold mission of the College of Arts and Sciences with sociology squarely within the liberal arts tradition.

### **Social Work Program**

The mission of the Social Work Program is to educate undergraduate students for generalist social work practice framed by an understanding of the history, purposes, and philosophy of the profession. The curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts perspective and embraces social

work knowledge, skills, and values.

The mission of the Social Work Program is congruent with the missions of the University and the College in that it seeks to offer excellent educational opportunities in instruction, research, and outreach, while fostering a commitment to the lifelong pursuit of knowledge. For more information about the social work program, please go to <https://www.sociology.msstate.edu/> and access “Undergraduate Programs” or directly to <https://www.sociology.msstate.edu/undergraduate/social-work/>

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **Mississippi State University Learning Outcomes**

All academic, academic-support, and student-support programs either directly or indirectly foster the following learning outcomes:

- Realize specific learning outcomes for their chosen discipline
- Articulate how their collegiate experiences integrate with their career management process
- Demonstrate communication fluency
- Demonstrate quantitative literacy in math and science
- Engage in scholarly or scientific inquiry
- Incorporate diverse or competing perspectives when evaluating social problems and issues
- Be able to collaborate toward common goals with people who are different than themselves
- Cultivate behaviors that promote health and wellbeing and that reduce risk

### **Social Work Program Learning Outcomes**

The Social Work Program goals derived from the mission statement are:

- To provide a positive educational environment that models social work values, ethics, and ideals, as well as encourages the development of critical thinking skills.
- To provide a curriculum that promotes competent baccalaureate generalist social work practice and is responsive to the changing political, social, cultural, economic and global influences based on current research data and evidence-based practice information.
- To prepare competent entry-level social work practitioners for generalist practice with diverse client systems of various sizes and types of groups marginalized by social and economic injustice.

Expected educational outcomes of the social work program are consistent with the competency-based standards set forth by the Council on Social Work Education. Students are afforded the opportunity to achieve mastery of the related component behaviors throughout the curriculum. Our social work students are assessed on the component behaviors through the identified dimensions of learning, which are knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes. Outcomes/Competencies (*see bold*) with related component behaviors are as follows:

- **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**
  - A. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
  - B. Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations
  - C. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
  - D. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
  - E. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior
  
- **Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**
  - A. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
  - B. Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences
  - C. Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies
  
- **Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**
  - A. Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
  - B. Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice
  
- **Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**
  - A. Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
  - B. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings
  - C. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery
  
- **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**
  - A. Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services

- B. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services
- C. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
- **Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
  - A. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
  - B. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies
- **Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
  - A. Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies
  - B. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies
  - C. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies
  - D. Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies
- **Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
  - A. Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
  - B. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies
  - C. Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
  - D. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
  - E. Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals
- **Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
  - A. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
  - B. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes

- C. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
- D. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

## CURRICULUM

### Bachelor of Social Work Degree Requirements

Completion of the BSW includes:

- Completion of Arts & Sciences core curriculum
- Completion of supporting foundation courses
- Completion of all social work courses

All social work courses must be completed with a minimum grade of “C”, excluding Introduction to Social Work SW2313, which must be completed with a minimum grade of “B”.

For more details about the BSW curriculum, please refer to Appendix A or access the University’s online catalog at

<http://catalog.msstate.edu/undergraduate/collegesanddegreeprograms/collegeofartsandsciences/departmentsociology/>

### Field Practicum

The field practicum allows students the opportunity for theoretical application in a structured and educationally directed environment. The field practicum experience affords students the opportunity to target mastery of all component behaviors across the various dimensions of learning. For the MSU Social Work Program, the field practicum is determined as the ultimate pedagogy. All social work majors are required to complete a **minimum of 450 hours** in an agency setting.

The field practicum is the equivalent of 12 semester hours. In addition to hours spent in the agency setting, students are required to actively participate in the field seminar that meets recurrently throughout the semester while enrolled in placement.

Students are required to complete registration (including payment of tuition) prior to entering placement. Malpractice insurance is required by social work students prior to entering the field practicum.

Each student and Field Instructor will be provided access to the Field Practicum Manual prior to the beginning of the field placement experience. The Field Practicum Manual is a detailed resource concerning the field education experience outlining responsibilities of the student, Field Instructor, and the Field Coordinator, as well as detailing various requirements and recommendations.

## Social Work Course Descriptions

- **SW 2303 Social Welfare Policy I: 3 hours.** In-depth study of the historical and contemporary effects of social welfare policy on client systems
- **SW 2313 Introduction to Social Work/Social Welfare: 3 hours.** A study of professional social work and the historical and philosophical development of social work and social welfare
- **SW 2323 Social Welfare Policy II: 3 hours.** The course provides an analysis and evaluation of social welfare policies as institutional responses to social problems, social justice, and human needs
- **SW 3003 Social work with At-Risk Populations (Populations at Risk): 3 hours.** Examines the role and interaction of social workers with vulnerable groups. Includes concepts of racism, sexism, homophobia, oppression, affirmation action, and xenophobia
- **SW 3013 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I: 3 hours.** Examines biological, psychological, social-structural, and cultural aspects of human development from conception through young adulthood from a social systems perspective, emphasizing diversity and oppression
- **SW 3023 Human Behavior and the Social Environment II: 3 hours.** Examines biological, psychological, social-structural, and cultural aspects of human development from middle adulthood to death from a social systems perspective, emphasizing diversity and oppression
- **SW 3033 Seminar in Resilience: 3 hours.** Examines current research, theoretical perspectives, and a bio-psycho-social approach to resilience. Focuses on planning & applying resilience practices to promote well-being
- **SW 3043 Military Social Work: 3 hours.** Explores history and roles of social workers with veterans and military families, including practice settings, ethical concerns, and effects of culture, advocacy, interventions, and policy

- **SW 3213 Research Methods in Social Work: 3 hours.** (Prerequisite: ST 2113 ) A survey of research methodology in social work practice, including an examination of the various types of research design, techniques, and procedures
- **SW 3513 Social Work Practice I: 3 hours.** (Prerequisite: Admission to the Social Work Program). The course emphasizes problem-solving methods utilizing communication theories and skills working with individuals, families, groups, and communities in preparation for generalist social work practice
- **SW 3523 Social Work Practice II: 3 hours.** (Prerequisite: Admission to the Social Work Program). The course focuses on processes involved in engaging client systems in data collection, assessment, intervention, evaluation, and termination in preparation for generalist social work practice
- **SW 3533 Social Work with Communities and Organizations: 3 hours.** (Prerequisite: Admission to the Social Work Program). The course focuses on processes involved in engaging client systems in problem solving with emphasis upon groups and larger systems in generalist social work practice
- **SW 4000 Directed Individual Study in Social Work: 1-6 hours.** (Prerequisites: Six hours of social work, junior standing, and consent of instructor). Hours and credits to be arranged. Independent research of problems related to social work
- **SW 4533 Substance Abuse and Addictions in Social Work Services: 3 hours.** Examines the role/interaction of social workers with people who use alcohol/drugs, (AOD). Concepts of use abuse, and dependence. Emphasis on the impact of AOD use on families/children
- **SW 4613 Child Welfare Services: 3 hours.** Assessment of parental and society's responsibilities in meeting physical, social, psychological, and legal needs of children and examining the delivery, policies, systems, and services
- **SW 4623 Social Work with the Aged: 3 hours.** Assessment of social, psychological, physical, and economic needs of aging persons; their utilization of services, conjoint planning and creation of new community-based resources

