

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM BSW STUDENT HANDBOOK



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Department of Sociology
Mississippi State University
Mississippi State, Mississippi 39762

Revised Fall 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	5
INTRODUCTION	6
OVERVIEW	6
BRIEF HISTORY	6
SOCIAL WORK.....	6
SOCIAL WORK: IS IT FOR YOU?	6
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS.....	7
GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE	7
MISSION STATEMENTS	8
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY	8
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES.....	8
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY	9
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM	9
LEARNING OUTCOMES.....	9
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY	9
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM	9
CURRICULUM	11
BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK ADMISSION AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	11
Eligibility Requirements for Admission:.....	11
Requirements to Remain in the Social Work Program:	12
SOCIAL WORK FIELD PRACTICUM.....	12
Criteria for Determining Student Eligibility for Field Practicum.....	13
Student Field Practicum Placement.....	13
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	13
DISTANCE EDUCATION/ONLINE LEARNING	13
MINOR IN SOCIAL WORK	14
SOCIAL WORK COURSE EQUIVALENCY AND TRANSFER CREDIT	14
DIRECT EQUIVALENT COURSES	15
ELECTIVE COURSES.....	15
CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCES.....	15
SOCIAL WORK ADMISSIONS AND ACADEMIC GUIDELINES.....	16
SOCIAL WORK OFFICIAL ADMISSION APPLICATION PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS	16
ADMISSION DECISION PROCESS	17
APPEALS PROCESS	17
TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION	17

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES	25
STUDENT CONDUCT.....	25
DISMISSAL POLICY	26
PROCEDURES	26
Addressing Conduct & Dismissal Concerns	26
Outcome, Remediation and Appeals Process	27
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES	28
FILING A GRIEVANCE.....	28
REVIEW PROCESS.....	29
GRIEVANCE RESOLUTIONS AND APPEALS	30
Grievance Involving a Social Work Faculty Member.....	30
Grievance Not Involving a Social Work Faculty Member	30
Grievance Involving the BSW Program Director	30
ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.....	30
ADVISING.....	30
OVERVIEW OF ADVISING.....	30
STUDENT ADVISING RESPONSIBILITIES	31
FACULTY AND STAFF ADVISING RESPONSIBILITIES	31
Academic Advisors:.....	31
BSW Program Director:	32
Field Coordinator:	32
Social Work Faculty:.....	32
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT	33
ACADEMIC RECOGNITION.....	33
ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT SOCIAL WORKERS	33
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER	33
PHI ALPHA SOCIAL WORK HONOR SOCIETY	33
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.....	34
UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT.....	34
FINANCIAL AID	35
SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION.....	35
GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION.....	35
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS	35
Reaves Davenport Excellence in SW Scholarship	36
Social Work Endowment for Quality and Excellence Scholarship	36
Leigh Jensen Crawford Social Work Annual & Social Work Endowed Scholarship	37
Mississippi Academic Pathways (MAP) Collaborative Project: Title IV-E Program	37
STUDENT INPUT.....	37
COURSE AND FACULTY EVALUATIONS.....	37

FACULTY SEARCH PROCESSES	38
EXIT EVALUATIONS.....	38
CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES	38
MSU SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS FACEBOOK GROUP	38
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIAL WORK (SW2333), SOCIAL WORK SENIOR SEMINAR (SW4713) AND FIELD PRACTICUM (SW4916/4926).....	39
MSU CAREER CENTER.....	39
STUDENT RESOURCES.....	39
BULLY’S PANTRY	39
CAREER CENTER	40
CENTER FOR ADVISING.....	40
CENTER FOR AMERICA’S VETERANS	40
COMPUTER-BASED TESTING SERVICES	40
DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER	40
FIRST GENERATION SCHOLAR PROGRAM.....	40
HOLMES CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS	40
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES	41
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE.....	41
LONGEST STUDENT HEALTH CENTER.....	41
MITCHELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY	41
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE	41
SPEAKING CENTER	42
STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES	42
STUDENT SUCCESS	42
UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER	43
SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE INFORMATION	43

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Inquiries regarding the social work program should be addressed to Bachelor of 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.

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 is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination is prohibited in university employment, programs or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status to the extent protected by applicable law. Questions about equal opportunity programs or compliance should be directed to the Office of Civil Rights Compliance, 231 Famous Maroon Band Street, P.O. 6044, Mississippi State, MS 39762

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 (BSW) 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/substance use agencies, public health agencies, home health/hospice agencies, skilled nursing facilities, juvenile and family court, intimate partner violence agencies/shelters, school systems, and neighborhood/community services/agencies.

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, professional social workers assist individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities to restore or enhance their capacity for social functioning, while creating societal conditions favorable to their goals. Effective social work practice requires an understanding of human behavior and development, social and cultural systems, economic and political structures, and the dynamic interactions among these factors.

BRIEF HISTORY

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University was granted permission to offer a baccalaureate social work degree in December 1989, by the Board of the Institutions of Higher Learning. The Council on Social Work Education granted candidacy status to the Starkville campus program in June 1992. The Social Work Program was granted initial accreditation effective fall 1995. Subsequent reaffirmations were successful in 2000, 2008, 2016, and 2024. The next accreditation review is scheduled for 2032.

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](#) for assistance in defining your career goals and visiting relevant professional websites, such as the [National Association of Social Workers](#) and the [Council on Social Work Education](#) 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 contributing to positive change within individuals, families, communities, and society?

2. Do you value the dignity, worth, and unique experiences of all people, regardless of their backgrounds, identities, or life circumstances?
3. Are you able to build positive relationships with others and approach challenges or conflicts with openness and a willingness to learn?
4. Do you demonstrate qualities such as patience, empathy, integrity, responsibility, perseverance, and resourcefulness?
5. Are you committed to self-reflection, personal growth, and developing your ability to work effectively with diverse individuals and communities?
6. Are you interested in understanding how family, community, organizational, and societal systems influence individual well-being and life outcomes?
7. Are you motivated to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the advancement of the social work profession?

Affirmative answers to these questions serve as the basis of the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University. As a professional program, social work education requires students to demonstrate academic readiness, ethical behavior, professionalism, and a commitment to the values of the social work profession.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#) further reinforces the important professional roles that social workers have in society. Teaching the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics is an integral part of the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University.

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. Our program provides a generalist social work education that integrates key areas of professional knowledge and practice through coursework, experiential learning, and the field practicum. These areas include social work values and ethics, human diversity, social and economic justice, human behavior in the social environment, social welfare policy and services, research-informed practice, professional practice skills, 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 principles in mind, the MSU Social Work Program embraces a definition of generalist social work practice in which practitioners draw upon a broad knowledge base and a range of professional skills to work with systems of all sizes. Grounded in a strengths-based perspective, generalist social workers use a planned change process to foster empowerment, enhance well-being, and address challenges across a variety of practice settings.

MISSION STATEMENTS

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Mississippi State University is a public research, land-grant university with a mission to provide access and opportunity to all sectors of Mississippi's diverse population, as well as other states and countries, and to offer excellent programs of teaching, research, and service. Mississippi State University offers a comprehensive range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across many disciplines.

The university embraces its role as a major contributor to the economic development of the state and beyond through targeted research and the transfer of ideas and technology to the public, supported by faculty, staff, student, and alumni relationships with industry, community organizations, and government entities. Mississippi State University is committed to its tradition of instilling among its community ideals of citizenship, leadership, and service.

Building on its land-grant tradition, Mississippi State University strategically extends its resources and expertise for the benefit of Mississippi's citizens, the nation, and the world by offering access for working and place-bound learners through its on- and off-campus education and research sites, Extension, and distance education programs.

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

The [core vision of the College of Arts & Sciences](#) is to prepare “students to be leaders in whatever career they choose by imparting the skills of creative and collaborative thinking and communication essential to navigating the enormous challenges the world faces today. With our emphasis on approaching problems from a range of perspectives, our students, faculty, and staff seek out new solutions to big problems, develop ideas to make the lives of our neighbors better, and inspire others to do the same. A degree in the College of Arts & Sciences provides students with an educational experience that uniquely prepares them for their career of choice and a life filled with learning, growth, and change.”

The College offers curricula in the fine arts, the humanities, the sciences, and the social sciences. These 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 academic disciplines.

A liberal arts 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 fine 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.

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.” The department provides 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.

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, adheres to social work knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes outlined by the [Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards of the Council on Social Work Education](#), and reinforces the [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

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

- Students will realize the specific learning outcomes for their chosen disciplines.
- Students will apply their specialized knowledge in their careers
- Students will demonstrate communication fluency
- Students will consider a variety of perspectives and solutions
- Students will engage in scholarly or scientific inquiry

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

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.

Outcomes/Competencies with related behaviors are as follows:

1. **Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**
 - a. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context
 - b. Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
 - c. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
 - d. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgement and behavior
2. **Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice**
 - a. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels
 - b. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
3. **Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice**
 - a. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels
 - b. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences
4. **Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice**
 - a. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs
 - b. Identify ethical, culturally-informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work
5. **Engage in Policy Practice**
 - a. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services
 - b. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
6. **Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
 - a. Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies
 - b. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies
7. **Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
 - a. Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies

- b. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan
- 8. **Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
 - a. Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals
 - b. Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies
- 9. **Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
 - a. Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes
 - b. Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

CURRICULUM

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK ADMISSION AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

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. A student may declare social work as a major at any time in their academic career. However, there is a formal admissions process into the program. Some upper division courses are restricted to students who have been admitted to the program. To prevent delays in degree completion, students should apply for formal admission once they meet the eligibility requirements listed below.

Eligibility Requirements for Admission:

1. Have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 with a 2.5 GPA for all social work courses;
2. Complete SW 2313 Intro to Social Work (including 20 hrs of experiential learning) with a minimum grade of "B". Courses in progress the semester of application are accepted; though, final grades below the minimum expectation will require reapplication;
3. In addition to the SW 2313 Intro to Social Work, complete two social work courses (one elective and one core or two core) with a minimum grade of "C". Courses in progress the semester of application are accepted; though, final grades below the minimum expectation will require reapplication;
4. Complete an "Application for Admission" including: online application, personal narrative essay, case study (completed in SW2313), and three references on the designated program form;
5. Participate in a personal interview with the Social Work Admissions Committee if indicated by the application rubric's benchmark score(s). Students not admitted to the Social Work Program for the application semester may reapply.

The following liberal arts courses must be completed before petitioning for admission:

- **EN 1103 (3 hours)** English Composition I or **EN 1104** Expanded English Composition
- **EN 1113 (3 hours)** English Composition II or **EN 1173** Accelerated Composition II
- **PS 1113 (3 hours)** American Government
- **PSY 1013 (3 hours)** General Psychology
- **SO 1003 (3 hours)** Introduction to Sociology

Requirements to Remain in the Social Work Program:

1. Maintain a cumulative 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.

For a general overview of the BSW curriculum, please access [MSU’s course catalog](#). For specific course information/description, please access [Social Work General Education and College Requirements & Major Core](#) information in the course catalog. Students have the right to appeal decisions that affect their admission to, progression in, or continuation within the Social Work Program by following the grievance procedures detailed in the Grievance Procedures section.