- **SW 4633 Social Work in Health Care: 3 hours.** Assessment of social work knowledge, values, and skills in understanding psychosocial aspects of illness, medical terminology, recording, discharge planning, ethics, team disciplines, and community resources
- **SW 4643 Social Work Services in Schools: 3 hours.** Assessment of the development, concepts, policies, planning, implementation, and evaluation of social work services in primary and secondary schools
- **SW 4653 Social Work with Family Violence: 3 hours.** A study of social workers' roles in responding to family violence, including societal context, family dynamics, extent, precursors, consequences, treatment, and prevention of family violence
- **SW 4663 Administration in Social Work: 3 hours.** Assessment of functions of human service management, planning and program, organizational theory and design, resources, supervision, funding, information systems, and evaluation of service delivery
- **SW 4713 Senior Seminar: 3 hours.** (Prerequisite: Admission to the Social Work Program; Co-requisite: Scheduled completion of all curriculum requirements excluding SW 4916 and SW 4926). Critical evaluation of current issues in social work practice; examination of career opportunities; and assessment of personal educational preparation for practice
- **SW 4916 Social Work Field Practicum/Seminar I: 6 hours.** (Prerequisites: Admission to the Social Work Program and SW 4713). The course provides students opportunities to apply generalist social work practice methods by completing a minimum of 450 supervised hours in a social work agency
- **SW 4926 Social Work Field Practicum/Seminar II: 6 hours.** (Prerequisites: Admission to the Social Work Program and SW 4713). The course provides students opportunities to apply generalist social work practice methods by completing a minimum of 450 supervised hours in a social work agency
- **SW 4990 Special Topics in Social Work: 1-9 hours.** Credit and title to be arranged. This course is to be used on a limited basis to offer developing subject matter areas not covered in existing courses. (Courses limited to two offerings under one title within two academic years)

### Other Relevant Courses



In addition to the liberal arts foundation core courses, and in keeping with Mississippi State University's educational objective to communicate effectively, all students must complete a computer literacy course, public speaking, and a writing course. The Department of Sociology is fortunate to have its own *computer lab* for student use. The program does offer some courses online.

- **Computer literacy course**

Each student is required to complete a course in computer literacy with basic concepts of computing using large-scale and microcomputers. This includes: introduction to operating systems commands, applications software (word processing, spread sheets, communications, etc.) and rudimentary basic programming.

- **Writing course**

MSU requires a junior-senior writing course as a specific course offering. The MSU Social Work Program fulfills this requirement with SW 4713: Senior Seminar. The Social Work Program believes that writing serves as an impetus to clear-thinking, more critical analysis, more precise interpretation of assessment, and increased self-awareness. Because social work is a professional degree, it is imperative that social work students are trained to effectively communicate. Writing across the curriculum enhances preparation for practice and is therefore found throughout all the courses. The social work curriculum typically maintains a minimum of one major writing requirement in each course with numerous minor writing assignments.

- **Distance Education/On-line learning**

The Social Work Program does offer several courses via distance learning. These courses are designed to assist students who are pursuing the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies degree, although social work majors may take the courses. The distance education courses can be helpful to students who have gotten out of sequence from regularly scheduled social work courses or those who choose to take a small number of social work courses via distance education.

At this time, the following courses are approved for offering via distance education:

- SW 2303: Social Welfare Policy I
- SW 3003: Populations at Risk
- SW 3013: Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
- SW 3023: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
- SW 3033: Seminar in Resilience
- SW 3043: Military Social Work
- SW 3213: Research Methods
- SW 4533: Substance Abuse and Addiction in Social Work Services
- SW 4613: Child Welfare Services

- SW 4643: Social Work Services in Schools
- SW 4653: Social Work with Family Violence

These courses are not typically taught via distance education the same semester that they are offered in the classroom. Social work majors are urged to take as many classes as possible in the classroom rather than via distance education.

### **SOCIAL WORK ADMISSIONS AND ACADEMIC GUIDELINES**

A student may declare social work as a major at any time in his or her academic career. There is a formal admission process into the program. Some upper division courses are restricted to students who have been admitted to the program.

The purpose of the admission criteria and academic guidelines is twofold:

1. To allow the student opportunities to examine one's motivation and interest in social work as a career; and
2. To assist faculty in assessing strengths and weaknesses of prospective students so that appropriate professional and developmental advising occur early in the students' curriculum.

#### **Social Work Admissions Requirements**

While students may declare social work as a major at any time in their academic career, there is a two-level formal process for matriculation through the social work major:

1. Admission into the social work program; and
2. Admission into the field practicum.

#### **Criteria for Admission into the Program**

1. Have a cumulative GPA of 2.0; with a 2.5 GPA for all social work courses.
2. Complete two of the following social work courses with a minimum grade of "C": SW 2303 Social Welfare Policy I, SW 3003 Social Work with At-Risk Populations, and SW 3013 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I;
3. Complete SW 2313 Introduction to Social Work (including 30 hrs. of service-learning experience) with a minimum grade of "B";
4. Complete an "Application for Admission" including three references on the designated program form and participate in a personal interview with the Social Work Admissions Committee.

## **Admissions Process**

Students will be provided admissions applications via email, or the application may be downloaded from the departmental website at <https://www.sociology.msstate.edu/undergraduate/social-work/academics/> . Typically, applications are due approximately April 1<sup>st</sup> or due November 1<sup>st</sup> with admission interviews toward the conclusion of the semester.

The personal interview is conducted by a team from the Social Work Admissions Committee led by a faculty member and may include an alumnus representative, field instructor, adjunct faculty member, and/or social work student. The team may recommend admission or may deny admission.

Appendix B includes the *Application for Admission* and Appendix C includes the *Recommendation Form*.

## **Appeals Process**

A student denied admission to the social work program may appeal to the Social Work Program Director. The Program Director will offer the student a plan for remediation, at the completion of which the student may again apply for admission. The Program Director may support the denial of admission. In some cases, the student may additionally be terminated from the major. In such cases the student may appeal this decision to the Sociology Department Head and then to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

## **Criteria for Remaining in the Program**

The criteria for remaining in the program include:

1. Maintain an overall GPA of 2.0, with a 2.5 GPA for all social work courses.
2. Must earn a minimum of a “C” in each social work course.
3. Continue to demonstrate an aptitude for a social work career.
4. Adhere to all academic expectations of the university and the social work program.
5. Adhere to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

## **Criteria for Admission into the Field Practicum**

There must be a minimum 2.0 or “C” in each social work course with a minimum GPA of 2.5 in social work as well as an overall GPA of at least 2.0. Prior to admission to SW 4916 and SW 4926, the field practicum, all courses must be completed. Exceptions are rare and are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students must enroll in SW 4713: Senior Seminar, the semester prior to entering field practicum.

## Program Retention Guidelines

- **Student Conduct**

Mississippi State University recognizes students as adults who are expected to obey the law and the rules and regulations of the University, to take personal responsibility for their conduct, to respect the rights of others, and to have regard for the preservation of State and University property as well as the private property of others. Some aspects of misconduct which are unacceptable and which subject the student to disciplinary action may be found by accessing <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/91100.pdf>

Students may not violate any announced departmental or college rule relating to academic matters including, but not limited to, abuse or misuse of computer access or information in any academic exercise.

For more specific information related to academic misconduct, please access <https://www.honorcode.msstate.edu/policy/> and click on the PDF link “View the current MSU Student Honor Code”. This includes information about offenses, sanctions, and the appeals process. Academic programs can impose additional sanctions in addition to sanctions imposed by individual faculty or the Honor Code Council.

Instances of academic misconduct represent behavior that is of an especially serious nature. Sanctions assigned for academic misconduct should convey the message that this type of behavior serves as a destructive force within the academic community. However, a range of sanctions can be employed in order to strike an appropriate balance between sending a message of accountability and enhancing a student’s moral and cognitive development. The Honor Code Council is empowered with assigning sanctions that are outlined within Mississippi State University’s Policies. These sanctions include separation from the institution, probationary status, and documentation that a violation has occurred. In addition, the Honor Code Council is also empowered to assign appropriate academic and/or educational sanctions based upon the specifics of the incident. Examples of appropriate academic sanctions include receiving a failing grade or other grade penalty for the course for academic misconduct.

There may be additional consequences for a student within their academic major based upon an involvement in academic misconduct. Students are encouraged to discuss their involvement in an academic misconduct situation with the Program Director or faculty designee. While this list on the website is not designed to be exhaustive, it demonstrates the wide range of sanctions that can be considered in cases of student misconduct.

- **Dismissal Policy**

The faculty of the Social Work Program has a duty to the social work profession to make a reasonable effort to assure that graduates are academically, emotionally, and ethically prepared for the demands of professional practice. Therefore, any student who displays inappropriate behavior as described in the NASW Code of Ethics or serious enough to jeopardize the student's educational program and/or causes serious questioning of professional aptitude, may be terminated from the Social Work Program. These violations include but are not limited to the following:

- Failure to meet the stipulated minimum grade point average;
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics
- Academic plagiarism, lying, or deception on any documents associated with classes, the program or the field site that has been confirmed by investigation through established university procedures;
- Unresolved personal issues and/or psychiatric disturbances that, in the professional judgment of the program faculty, may impair the effective and ethical quality of services to future clients;
- Evidence of active chemical dependency documented as occurring during the course of study. The university's policies concerning substance misuse also apply;
- The inability to develop the appropriate interpersonal skills necessary for effective and ethical social work practice as evaluated and judged by the program faculty;
- Conviction of any misdemeanor or felony involving actual or threatened assault or injury to a person;
- Discovery of any false, incomplete, deceptive, or misleading oral or written statements when making application to the program or field practicum.
- Failure to meet academic, emotional, or professional standards and expectations.

Problems identified will be investigated by the Social Work Program Director. Alleged problem(s) can be presented by faculty, staff, field instructors, or other students. Identified problem(s) must be presented to the student and the director in writing. All information relevant to the student's evaluation should be as thorough as possible, including the specification of the sources providing the information.

In the course of investigating, the alleged violations outside evaluations, assessments, and/or opinions from university and/or external professionals may be required. If necessary, the program will secure the written permission of the student to seek relevant information. Failure to grant permission may result in dismissal from the program.

The social work program director, the student, and his/her advisor will evaluate the allegation(s) and attempt to craft a resolution of the difficulty. If related to academics the Academic Coordinator may be included; if the nature of the issue is professional or emotional the student may be appointed a designate faculty advisor.

Recommendations will be one of the following: 1) the student will be encouraged to continue in the program; 2) the specific problem will be identified and the student will be advised concerning necessary corrective action; 3) the student will be required to withdraw, either indefinitely or temporarily. A written plan will include a statement of the specific problem, the period of time for correction of the behavior or the period of time for withdrawal before the student can re-enter the program. The student and the social work program director must sign all plan(s).

Students may appeal the decision(s) made by the social work program director and/or faculty that affect the student's ability to pursue or continue in the program through the normal channels and mechanisms specified by the University. Appeals of admission/continuance decisions may be initiated by contacting the Sociology Department Head.

The additional university representative's (Academic Coordinator or Faculty representative) role is to ensure that the student is aware of the process and the procedures. The representative is expected to be available at the various stages of the evaluation and appeals process, providing relevant information as requested. The representative is a source for the student to consult regarding his/her rights and options.

### **Transferring credits into MSU**

Mississippi State University does accept course credits through transfer from other accredited universities and colleges; credits must be consistent with the curriculum and will not be accepted if these courses are vocational or remedial in nature.

The Social Work Program may accept transfer credit hours for required social work courses. Students must provide a syllabus for each course for potential transfer. Transfer students may declare social work as a major at any time but must apply for and be granted permission to the Social Work Program. Please see specific transfer guidelines below:

- **Transfer from Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Accredited Program**
  - Courses must be similar in content and credit value to the course(s) for which they are being substituted.
  - Student must have completed the course with no less than a "C" final grade, with the exception of SW 2313, in which a minimum grade of "B" is required. Students must provide a syllabus for each social work course for potential transfer.

- Students transferring from an accredited social work program must provide a letter from that program confirming that they left the program while in good standing.
- **Transfer from Non-Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Accredited Program**
  - Social work courses accepted under this category will be granted on an individual basis, after careful evaluation and agreement by social work faculty. The content and credit value must be similar to the course(s) being substituted.
  - The student must have completed the course with no less than a "C". Students will be required to write a summary of individual learning activities.
  - The qualifications of the instructor who taught the course will also be evaluated
- **Credit for Life Experiences**
  - Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation areas.
  - It is the belief of the social work program that practice wisdom does not replace one's theoretical understanding of social work practice, but that the effective practitioner will blend both practice wisdom and theory.

### **Academic Expectations**

The completion of the Social Work Program is more than receiving a diploma. It represents the beginning of a professional practice. Professionalism begins with the academic performance of the social work student. The following guidelines are stated to assist the student in understanding the importance of professional behavior early in one's career.

- **Accept Responsibility for Learning**  
Students are expected to utilize the library and participate in the library's planned tours and explanations of library services.
- **Assignments**  
Unless there is undue hardship, all tests and assignments are due at the time that the instructor indicates. Please consult the instructor about policy and documentation

- **Attire**

The Social Work Program does not impose a dress code for students. However, whenever you represent the program outside of the University, as when completing service learning, field practicum experiences, or attending a professional conference or meeting, professional attire is required. Similarly, professional attire is required for some campus activities, such as when guest speakers are visiting and during admission interviews.

- **Audit**

In order to receive a “pass” grade, the student is expected to attend all classes. Unexcused absences and tardiness are not permitted in audited social work courses. Please contact the instructor prior to the class period if an emergency arises.