SOCIAL WORK FIELD PRACTICUM

Field education is recognized as the signature pedagogy of social work education and serves as the primary mechanism through which students integrate classroom knowledge, professional values, and practice skills within real-world settings. Mississippi State University, through its Council on Social Work Education—accredited Bachelor of Social Work Program, requires completion of a field practicum. The field practicum provides a structured, educationally directed learning experience that enables students to apply social work theories, competencies, and ethical principles in agency-based practice settings. For the social work field practicum, all social work majors designated within the Department of Sociology seeking to obtain the Bachelor of Social Work are required to complete a minimum of 450 field practicum hours including field activity through an agency setting and an embedded seminar course. The field practicum is the equivalent of 12 semester hours and is represented in the curriculum as SW4916 Social Work Field Practicum/Seminar I and SW4926 Social Work Field Practicum/Seminar II.

Field education agencies may require background checks, fingerprinting, drug screening, immunization documentation, or other agency-specific requirements as a condition of placement. Students are responsible for complying with all agency requirements and should be aware that failure to meet such requirements may affect their ability to complete field education requirements and progress in the Social Work Program.

Each student and Field Instructor will be provided access to the Field Practicum Manual prior to the beginning of the social work field practicum. The Field Practicum Manual is a detailed

resource of policies and procedures concerning the field education experience outlining responsibilities of the student, Field Instructor, and the Field Coordinator.

Criteria for Determining Student Eligibility for Field Practicum

Completion of all coursework in the Social Work Program curriculum excluding SW4916 and SW4926.

Social Work Official Admit Designation, which includes the following criteria:

1. Maintain cumulative 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.
6. Completion and Submission of the *MSU Social Work Program Field Practicum Application* in accordance with guidance provided by the Field Coordinator.

Student Field Practicum Placement

Each student can provide individual input regarding agency placement for the field practicum experience. The Field Coordinator selects/approves the field education setting and directs the placement process. See the Field Practicum Manual for additional information.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Social Work Program values strong partnerships with the professional practice community and relies on these relationships to ensure curriculum relevance and responsiveness to the evolving nature of social work practice. Practitioners contribute to student learning through guest lectures, experiential learning opportunities, field instruction, annual field instructor training, continuing education events, and professional networking activities. The program also engages members of the professional community through consultation regarding workforce needs, employment expectations, and emerging practice trends. Through field education and classroom experiences, students interact with social workers and professionals from other disciplines, gaining exposure to diverse practice settings and perspectives. Faculty maintain active involvement in professional organizations, community service, licensure, continuing education, and leadership activities within the profession. Collectively, these partnerships provide practice-informed perspectives, enrich student learning, strengthen field education, and support the preparation of competent, ethical, and practice-ready social workers.

DISTANCE EDUCATION/ONLINE LEARNING

The MSU Social Work Program follows a traditional in-person instructional model, with a limited number of social work courses available via distance education/online learning. While social work majors may enroll in these online courses, they are primarily designed to support students pursuing the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies degree. Additionally,

the courses are not typically offered via distance education/online learning within the same semester that they are offered in-person. As such, students should not rely on distance education courses as their primary pathway for completing the BSW degree. However, when offered, online courses may provide flexibility for students who have fallen out of sequence in the curriculum or who wish to complete a limited number of social work courses through distance education while remaining on track in the program.

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

- 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

MINOR IN SOCIAL WORK

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University does not offer a minor in social work. However, select social work courses are available to students from other academic disciplines who are interested in learning more about social work, social welfare, and related social issues. These courses may complement a variety of majors and career interests by increasing understanding of individuals, families, communities, and social service systems.

Students should be aware that completion of social work courses alone does not constitute preparation for professional social work practice. Consistent with accreditation standards established by the Council on Social Work Education, a minor in social work is not recognized as preparation for entry-level professional social work practice. Professional social work practice requires completion of a Council on Social Work Education—accredited Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) or Master of Social Work (MSW) degree program.

SOCIAL WORK COURSE EQUIVALENCY AND TRANSFER CREDIT

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 admission

to the Social Work Program as previously detailed. Please see specific credit transfer guidelines below.

DIRECT EQUIVALENT COURSES

1. Courses with a SW designation coming from a Mississippi community college or any Council on Social Work Education accredited program may be approved as a direct equivalent for one of our social work courses. The BSW Program Director determines what seems likely for equivalency using the course title and description, then requests a syllabus for review, as needed. If a syllabus is requested/received, the BSW Program Director can consult the Instructor of Record for additional feedback in making the determination, as needed. If it is not-time sensitive and/or if the BSW Program Director feels additional feedback is needed, the BSW Program Director may consult the SW curriculum committee.
 - Direct equivalency must be a “C” or higher, with the exception of SW 2313, which must be a “B” or higher, to align with BSW program requirements.
 - Courses must be similar in content and credit value to the course(s) for which they are being substituted.

ELECTIVE COURSES

1. Courses with a SW designation from a Mississippi community college or any Council on Social Work Education accredited program may be approved as a general elective, social science elective, or social work elective.
 - Elective equivalency must be “C” or higher for social work elective to align with BSW program requirements or “D” or higher for general or social science elective.
 - Courses must be similar in content and credit value to the course(s) for which they are being substituted.
2. Courses with a SW designation not from a Mississippi community college or any Council on Social Work Education accredited program may be approved as a general or social science elective.
 - Elective equivalency must be “D” or higher for general or social science elective.
 - Courses must be similar in content and credit value to the course(s) for which they are being substituted.

CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCES

1. Consistent with accreditation standards, the Social Work Program does not grant academic credit for life experience or previous employment in lieu of required social work coursework or field education.
2. The program values the contributions of lived experience and practice wisdom while emphasizing the importance of grounding professional practice in social work theory, research, and ethical principles. Competent social workers integrate both knowledge and experience to inform their practice.