- **Class Expectations**

Students are expected to:

- Attend all classes
- Be on time
- Be prepared
- Participate in class discussions and activities
- Complete assignments as assigned
- Comply with each instructor’s policy regarding electronic devices. \
- Comply with each instructor's attendance policy.

- **Confidentiality**

It is the student’s responsibility to maintain confidentiality in all practice, volunteer, and classroom learning experiences. Pseudonyms will be used in all papers and reports.

Sharing about experiences for the purposes of learning should be done in accordance with standard 1.07(u) of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

- **Email**

Students are expected to check their university email accounts for correspondence concerning university, departmental, programmatic, and course information. When sending email to faculty; students are expected to remain professional and regard such correspondence as an opportunity to practice appropriate professional documentation.

- **Reading Days & Final Examination Schedule**

The Examination Schedule starts with a Reading Day. The purpose of the Reading Day is to allow students time to study and prepare for final examinations. No mandatory activity, meeting, assignment, or event for a class should be scheduled on this day.



These restrictions apply to all Mississippi State University classes (e.g., face-to-face, online, etc.). All examinations shall be held as specified on the examination schedule except classes meeting fewer than two lecture hours per week and/or certain other classes which may be given at particular times by special permission from the Provost and Executive Vice President.

- **Student Compliance**

Students must comply with all relevant regulations of the University. Please refer to University Policies at <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/>

## ADVISING

### Overview of Advising

Students entering MSU may declare social work as a major at any time in their academic career. Upon declaring social work as a major, each student will be assigned to the Academic Coordinator for academic advising. All program faculty are committed to being available for professional and developmental advising. Students are encouraged to seek out professional and developmental advising, as needed. The Academic Coordinator or program faculty may recommend professional and developmental advising by the Program Director, Field Coordinator, and/or a relevant program faculty member based on the particular advising need(s). Although students bear ultimate responsibility for their academic program and scheduling, students are encouraged to work closely with program faculty and staff. Interaction with relevant faculty and/or staff is viewed as a partnership to complete the goal of further assessing the student’s interests, skills, and motivation to complete the social work degree. It is the joint responsibility of the student and the relevant faculty and/or staff to give appropriate feedback in assessing the student’s strengths and areas of concern.

### Faculty and Staff’s Advising Responsibilities

The table below delineates common advising responsibilities:

*Relevant faculty and staff				Advising responsibility
AC	FC	PD	PF	
X		X		Assist student in planning the course of study
	X	X	X	Assist student in evaluating aptitude for a social work career
X		X		Assist students in evaluating their performance in the liberal arts foundation courses.
X	X	X	X	Assist students in evaluating their performance in the professional social work courses.
	X	X	X	Provide feedback to the student in regard to continued motivation and performance for a social work career.

X	X	X	X	Assist students in understanding the policies and procedures of the Social Work Program, as well as the policies and procedures of Mississippi State University.
X	X	X		Provide students with general information on any course or curriculum changes that would directly affect the student's proposed course of study.
X				Advise students on appropriate courses for each semester prior to release
X				Initiating and completing the 75-hour checklist with the student
	X		X	Assist students in completing forms for field education.
X	X	X	X	Refer students, as needed, to appropriate resources for help with academic or personal problems.
				Guide students in completing university required forms related to advising i.e. course substitution and permission to enroll off-campus
X	X	X	X	Refer students to the appropriate program representative for professional and developmental advising
X		X		Provide guidance and assistance with academic and suspension issues

\* AC = Academic Coordinator; FC = Field Coordinator; PD = Program Director; PF = Program Faculty

### ***Student's Advising Responsibilities***

- Seek out the Academic Coordinator for purposes of scheduling courses
- Seek out the appropriate program faculty or staff representative to discuss areas of interest (either for additional study/exploration) or for seeking appropriate resources for areas of concern.
- Understand that you will not be able to register until you are released.
- Complete draft schedules prior to advising and register for appropriate courses after advising.
- Confer with Program Director or Academic Coordinator on specific problems that impede the students' successful completion of all classes involved.
- Review CAPP report regularly, generating new reports as needed. Make sure to notify the Academic Coordinator should you encounter errors with the report.
- Consult the Academic Coordinator regarding the most appropriate option for professional and developmental advising.

## STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Academic Achievement

#### • Recognition

Full-time students (at least 12 semester hours) are eligible for recognition at two academic levels:

- President's Scholars---Students who achieve a 3.80 GPA or better
- Dean's Scholars---Students who achieve a 3.5 to a 3.79 GPA.

#### • Scholarships

Scholarships at Mississippi State University are operated through the department of Student Financial Aid, which can be found at <https://www.sfa.msstate.edu/>

The Social Work Program currently administers The Reaves-Davenport Excellence in Social Work scholarship. Application for this scholarship is open to social work majors who have been officially admitted to the program, junior or senior standing, have a GPA of at least 3.0. The application submission process through the University's online platform typically opens October 1<sup>st</sup> and closes March 1<sup>st</sup>. The scholarship winner is selected by the social work faculty after careful review and discussion of each application. The award is made for the following academic year.

The amount of the scholarship varies from year to year and the award is typically divided between the fall and spring semesters. It is not renewable. The MSU Student Financial Aid disburses the scholarship, thus need based financial aid may be affected by the award.

### Association of Student Social Workers

The Association of Students Social Workers (ASSW) is open to all students enrolled at Mississippi State University who show a definite interest in social work. There are many opportunities for students to be involved in the association through the various committees. See Appendix D for a copy of the constitution and bylaws.

### National Association of Social Workers, Mississippi Chapter

Students are eligible for student membership in NASW and are encouraged to actively participate in the activities. National benefits consist of Social Work and NASW News. Student membership entitles students to receive low cost NASW malpractice insurance. The state chapter conducts a conference each year.

## **Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society**

The purpose of Phi Alpha is to provide a closer bond among students of social work and promote humanitarian goals and ideals. The national social work honor society seeks to foster high standards of education of social work through the recognition and promotion of scholastic excellence and fellowship among social work students. Your academic achievements bring credit to you and the social work profession. The name "Phi Alpha" means "Love of Humanity".

The Mississippi State University Social Work Program is designated as the Pi Iota Chapter.

### **• Eligibility**

An undergraduate student is eligible for membership after achieving the following requirements:

- Declared Social Work as a Major
- Achieved Sophomore status
- Completed 9 semester hours of required social work courses
- Achieved an overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Achieved a social work GPA of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale.

## **Professional Development Opportunities**

- The Social Work Program and the Association of Student Social Workers encourage and assist with financial support for students to attend and participate in professional workshops. Workshops commonly attended by student social workers are:
  - Alabama-Mississippi Social Work Education Conference
  - Mississippi Conference on Social Welfare (annual forum and regional conferences)
  - Mississippi Chapter of National Association of Social Workers' Annual Program Meeting
  - Local opportunities, as offered. Students are encouraged to attend additional workshops and conferences held on campus and in the community offered by other departments and professional organizations.
- The Social Work Program keeps avenues of renewal open with social work practitioners by having guest lecturers in social work classes. Many of these guest lecturers are graduates of the MSU Social Work Program. The purpose of guest lecturers is to reinforce the theories, values, knowledge, and skills learned in the classroom setting. These are also valuable networking opportunities for social work students.