SOCIAL WORK ADMISSIONS AND ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

A student may declare social work as a major at any time in their academic career. However, there is a formal admissions process into the program. Some upper division courses are restricted to students who have been admitted to the program.

The admissions process and academic guidelines provide students with opportunities to explore their interest in and preparedness for a career in social work while allowing faculty to assess the strengths, readiness, and developmental needs of prospective students. This process facilitates timely academic and professional advising designed to support student success. Therefore, declaring social work as a major does not guarantee admission to the Social Work Program, nor does it guarantee successful completion of the BSW degree.

SOCIAL WORK OFFICIAL ADMISSION APPLICATION PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

Application portfolios for Social Work Official Admission are completed via an online process communicated by the BSW Program Director. All application materials are due by 11:59pm on either November 1st (fall semester) or April 1st (spring semester), regardless of the day of the week.

1. The application portfolio requires the inclusion of a personal narrative essay uploaded in PDF format. Please refer to the outline provided in the online application for specific details.
2. Case Study (Completed in SW2313 for current students; students who completed SW2313 before this was an option should follow the instructions provided in their confirmation email)
3. Three references (one academic from a non-social work faculty member, one personal, and one work) are required. References are required to submit their responses via the designated program form. The program reference form will be generated through your application and sent directly to your reference.
 - Examples of these include the following:
 1. **Academic**—Instructors of non-social work classes
 2. **Personal**—Community leaders, high school counselors, ministers, teachers, sorority/fraternity, or social club advisors
 3. **Work**—Either paid or volunteer experiences
 - Applicants must not use any references who are (a) related to them or (b) instructors of MSU social work courses.
 - Applicants are encouraged to contact their references in advance to obtain consent and verify contact information.
 - References will receive the online reference form directly via email through the application; however, applicants are responsible for confirming receipt of the form with their references and ensuring all forms are submitted by the stated deadlines.
 - **Important Note: References will become part of the applicant's admissions file. They will be used only for admission consideration and will not be disclosed to**

any unauthorized individual without the applicant's consent. Applicants have the right to review references in their file unless they voluntarily waived their right of access.

4. The Social Work Admissions Committee will also consider each applicant's observed engagement and/or performance during the completion of their coursework (i.e., attendance, classroom participation, assignment timeliness/quality, communication, self-awareness, and professionalism).

ADMISSION DECISION PROCESS

After the application period closes, the Social Work Admissions Committee will review all complete admission portfolios. The Social Work Admissions Committee is made up of full-time social work faculty and led by the BSW Program Director. Additionally, the committee may include alumni, field instructors, adjunct faculty members, and/or social work students. Based on the review of admission portfolio materials, as well as the applicants' observed engagement and/or performance during coursework, applicants who meet or exceed the established evaluation criteria may have the personal interview with the Admissions Committee waived and be admitted to the Social Work Program. The BSW Program Director will notify applicants if a personal interview is required. After all required materials and interviews, as applicable, are complete, the BSW Program Director will communicate final admission decisions—admit or do not admit—via email.

APPEALS PROCESS

A student who is denied admission to the Social Work Program may appeal the decision to the BSW Program Director. Following a review, the BSW Program Director may either uphold the original admission decision or identify conditions that would allow the student to address deficiencies and reapply for admission to the program. In some cases, denial of admission may also result in dismissal from the social work major. Students wishing to appeal such a decision may do so through the Grievance Procedures outlined in this handbook.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

The Social Work program at MSU is committed to supporting students as they prepare to become professional social workers. The Technical Standards for Professional and Ethical Behavior describe the minimum expectations each student in the MSU Social Work Program—declared major or Social Work Official Admit—must satisfy to enroll in, progress through, and graduate from the BSW program.

Because the Social Work Program is preparing students for careers as professional social workers, and given the nature of professional social work practice to protect the clients and communities we serve, the Social Work Program has established requirements for student conduct that not only focus on academic performance but that also emphasize necessary skills, attributes, and competencies. The Technical Standards are intended to support student development, protect client well-being, uphold professional standards, and ensure readiness for competent social work practice.

Becoming a professional is a developmental process. Students are expected to demonstrate growth in these areas throughout their matriculation in the BSW program. If at any point a student has questions about their ability to meet these Standards, they should contact the BSW Program Director. Faculty or administrators who have questions or need clarification regarding a student's ability to meet these Standards should also consult with the BSW Program Director.

A student can participate in the Social Work Program so long as they are able to meet these standards with or without reasonable accommodations. Students who seek accommodations for disabilities should contact MSU's [Disability Resource Center](#) as soon as possible. The Disability Resource Center will determine a student's eligibility for and recommend appropriate accommodations and services. The Disability Resource Center may be reached by phone at (662) 325-3335 or by email at drc@msstate.edu.

Concerns related to the Technical Standards will be considered on a continuum of low-, moderate-, or elevated-risk concerns and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Factors considered may include the severity of the concern; pattern of behavior; responsiveness to feedback; impact on clients, agencies, peers, faculty, the Social Work Program, MSU, or the broader community; professional implications; and actual or potential risk to clients or learning environments.

These Technical Standards are intended to complement, rather than replace, the professional responsibilities outlined in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and other applicable Social Work Program, University, and field education policies.

Commitment to Non-Discrimination

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination is prohibited in university employment, programs or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status to the extent protected by applicable law. Questions about equal opportunity programs or compliance should be directed to the Office of Civil Rights Compliance, 231 Famous Maroon Band Street, P.O. 6044, Mississippi State, MS 39762

The Technical Standards outlined below address the following:

- Standard 1: Communication
- Standard 2: Functional Abilities for Academic and Field Education
- Standard 3: Emotional Stability, Management, and Regulation
- Standard 4: Self-Awareness and Reflective Practice
- Standard 5: Respect for Diversity and Social Justice
- Standard 6: Ethical Conduct
- Standard 7: Professional Relationships and Boundaries
- Standard 8: Academic and Professional Standards

Concerns regarding compliance with these standards will be addressed through the Student Conduct and Dismissal Procedures section of this handbook.