## **University Opportunities for Self-development**

Mississippi State University provides diverse opportunities to facilitate student learning. Social work students have opportunities that will strengthen preparation for a generalist social work

education. These include, but are not limited to the following areas:

- Campus activities boards
- Cultural and international organizations
- Honorary organizations
- Intramural sports
- Maroon Volunteer Center
- Political organizations
- Residence hall activities
- Student Government Association

More detailed information on these and other organizations can be found at <https://www.union.msstate.edu/student-activities/>

## STUDENT INPUT

The Social Work Program recognizes social work students as adult learners who have valuable feedback to offer the faculty for the growth of the Social Work Program. Student input is obtained via faculty evaluations, faculty hiring, student field practicum, student advisory council, and exit evaluations.

### Exit Evaluations

Each student will complete an evaluation near exiting the program which includes content about the field practicum agency, the agency Field Instructor, the faculty Field Coordinator, and the MSU Social Work Program. This evaluation is completed using the *Student Evaluation of Learning Experience*. Additionally, each student will complete an oral exit interview with the MSU Social Work Program Assessment Coordinator and a written component to the exit interview (questions emailed to student) prior to the oral exit interview.

### Faculty Evaluation

All students enrolled at Mississippi State University have an opportunity to evaluate faculty on a standardized faculty evaluation form each semester. The final evaluations are completed in each class and are kept confidential with the results being computer-generated. These evaluations are returned to the faculty to utilize in strengthening content, teaching, and learning methods to facilitate learning more effectively.

### Hiring of Social Work Faculty

As social work faculty positions become available, students are asked to provide input. Students have opportunities, both formally and informally, to meet prospective candidates. Students' comments are reviewed and considered by the departmental search committee.

## **Social Work Student Advisory Council**

The student advisory council serves as a liaison between faculty and students to enhance cohesion of the Social Work Program. It consists of five (5) upper-division social work students\*, who display leadership skills and a commitment to the social work profession. The council composition consists of representatives of the student body in terms of diversity i.e. race, gender, age. The Student Advisory Council maintains an oversight function with the Association of Student Social Workers (ASSW). At no time will a student advisory council member hold office in ASSW. The president of ASSW serves as an ex-officio member of the council.

### **• Goals of the Social Work Student Advisory Council:**

- Advocate for social work students' needs.
- Become an avenue for leadership in the Social Work Program.
- Promote ASSW and strengthen it through recruitment and retention of members and support its mission and goals.
- Facilitate communication between faculty and students, through the dissemination of information.
- Assist with the Social Work interviewing process, which is required before acceptance into the Social Work Program.

*\*Upper-division students are defined as students admitted to the program and who demonstrate commitment to the Social Work Program and the social work profession through their scholarship, their volunteerism, and their membership and participation in ASSW.*

## **Student Field Practicum**

Each student has the opportunity to prioritize individual requests for field practicum. The field practicum coordinator works closely with students to locate a suitable placement.

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Graduates of the Social Work Program have a strong record of obtaining employment upon graduation. Many students have been hired by the agency where their field practicum was completed.

Social work students are encouraged to utilize the following services:

### **• Association of Student Social Workers**

Through the scholarship and employment committee, students are kept current about employment opportunities, graduate schools of social work, and financial assistance programs.

- **Facebook**

The Social Work Program manages a closed group on Facebook, MSU Social Work Students, open to enrolled social work students and to program alumni. Job opportunities are posted to this site on an ongoing basis by faculty and alumni. Opportunities for professional development such as continuing education are noted. Information regarding scholarships and graduate schools of social work is updated upon receipt of the information. The goal of the Facebook page is to connect present and former students, to be an information clearinghouse regarding social work information, and to assist in disseminating helpful information to alumni and students.

- **Field Practicum**

One components of the field practicum seminars is to assist students in strengthening their resumes, preparing for the licensure exam, and sharing information regarding job opportunities.

- **The MSU Career Center**

In addition to developmental services, the MSU Career Center is dedicated to assisting students with job leads. There is a person designated in the Career Service Center to work with all students in the College of Arts & Sciences. Job placement and career planning services are provided for Mississippi State University students and alumni through the Career Services Center. Providing individual career and job counseling, reviewing resumes, offering mock interviews, furnishing career information, making placement referrals, arranging for employers to interview on campus, offering Career Day, and organizing career outreach programs are services included in the scope of Career Services.

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

- **Computer-Based Testing Services**

Computer-Based Testing Services (CBT) administers national standardized examinations to assist students in their pursuit of educational and professional goals. For more information, please visit <https://www.cbt.msstate.edu/testing/>

- **Holmes Cultural Diversity Center**

The Holmes Center for Cultural Diversity (HCDC) strives to encourage, through sensitivity training and programming, the development of a climate in which all cultures, especially minority and international students, are appreciated as valued members of the campus community; increase minority and international student enrollment and retention at Mississippi State by assisting the university's student recruitment and retention efforts; encourage and assist minority and international students with their academic, career aspirations and social adjustments to college life; serve as a liaison between minority

students, international students, the faculty, and administration; promote the positive image that all cultures contribute to university life; and make the college experience a productive and successful endeavor for all students. The center is committed to enhancing the cultural college experience of students at MSU.

The HCDC offers two mentorship program: The HCDC Black Alumni Mentorship Program and BRIDGES (Building Relationship that Intentionally Develop Generations of Excellent Scholars. See more information about the mentorship programs at <https://www.union.msstate.edu/hcdc/resources/mentorship/> and the other services the HCDC offers at <https://www.union.msstate.edu/hcdc/>

#### • **Information Technology Services**

Information Technology Services (ITS) is responsible for overseeing MSU's academic and administrative systems and the information technology infrastructure that supports them. All enrolled students are assigned an e-mail address with the University. Official University correspondence will be sent to the student's University email address. For more information or to learn how to forward email to another address, please contact ITS at <https://www.its.msstate.edu/>

#### • **International Institute**

The International Services Office exists to meet the needs of our international student and scholar population as well as provide international travel assistance for MSU faculty and staff. Please access <http://international.msstate.edu/current/services/> for more information.

#### • **Learning Center**

The Learning Center supports students in improving academic performance and in enhancing lifelong learning skills. The Learning Center offers diverse services to graduate and undergraduate students which include academically enhanced university credit courses, support programs, workshops, seminars, tutoring services, academic coaching, and state of the art technology labs. Open to all university entities, these services promote academic excellence. For more information, please visit <https://www.tlc.msstate.edu/>

#### • **Longest Student Health Center**

The mission of the Mississippi State University Student Health Services is to prevent disease where possible, if prevention is not possible then to cure, where cure is not possible to control, where control is not possible to console, but to do all of this with compassion, integrity, and respect for our patients.

Recognizing that many of the major health problems in the United States can be changed by lifestyle modification initiated during the collegiate years, we are committed to health



education and behavioral modification as a major source of health evaluations, preventive Education, wellness assessment, and personal direction. The individual's right to privacy, dignity, and quality care are central to our service. All individuals regardless of gender, ethnic background, position, lifestyle, or economic status will be treated the same.

Enrolled students are not charged for office visits. A \$25 fee is applied for any missed visit. All other medical procedures and supplies are available at reasonable charges.

<http://www.health.msstate.edu/healthcenter/>

- **Mitchell Memorial Library**

The library currently contains a plethora of texts (micro-text, manuscripts, etc.) to support the education effort of the university. More information about the library services and access to search tools may be found at <http://lib.msstate.edu/>

- **Office of Compliance and Integrity**

The Office of Compliance and Integrity works to ensure Mississippi State University's compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, and ethical standards. We help design, implement, coordinate, and maintain compliance and oversight strategies for units across the university. Some of our areas of responsibility are:

- Title IX, Sexual Misconduct, and Gender Equity

The University takes all forms of sexual violence and other misconduct very seriously, and places particular emphasis on responding effectively to the nationwide problem of sexual assault. Faculty are mandated reporters regarding a disclosure of sexual misconduct by a student. The University employs a Title IX Coordinator. Contact information for the coordinator and more information about Title IX services can be accessed at <https://www.oci.msstate.edu/focus-areas/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/> and MSU's policy regarding sexual misconduct can be accessed at <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/0304.pdf>

- Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

The University is committed to equal opportunity in all facets of the university. To that end, MSU policies prohibit unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. These are called "protected characteristics." Likewise, the university prohibits retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report of potential discrimination or harassment. MSU non-discrimination policies, as well as how to report potential violations can be accessed at <https://www.oci.msstate.edu/focus-areas/discrimination-harassment-reliation/> and MSU's policy regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation can be accessed at <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/0303.pdf>

- In addition to the aforementioned focus areas of The Office of Compliance and Integrity, other focus areas include: Children and Youth on Campus; Privacy/FERPA; Conflicts of Interest; and ADA Accessibility and Accommodations. More information about the office and its focus areas may be found at <https://www.oci.msstate.edu/>

#### • **Social Work Program Advisory Board**

The Social Work Program Advisory Board is comprised of representatives from the state and local community, including social workers and concerned citizens.

The Board seeks to:

- Provide information to the program regarding current community activities, needs, and goals;
- Review programmatic assessment data and give feedback about the program's activities, curriculum, and instructional services; advocate for the program and the profession; and
- Serve as engaged role models for students.

Appendix E includes a list of current members.

#### • **Student Counseling Services**

Student Counseling Services (SCS) offers personal counseling, group counseling, career counseling, and testing services. All currently enrolled MSU students (unless they are benefits-eligible MSU employees) are eligible to receive our services as recommended after their initial assessment with a clinician. The counseling center staff is composed of competent professionals with extensive training in clinical psychology, counseling psychology, social work, and counseling, who are experienced in facilitating personal growth and development. They respect the ability of each individual to make actualizing choices. NOTE: At SCS all of our services are confidential and will not become a part of your academic record. For more information, please visit <http://www.health.msstate.edu/scs/>

#### • **Student Support Services**

Student Support Services (SSS) is composed of two distinct entities- The TRIO Program and Disability Support Services. More information about SSS may be found at <https://www.sss.msstate.edu/>

- TRIO Program: The TRIO Program provides supportive services for low income and first generation students in order to enhance their academic skills, increase their

retention and graduation rates, and as appropriate, facilitate entrance into graduate and professional programs.

- Disability Support Services: Disability Support Services seeks to provide educational access and opportunity through support, resources, advocacy, collaboration, and academic accommodations for students with disabilities (as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) who are accepted to the University.

#### • **University Academic Advising Center**

The University Academic Advising Center (UAAC) serves the needs of undergraduate students who are undecided about the major they wish to pursue and are classified as Undeclared (UND). The Center also advises students classified as Special Non Degree (SND). The UAAC additionally serves as an academic resource to all undergraduate students. For more information, please visit <https://www.uaac.msstate.edu/>

#### • **University Writing Center**

The Writing Center dedicates itself to helping all MSU students develop as writers and critical thinkers, thus supporting the writing that is happening on campus. Representatives are available online and in person to writers who want to think about, talk about, and work on their writing and the ideas that they want that writing to communicate. The center offers 30- and 60-minute consultations as well as walk-in appointments, free of charge, to all MSU writers.

### **FINANCIAL AID**

The primary sources of financial aid at Mississippi State University are federal sources and university sources. Please visit <https://www.sfa.msstate.edu> for more information about completing eligibility applications, checking the status of your aid, and discovering an array of other resources and tools. Specific details about the types of aid available can be reviewed by accessing <https://www.sfa.msstate.edu/types-of-aid/>

University level scholarships, scholarships through the College of Arts and Sciences, and the program-level scholarship, The Reaves-Davenport Excellence in Social Work Scholarship Award are available based on certain eligibility criteria.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### • **Minor in Social Work**

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University does not offer a minor. Some social work courses are open to any MSU student interested in learning more about social

work and social welfare. CSWE does not accept a minor as preparation for entry-level social work practice.

- **Mississippi Social Work Licensing**

Social work students are eligible to sit for the state licensing examination when enrolled in Field practicum or after graduation. Contact information:

- Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers/Marriage and Family Therapists:

350 West Woodrow Wilson Avenue  
1st floor, Suite 761 Jackson, MS 3921  
(601) 987-6806  
[www.swmft.ms.gov](http://www.swmft.ms.gov)

- **Student Grievances**

If the grievance involves program faculty, then the grievance should initially be reported to the relevant program faculty member(s). An appeal to a grievance resolution effort made by the faculty member(s) may be initiated by the student by contacting the Social Work Program Director. An appeal to a grievance resolution effort made by the Program Director may be initiated by the student by contacting the Sociology Department Head.

If the grievance does not involve program faculty, then the grievance should initially be reported to the Social Work Program Director. An appeal to a grievance resolution effort made by the Program Director may be initiated by the student by contacting the Sociology Department Head.

## Appendix A

### Social Work Curriculum Content

#### General Education and College Requirements

##### English Composition

<u>EN 1103</u>	English Composition I	3
or <u>EN 1163</u>	Accelerated Composition I	
<u>EN 1113</u>	English Composition II	3
or <u>EN 1173</u>	Accelerated Composition II	

##### Foreign Language

2 semesters - one Foreign Language\* 6

##### Humanities \*

Literature - see General Education courses	3	
History - see General Education courses	3	
<u>PHI 1103</u>	Introduction to Philosophy	3
or <u>PHI 1113</u>	Introduction to Logic	
Literature Elective	3	
History Elective	3	
Humanities Elective	3	