Standard 1: Communication

Effective communication is essential to social work education and professional practice. Students must demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly, respectfully, responsibly, and professionally across academic, field, and professional settings.

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- Express ideas and feelings clearly.
- Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills, including the ability to listen objectively and to interpret nonverbal communication.
- Communicate responsibly and respectfully in all interactions with colleagues, faculty, field instructors, task supervisors, staff, clients, other professionals, and others with whom they interact in their student role.
- Communicate clearly through written products at a level appropriate for undergraduate social work education, including using correct grammar and spelling and applying the Social Work Program designated writing style.
- Advocate for themselves in an appropriate and responsible manner that uses proper channels for conflict resolution as outlined in the BSW Program Handbook and Field Practicum Manual.
- Demonstrate communication skills sufficient to meet the academic, professional, and field education requirements of the Social Work Program. Students with disabilities will receive full consideration, and reasonable accommodations may be provided through the Disability Resource Center in accordance with University policy.
- Demonstrate the ability to build rapport and work effectively with colleagues, faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, staff, clients, and other professionals.
- Demonstrate openness to constructive feedback and the ability to integrate feedback into professional practice.

Standard 2: Functional Abilities for Academic and Field Education

Social work education requires students to engage in academic and field-based learning that involves cognitive, sensory, motor, and technological skills. Students must demonstrate the capacity to participate in learning experiences, process information, think critically, solve problems, and meet classroom and field education requirements.

Students must be able to meet the following academic and field education requirements, with or without reasonable accommodations:

- Prepare for, attend, and participate in classes and field placements in accordance with expectations outlined in course syllabi, field placement requirements, and the Council on Social Work Education's nine social work competencies.

- Demonstrate the ability to arrange and utilize reliable transportation necessary to meet classroom and field education requirements.
- Demonstrate the professional and ethical use of technology necessary for academic success and effective social work practice, including, but not limited to, computers, telephones, learning management systems, electronic communication platforms, and agency databases.
- Demonstrate the ability to acquire knowledge and process experiences to inform simulations, discussions, and practice.
- Demonstrate the capacity to think critically and to apply effective problem-solving skills.

Standard 3: Emotional Stability, Management, and Regulation

In accordance with the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics (§ 4.05), social work students should not allow their personal problems or issues to interfere with their judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have professional responsibility. Students must demonstrate the emotional and behavioral regulation necessary to exercise sound judgment, meet program expectations, and support safe and effective social work practice.

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- Demonstrate appropriate self-disclosure (the revealing of personal information) and professional boundaries in classroom and field settings, including all assignments. Appropriate disclosure may look like a broad description without significant details. Open communication is encouraged; however, students are expected to exercise professional judgment regarding the amount and nature of personal information shared in academic and field settings.
- Maintain respectful relationships with colleagues, faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, staff, clients, and other professionals across in-person and electronic interactions. Students are expected to communicate about others in a manner consistent with professional and ethical standards, including in group chats, social media, and other digital spaces.
- Seek appropriate help when personal circumstances interfere with academic or professional performance. Consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and professional social work expectations, students are encouraged to engage in ongoing self-care practices that support their well-being, learning, and professional effectiveness.
- Use appropriate strategies and resources to manage stress and support academic and professional functioning. Strategies may include seeking counseling, contacting [Student Success](#) and/or [Student Counseling Services](#), and obtaining support from others.
- Respectfully receive and integrate constructive feedback into academic and field learning.

Standard 4: Self-Awareness and Reflective Practice

Self-awareness and reflective practice are essential to professional growth and effective social work practice. Students must demonstrate the capacity to examine how their values, beliefs, biases, experiences, strengths, and limitations may influence their interactions, decision-making, and professional practice.

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements throughout the curriculum:

- Demonstrate a willingness to continually reflect on personal values, attitudes, beliefs, biases, emotions, and experiences and consider how these factors may influence thinking, behavior, interactions, and professional practice.
- Demonstrate the capacity to continually assess personal strengths, limitations, and areas for professional growth and development.
- Take responsibility for personal actions and consider their impact on others.
- Seek supervision and receive and incorporate constructive feedback into professional growth and practice.

Standard 5: Respect for Diversity and Social Justice

Social work practice requires students to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in ways that demonstrate respect for human rights and a commitment to anti-racism, diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experience may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power.

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- Demonstrate a willingness to examine their personal beliefs, values, and assumptions that perpetuate or counter oppression.
- Demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for one's reactions and behaviors in learning and integrating diverse perspectives.
- Demonstrate the willingness and capacity to empathize with the experiences and perspectives of individuals or groups from diverse backgrounds in both academic and field settings.
- Demonstrate the ability to engage respectfully and effectively with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities whose backgrounds, identities, experiences, or perspectives differ from their own.
- Demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity to diversity, oppression, and privilege.
- Approach differences with an attitude of humility and respect, acknowledging the importance of cultural differences in shaping life experiences.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop and strengthen cultural humility and responsiveness when working with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Exhibit an appreciation for difference and a commitment to engage around the complex issues of diversity and social justice.

Standard 6: Ethical Conduct

Students are required to adhere to ethical conduct and decision-making in accordance with the values, ethics, and standards established for the social work profession, as formalized in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, and to abide by all applicable University policies, including the [University's Honor Code](#).