##### Mathematics

<u>MA 1313</u>	College Algebra	3
<u>ST 2113</u>	Introduction to Statistics	3

##### Fine Arts

See A&S Core List 3

##### Natural Sciences

<u>BIO 1004</u>	Anatomy and Physiology**	4
	Physical Sciences w/lab (CH, GG, PH) **	3-4
	Natural Science Elective **	3-4
<b>Social Sciences</b>		
<u>SO 1003</u>	Introduction to Sociology	3
<u>PS 1113</u>	American Government	3
<u>SW 3003</u>	Social work with At-Risk Populations	3
<u>PSY 1013</u>	General Psychology	3
<u>EC 2113</u>	Principles of Macroeconomics	3
<u>AN 1103</u>	Introduction to Anthropology	3
	or <u>AN 1143</u> Introduction to Cultural Anthropology	
	or <u>GR 1123</u> World Geography	
<b>Major Core</b>		
See advisor for course sequencing, as needed		
<u>SW 2303</u>	Social Welfare Policy I	3
<u>SW 2313</u>	Introduction to Social Work/Social Welfare	3
<u>SW 2323</u>	Social Welfare Policy II	3
<u>SW 3013</u>	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
<u>SW 3023</u>	Human Behavior and the social Environment II	3
<u>SW 4613</u>	Child Welfare Services	3
<u>SW 3213</u>	Research Methods in Social Work ***	3
	Choose one of the following:	3
<u>SW 3033</u>	Seminar in Resilience	
<u>SW 3043</u>	Military Social Work	
<u>SW 4533</u>	Substance Abuse and Addictions in Social Work Services	
<u>SW 4623</u>	Social Work with the Aged	
<u>SW 4633</u>	Social Work in Health Care	
<u>SW 4643</u>	Social Work Services in Schools	

<u>SW 4653</u>	Social Work with Family Violence	
<u>SW 4663</u>	Administration in Social Work	
<b>Oral Communication Requirement</b>		
<u>CO 1003</u>	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3
or <u>CO 1013</u>	Introduction to Communication	
<b>Writing Requirement</b>		
<u>SW 4713</u>	Social Work Senior Seminar ***	3
<b>Computer Literacy</b>		
<u>TKT 1273</u>	Computer Applications	3
<b>General Electives</b>		
Consult advisor*		2-7
Students must successfully complete a formal admissions process prior to taking the following courses		
<u>SW 3513</u>	Social Work Practice I ***	3
<u>SW 3523</u>	Social Work Practice II ***	3
<u>SW 3533</u>	Social Work with Communities and Organizations***	3
Field Work includes full-time placement for one semester in a supervised agency setting.		
<u>SW 4916</u>	Social Work Field Practicum/Seminar I ***	6
<u>SW 4926</u>	Social Work Field Practicum/Seminar II ***	6
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>124</b>

(31 hours must be A&S 3000/4000 level)

\* Consult advisor/academic coordinator.

\*\* Must have at least one physical science lab and one biological science lab.

\*\*\* Course has prerequisite. Consult advisor/academic coordinator

## Appendix B

### MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

To be interviewed for admission to the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University students must:

1. Have a cumulative GPA of 2.0; with a 2.5 for all social work courses
2. Complete two of the following three social work courses with a minimum grade of "C"  
SW 2303: Social Welfare Policy I  
SW 3003: Populations at Risk  
SW 3013: Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
3. Complete SW 2313: Introduction to Social Work (including 30 hours of service learning) with a minimum grade of "B"
4. Complete an Application for Admission that includes a typed, 4-8 page **Personal Statement** with the following content. **Attach to application.**

#### Life Experiences

- a. What life experiences/milestones led you to be the person you are today?
- b. How did your interest in social work develop?
- c. Have you tested this interest in volunteer or employed social service experience?

#### Self-Assessment

- a. Describe the strengths you possess which you believe would contribute to the practice of social work.
- b. Based upon your self-assessment, identify at least three areas of needed personal and/or professional development and your plan for growth in these areas. (Be specific.)

#### Goals and Questions

- a. What are your educational goals, and what do you expect from an undergraduate social work program? Have you identified an area(s) for future practice? Identify any questions you have about the Mississippi State University Social Work Program or about the social work profession.

#### Statement of Social Problem

- a. Describe one of the most pressing social problems that concerns you. When employed as a social worker, how do you hope to impact the problem you identify?
5. Provide **three references** (one academic, one employment, and one personal) on the designated program form.

The following liberal arts courses must be completed prior to petition for admission:

EN 1103	English Composition I
EN 1113	English Composition II
MA 1313	College Algebra
BIO 1004	Anatomy and Physiology
PS 1113	American Government
PSY 1013	General Psychology
SO 1003	Introduction to Sociology
EC 2113	Principles of Macroeconomics

**Completed Application Packet (application/statement/reference forms) MUST be received by November 1<sup>st</sup> in Fall semester and April 1<sup>st</sup> in Spring semester.**

Your application must be typed



Current Date		Semester Entering		Current Classification	Net ID
MM/DD/YYYY		( ) Fall ( ) Spring	Year:	( ) Sophomore ( ) Junior ( ) Senior	
Name in Full				Phone number <i>(cell number preferred, if available)</i>	
Current Mailing Address			Permanent Address		
Line 1		Line 1			
Line 2		Line 2			
City, State		City, State			
Zip		Zip			
1. Liberal Arts Requirements:					
<b>Course</b>			<b>Semester Taken/Enrolled</b>		<b>*Grade</b>
EN 1103 English Composition I or EN 1163 Accelerated Composition I					
EN 1113 English Composition II or EN 1173 Accelerated Composition II					
MA 1313 College Algebra					
BIO 1004 Anatomy and Physiology					
PS 1113 American Government					
PSY 1013 General Psychology					
SO 1003 Introduction to Sociology					
EC 2113 Principles of Macroeconomics					
2. Social Work Requirements:					
<b>Course</b>			<b>Semester Taken/Enrolled</b>		<b>*Grade</b>
SW 2313 Introduction to Social Work/Social Welfare <i>(minimum grade of "B", including completion of 30 service-learning hours)</i>					
**SW 2303 Social Welfare Policy I <i>(minimum grade of "C")</i>					
**SW 3013 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I <i>(minimum grade of "C")</i>					
**SW 3003 Populations at Risk <i>(minimum grade of "C")</i>					
* Please insert "pending" in grade column, if currently enrolled in course. ** Two of these three courses are required for admission. *** Office use only. Please do not use.					

3. Other Social Work Courses - - Please list social work courses not included in #2:		
Course	Semester Taken/Enrolled	**Grade
4. Grade Point Averages ( <i>Please check CAPP</i> )		
Type of GPA	GPA	***Office use only (re-check)
Overall GPA - - Must be at least 2.0 for admission		
Social Work GPA - - Must be at least 2.5 for admission		
5. Academic History - - Include high school and any subsequent institutions attended:		
Institution	Date(s) Attended	Diploma/ Degree
6. Honors and Academic Distinctions:		
Institution/Organization	Relevant Date(s)	Honor/Distinction
7. Work History - - Include and label paid and volunteer work below:		
Institution	Date(s)	Responsibilities
<p>* Please insert "pending" in grade column, if currently enrolled in course.  ** Two of these three courses are required for admission.  *** Office use only. Please do not use.</p>		
<p>I understand that withholding information requested on this application or giving false information will make me ineligible for admission to the Social Work Program or subject to dismissal.</p> <p>With this in mind, I certify the above statements are correct and complete.</p>		
Print Name		Date
Signature		

***Interviews will be scheduled after the application is reviewed. Please check your email for scheduling.***

**Authorization to Release Information**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ authorize the social work faculty at Mississippi State University to release admissions application information and character references to interview team members. I understand this information will be used by the interview team members which may include, but is not limited to, social work students and faculty, social work advisory board members, field instructors, and/or social work practitioners to assess my potential to become a professional social worker at a beginning level of practice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MSU Honor Code**

“As a Mississippi State University student, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.”