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- Adhere to a commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.
- Demonstrate behavior and decisions reflecting the highest standards of honesty and personal and professional integrity.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with colleagues, faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, staff, clients, and other professionals.
- Understand their role in practice as a learner and social work student. This includes the ability to correctly judge the limits of one's own competence and to seek help from an appropriate source when necessary.
- Disclose to the BSW Program Director, Field Coordinator, or both any legal involvement that takes place during enrollment in the Social Work Program, including any arrest, criminal charge, indictment, conviction, plea of guilty, plea of nolo contendere (no contest), Alford plea, deferred prosecution, pretrial diversion, deferred adjudication, or other criminal court disposition that may affect a student's eligibility for field placement, licensure, or professional practice.
- Follow federal and state laws and agency policies regarding confidentiality and mandatory reporting, including seeking permission from agency administrators for the use of agency materials, records, or audio-visual materials for academic coursework.
- Use technology, electronic communication, and artificial intelligence tools in a manner consistent with the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, University policies, field agency requirements, and principles of academic and professional integrity.

Standard 7: Professional Relationships and Boundaries

Professional social work practice requires the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients, colleagues, supervisors, faculty, and other professionals. Students must demonstrate the capacity to communicate professionally, engage respectfully with others, navigate interpersonal challenges, and maintain appropriate professional boundaries consistent with social work values and ethical standards.

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- Demonstrate the ability to build a professional rapport with peers/colleagues, faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, staff, clients, and other professionals.

- Demonstrate the capacity to understand the experience and perspectives of individuals or groups and use this empathy as a basis for a productive relationship.
- Exhibit conflict resolution skills, including the ability to negotiate differing attitudes and opinions.
- Demonstrate professional written and electronic communication appropriate to academic, field, and professional settings.
- Recognize and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in interactions with peers/colleagues, faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, staff, clients, and other professionals, including through social media, electronic communication, and other digital interactions. Demonstrate professional judgment regarding the nature and limits of these relationships.

Standard 8: Academic and Professional Standards

Social workers are entrusted with significant responsibilities to clients, agencies, communities, and the profession. As a result, students must demonstrate dependability, accountability, and the ability to consistently meet academic, professional, and field-related expectations. This includes adhering to policies and procedures, managing time effectively, fulfilling commitments, and conducting themselves in a manner consistent with professional standards.

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- Demonstrate the ability to meet the Social Work Program's requirements to remain in good academic standing and to continue in the program.
- Show the capacity to successfully complete required field practicum hours and demonstrate positive progress in the required competencies and behavioral indicators in the field and classroom settings.
- Follow the policies, procedures, and operating standards of the Social Work Program, the Department of Sociology, the College of Arts and Sciences, MSU, and the field placement agency.
- Ensure that appearance, dress, and general demeanor are appropriate to the context.
- Prioritize responsibilities and manage time effectively; demonstrate punctuality and dependability; attend classes, including online courses, and field activities in accordance with applicable attendance policies; meet deadlines; complete assignments on time; and conscientiously arrange and keep appointments.
- Adhere to classroom, program, and agency policies and procedures and appropriately utilize instruction and supervision throughout the learning process.

Examples of Behaviors That May Raise Technical Standards Concerns

The following examples are illustrative rather than exhaustive. A behavior may implicate more than one Technical Standard, and concerns will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis consistent with the continuum described above, including the severity and pattern of behavior, responsiveness to feedback, impact on others, professional implications, and actual or potential risk to clients or learning environments.

1. A student repeatedly misses class, field activities, or supervision, does not follow established attendance or notification procedures, and fails to respond appropriately to faculty or field personnel regarding the pattern. (Communication, Standard 1; Academic and Professional Standards, Standard 8)
2. A student has recurring difficulty accessing or appropriately using required technology or processing information needed to complete academic or field responsibilities and, despite instruction and available support, does not seek guidance or apply problem-solving strategies. (Functional Abilities for Academic and Field Education, Standard 2; Academic and Professional Standards, Standard 8)
3. A student allows personal stress or circumstances to repeatedly interfere with classroom or field responsibilities and, despite feedback and available support, does not communicate concerns, seek appropriate assistance, or take reasonable steps to address the impact on performance. (Communication, Standard 1; Emotional Stability, Management, and Regulation, Standard 3; Self-Awareness and Reflective Practice, Standard 4)
4. A student receives constructive feedback about professional behavior or performance but repeatedly responds defensively or disrespectfully, does not reflect on their role in the concern, and makes little effort to incorporate the feedback into future behavior. (Communication, Standard 1; Emotional Stability, Management, and Regulation, Standard 3; Self-Awareness and Reflective Practice, Standard 4)
5. A student repeatedly engages in judgmental, demeaning, discriminatory, or otherwise disrespectful communication or behavior toward individuals or groups based on differences in identity, background, values, experiences, or perspectives and, after feedback and opportunities for reflection, is unwilling to examine personal assumptions, consider the effects of their behavior, or modify their professional interactions. (Self-Awareness and Reflective Practice, Standard 4; Respect for Diversity and Social Justice, Standard 5; Professional Relationships and Boundaries, Standard 7)
6. A student shares identifiable client or agency information in coursework, electronic communication, social media, or an artificial intelligence tool without required authorization or appropriate confidentiality safeguards. (Ethical Conduct, Standard 6; Professional Relationships and Boundaries, Standard 7; Academic and Professional Standards, Standard 8)
7. A student disagrees with a course, field, or program decision and responds through hostile or disrespectful communication, public discussion, group chats, or social media rather than using established channels for professional advocacy and conflict resolution. (Communication, Standard 1; Emotional Stability, Management, and Regulation, Standard 3; Professional Relationships and Boundaries, Standard 7)

8. A student encounters a situation in field placement that exceeds their current knowledge or competence but proceeds independently rather than seeking supervision, resulting in failure to follow agency procedures or creating potential risk for a client or others. (Functional Abilities for Academic and Field Education, Standard 2; Ethical Conduct, Standard 6; Academic and Professional Standards, Standard 8)
9. A student demonstrates an ongoing pattern of failing to meet academic, field, or professional responsibilities, such as missing deadlines, arriving late, failing to complete agreed-upon tasks, or not keeping scheduled appointments, and does not demonstrate sufficient improvement after expectations, feedback, and available supports have been provided. (Communication, Standard 1; Academic and Professional Standards, Standard 8)

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

STUDENT CONDUCT

Mississippi State University expects students to conduct themselves as responsible adults who comply with all applicable laws, University policies, and academic regulations. Students are accountable for their actions, expected to respect the rights of others, and responsible for safeguarding University, state, and private property. Behaviors that violate these expectations may result in disciplinary action as outlined in [MSU's Code of Student Conduct](#). Students are also expected to comply with departmental, college, and program-specific academic policies, including those governing the appropriate use of technology, computer resources, and information in academic work.

Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures of the [MSU Student Honor Code Office](#), which provides detailed information regarding academic misconduct, potential sanctions, and the appeals process. In addition to sanctions imposed by faculty members or the Honor Code Council, academic programs may impose professional or program-specific consequences when warranted.

Students are expected to comply with course-specific policies regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. Students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, appropriate attribution, and academic integrity of all submitted work regardless of whether AI tools were used in its development.

Academic misconduct is considered a serious violation of the standards of integrity essential to the academic community. MSU seeks to balance accountability with opportunities for student learning and development; however, violations of academic integrity may result in significant academic, educational, and disciplinary consequences. The Honor Code Council is authorized to assign sanctions in accordance with University policy, including disciplinary probation, separation from the University, official documentation of violations, and other educational or academic measures appropriate to the circumstances.

Because professional integrity is central to social work practice and detailed as a core value in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, incidents of academic misconduct may also have implications for a student's standing within the Social Work Program. Additional program-level review, remediation requirements, or other actions may be considered based on the nature and severity of the violation. Students involved in an academic misconduct case should consult with the BSW Program Director or designated faculty member to discuss potential impacts on their academic and professional progression. While University policies identify a range of possible sanctions, decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and reflect the specific circumstances of each incident.

DISMISSAL POLICY

The Social Work Program is committed to preparing competent, ethical, and professional social workers. Students are expected to demonstrate behaviors consistent with the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, the Technical Standards for Professional Social Work Education, program policies, and the expectations of the profession. Concerns regarding academic performance, professional conduct, ethical decision-making, or adherence to program standards may result in review, remediation, or dismissal, depending on the nature and severity of the concern.

A student may be subject to review when concerns arise regarding:

- Adherence to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, University policies, Social Work Program policies, or the Technical Standards for Professional Social Work Education.
- The ability to meet the academic, ethical, professional, field education, or Technical Standards requirements of the Social Work Program.
- Conduct that may compromise client welfare, professional integrity, educational performance, or readiness for professional social work practice.

The appropriate response will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include no further action, remediation, or dismissal. In determining the appropriate response, the Program may consider the nature and severity of the concern, pattern of behavior, responsiveness to feedback or remediation, impact on others, professional implications, and actual or potential risk to clients or learning environments.

Failure to meet the Technical Standards for Professional Social Work Education, with or without reasonable accommodations, may result in review, remediation, or dismissal in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

PROCEDURES

Addressing Conduct & Dismissal Concerns

Concerns regarding a student's academic performance, professional conduct, ethical behavior, or ability to meet the requirements and Technical Standards of the Social Work Program will be reviewed by the BSW Program Director. Concerns may be raised by faculty, staff, field instructors, agency personnel, or students. Alleged concerns must be submitted

in writing to the BSW Program Director and should include sufficient documentation, relevant supporting information, and, when applicable, the sources of the information.

As part of the review process, the BSW Program Director may gather additional information necessary to evaluate the concern. This may include consultation with University personnel, review of relevant records, or consideration of professional evaluations, assessments, or recommendations as authorized from qualified University or external professionals. When appropriate, the student's written consent will be obtained before requesting or receiving information protected by privacy or confidentiality requirements.

Outcome, Remediation and Appeals Process

Students are expected to participate in the review process regarding concerns related to academic performance, professional conduct, ethical behavior, field education, or their ability to meet applicable Program and Technical Standards requirements. Students are expected to provide information reasonably necessary to evaluate the identified concern. A student's failure to participate in the review process or provide reasonably requested information may limit the Program's ability to evaluate or resolve the concern. In such circumstances, the Program may proceed based on the information reasonably available and determine an appropriate outcome consistent with Program and University policies.

Concerns related to a student's academic performance, professional conduct, ethical behavior, or readiness for social work practice will be reviewed by the BSW Program Director in consultation with the student, Social Work faculty, the student's advisor, or any other additional program representatives based on appropriateness.

Following a review of the available information, one of the following outcomes may occur:

1. The student may be permitted to continue in the program without further action.
2. The identified concern(s) may be addressed through a remediation plan outlining specific expectations, recommendations, or corrective actions necessary for continued progression in the program.
3. Dismissal decisions will identify whether the dismissal is temporary or permanent. Temporary dismissal may permit a student to seek reinstatement or reapply following completion of specified conditions. Permanent dismissal results in termination from the Social Work Program without eligibility for reinstatement unless otherwise specified in the dismissal decision.

When a remediation plan or dismissal action is required, the plan will be documented in writing and will identify the specific concern(s), the conditions for remediation, applicable timelines, and, when relevant, the requirements for reapplication or reinstatement. The student and the BSW Program Director will acknowledge receipt of the plan in writing.

Students have the right to appeal decisions that affect their admission to, progression in, or continuation within the Social Work Program by following the grievance procedures detailed below.