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Sociology Department Integrity Policy**

Undergraduate Students in the Sociology Department are expected to meet the highest standards of academic and professional integrity and to comply at all times with the Mississippi State University Honor Code. Undergraduate Students will be especially cognizant of always giving proper credit in accord with the standards of their academic discipline. Plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances including but not limited to all occasions where one's performance as an undergraduate student is being evaluated or where any other academic or professional activity is being performed. Although the faculty are responsible for providing appropriate guidance to undergraduate students on issues of academic integrity and for monitoring compliance with these standards, undergraduate students are ultimately responsible for their own behavior in this regard. For additional information, please see <http://ww.honorcode.msstate.edu/>.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



1. In what capacity do you know the applicant? How long have you known the applicant?
  
2. In your opinion, what are the applicant's major strengths?
  
3. In your opinion, what are the applicant's limitations?
  
4. We are also interested in your comments regarding this applicant's aptitude for undergraduate study and a career in social work. Feel free to provide this information on a separate sheet or in the space below.
  
5. Please evaluate the applicant in each of the following areas using this scale:

	Unable to Observe	Unacceptable/ Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory
Openness to Learning With Capacity to Change				
Intellectual Capacity				
Integrity				
Emotional Maturity/Stability				
Creativity				
Written Communication Skills				
Verbal Communication Skills				
Interpersonal Skills				
Sensitivity to & Capacity for Accepting Differences in Race, Class, Culture, Lifestyles & Ideas				
Ability to Accept Constructive Feedback				

6. \_\_\_ I strongly recommend this applicant for admission, without reservation.  
 \_\_\_ I recommend this applicant with reservations; if admitted, he/she would greatly benefit from study in the program.  
 \_\_\_ I do not recommend this applicant for admission.

Signature of Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix D**  
**Constitution of the Association of Student Social Workers\***  
**Social Work Program Mississippi State University**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the members of this Association of Student Social Workers, in order to create a form of self-government, to promote a widespread interest in social work, and to govern ourselves justly and in the best interest of all, do ordain and establish this constitution.

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Association of Student Social Workers of Mississippi State University.

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSES**

- (1) To promote interest in and to keep members current on Social Work trends and education.
- (2) To encourage involvement in community service programs, both individually and in groups.
- (3) To activate a social action role in which one becomes aware of and responsible for needed social changes.
- (4) To channel information regarding scholarships, fellowships, and employment in social work fields.

**ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in this organization shall consist of all students at Mississippi State University who show a definite interest in Social Work. Members are encouraged to complete community service hours, which will be set at the first meeting of the academic year. Members completing verifiable hours will receive a Certificate of Service.

**ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS AND DUES**

Section 1. There shall be a regular monthly meeting held at the time and place designated by the Executive Council and Faculty Advisor. The date of the first meeting of the year shall be determined by active, i.e., dues-paying, ASSW membership the last meeting of the current year. The Executive Council and Faculty Advisor shall have a regular monthly planning meeting to be held prior to the regular Association meeting.

Section 2. In order to be an active member of the Association of Student Social Workers a person must pay annual club dues, which will be set at the first meeting of each year. Dues shall be paid on or before the second called meeting of each

semester. If dues are not paid, a person is entitled to attend Association meetings, but is not allowed to cast a vote.

#### **ARTICLE V. PROCEDURE**

- Section 1. Election procedures as provided in ARTICLE VII, Section 1 and 2.
- Section 2. All regular business shall be passed by majority vote of the members present.
- Section 3. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the meetings of the Association on all deliberations not covered by the Constitution.

#### **ARTICLE VI. EXECUTIVE POWERS**

- Section 1. All executive powers of the ASSW shall be vested in the Executive Council. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian shall compose the Executive Council. Their duties shall be such as spelled out in the Constitution with no member serving the same office for more than two (2) semesters.

##### Section 2. President-Duties and Powers

The President shall:

- (a) Preside over all meetings of the Association of Student Social Workers.
- (b) Act as a representative of the Association in inter-group meetings.
- (c) Appoint such special committees and chairpersons, as he or she deems wise and proper for conducting the general work of the Association.

- Section 3. Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian

The Vice-President shall:

- (a) Discharge the duties of the President in the absence of that officer.
- (b) Serve as Chairperson of the Program Committee.
- (c) Act as ex-officio member on all committees.

The Secretary shall:

- (a) Keep minutes of all ASSW meetings.
- (b) Maintain an accurate roll of all members and check the roll at each Association meeting.
- (c) Handle all correspondence, including all form letters.

The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Keep accurate accounts of Association finances.
- (b) Be prepared to give a financial statement to the Association when requested at any meeting.



The Parliamentarian shall:

- (a) Be versed and familiar with Robert's Rules of Order parliamentary procedure.
- (b) Give his interpretation of the Constitution and any parliamentary procedure as is necessary in any Association meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII. ELECTIONS, VACANCIES, AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

### Section 1. Elections

A new ASSW President shall be elected at the last meeting of each school year. A Faculty Advisor, who shall be the Parliamentarian, shall be appointed by the Program Director. Other Executive Council members shall be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the new school year, as set in ARTICLE IV, Section 1. Any Association member shall make nominations from the floor. Each active, i.e., dues-paying, member shall cast one vote with all votes being made by secret ballot except in the case of a vote of acclamation. The ballots shall be counted by the Faculty Advisor and two members elected at the previous meeting. Results will be announced by the Advisor.

### Section 2. Vacancies

Should the office of any member of the Executive Council, with the exception being the office of president, be vacated, the President shall appoint a temporary officer until a special election at the next Association meeting. When the office of President is vacated, the Vice-President will automatically become president and will appoint a temporary vice-president to serve until the next regular association meeting when a special election will be held to fill the office of vice-president.

### Section 3. Standing Committees

There shall be a minimum of three (3) members on each committee, one of which will be Chairperson. Volunteers will be used to fill these positions, with the President using appointive powers to complete committee membership requirements. Each committee will have an Executive Board Liaison that will help guide the planning process and actions for each committee. These positions will be filled within the first three meetings of the year. The standing committees and their duties shall be as follows:

- (a) Program Committee--to plan programs and arrange for guest speakers. The Vice President will serve as Executive Board Liaison for this committee.
- (b) Fund-Raising Committee--to plan and coordinate projects involving the raising of money for the Association. The Treasurer will serve as Executive Board Liaison for this

**Appendix E**  
**SOCIAL WORK ADVISORY BOARD**

Armando de la Cruz Starkville, MS
Gloria Holland Plantersville, MS
Leigh Jensen Starkville, MS
JoAnn Rounsaville Philadelphia, MS
Kimberly Shield-Smith Starkville, MS
Dianne Walton Meridian, MS
Current ASSW President MSU, MS