When an advisor, faculty representative, or other designated University representative is involved in the process, their role is to help ensure that procedures are followed fairly and consistently, that the student is informed of the review and appeals processes, and that relevant information is available to all parties. Such representatives may serve as a resource to the student regarding available options, procedural rights, and program expectations.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

A grievance is a written complaint regarding an action, decision, policy, procedure, or condition within the Social Work Program that a student believes is unfair, inconsistent with program policies, or adversely affects the student's educational experience.

The Social Work Program grievance process is not intended to replace or supersede established University policies and procedures. Concerns governed by other University policies or procedures will be referred to the appropriate University office and addressed through the applicable process. Examples include, but are not limited to, grade appeals, discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, disability accommodations, student conduct violations, and academic dishonesty.

The Social Work Program is housed within the Department of Sociology. Appeals beyond the BSW Program Director are reviewed by the Sociology Department Head in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

Concerns related to field placement, field instruction, or agency practices should first be addressed through the procedures established by the Social Work Program's field education policies. If resolution cannot be achieved through those procedures, the student may utilize the Grievance Procedures outlined in this handbook.

Concerns regarding professional conduct, a student's ability to meet Program or Technical Standards, remediation plans, program continuance, or dismissal decisions should be addressed through the Social Work Program grievance procedures. Students retain the right to appeal such decisions through the Grievance Procedures outlined in this handbook.

FILING A GRIEVANCE

The student bears responsibility for providing sufficient information and supporting documentation to allow for a meaningful review of the grievance. Anonymous complaints generally cannot be fully investigated and therefore will not ordinarily be considered unless sufficient documentation is provided to permit meaningful review.

To facilitate a fair and timely review, all grievances and appeals must be submitted in writing to the BSW Program Director and include:

- Student's name and contact information
- A clear description of the concern
- Date(s) of the incident or decision

- Relevant supporting information or documentation
- Previous attempts to resolve the concern
- Desired resolution

Students are expected to make a reasonable effort to resolve concerns informally with the individual(s) involved before initiating a formal grievance unless doing so would be inappropriate, impractical, or raise concerns related to safety, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or other circumstances requiring immediate administrative review.

Formal grievances should be submitted within **20 business days of the incident or decision giving rise to the complaint.**

For purposes of this policy, "business days" refer to days when the University is officially open for normal operations and do not include weekends, University holidays, or official University closures.

REVIEW PROCESS

The individual responsible for reviewing the grievance will acknowledge receipt within **five business days of receiving the grievance** and provide a written response within **15 business days of receiving the grievance**, unless additional time is required.

Timelines may be extended when additional investigation or consultation is necessary. In such cases, the student will be notified in writing of the reason for the delay and the anticipated timeframe for resolution.

If the individual responsible for reviewing a grievance is the subject of the complaint or has a conflict of interest, the grievance will be referred to the next appropriate administrative level for review.

The individual responsible for reviewing the grievance may consult relevant parties, review applicable documentation, and request additional information as necessary to evaluate the concern.

Decisions rendered at each level of review will be communicated to the student in writing and will include the basis for the decision, any applicable next steps, and available appeal options.

Failure to respond to requests for information or otherwise participate in the review process may result in closure of the grievance without further action.

The program will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of all parties involved; however, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, as information may need to be shared to conduct a fair review.

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTIONS AND APPEALS

Grievance Involving a Social Work Faculty Member

1. Submit the concern in writing to the faculty member.
2. Appeal unresolved concerns to the BSW Program Director.
3. Appeal BSW Program Director decisions to the Sociology Department Head.

Grievance Not Involving a Social Work Faculty Member

1. Submit the concern in writing to the BSW Program Director.
2. Appeal unresolved concerns to the Sociology Department Head.

Grievance Involving the BSW Program Director

1. Submit the concern in writing to the Sociology Department Head.

Appeals must be submitted within **ten business days of receiving the written decision unless otherwise specified by University policy**. Appeals should identify the specific basis for the appeal, such as a procedural error, the availability of new information that was not reasonably available during the original review, or concerns regarding the application or interpretation of program policies and procedures. The decision of the Sociology Department Head constitutes the final departmental review. Students may pursue any additional appeals available through applicable University policies and procedures.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

The Social Work Program is committed to addressing concerns in a fair, timely, and respectful manner while maintaining the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved.

All grievance records and related correspondence will be maintained in accordance with applicable University policies.

All individuals participating in the grievance process are expected to do so honestly and in good faith. Knowingly providing false, misleading, or fraudulent information may result in referral to appropriate University processes.

Retaliation against any student participating in the grievance process is prohibited.

Decisions rendered by the final level of appeal available through the Social Work Program and Department shall conclude the program-level grievance process.

ADVISING

OVERVIEW OF ADVISING

Students may declare Social Work as a major at any point during their enrollment at MSU. Upon declaring the major, students are assigned an advisor based on their academic classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior). The Social Work Program faculty are committed to providing academic, professional, and developmental advising throughout a

student's educational journey and encourage students to seek guidance as needed. Depending on individual circumstances, advisors may recommend additional consultation with the BSW Program Director, Field Coordinator, or another appropriate faculty member to address specific academic, professional, or developmental needs.

While students are ultimately responsible for planning and completing degree requirements, the program encourages ongoing collaboration with faculty and staff. Advising is viewed as a shared process designed to support students in exploring their interests, assessing their strengths, developing professional competencies, and preparing for a career in social work. Through this collaborative approach, students and faculty engage in ongoing dialogue regarding academic progress, professional growth, and areas for continued development.

STUDENT ADVISING RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to take an active role in their academic planning and professional development and should:

- Meet with their assigned advisor to discuss course selection and degree planning.
- Prepare a draft course schedule prior to advising appointments and register for approved courses following advisor release.
- Understand that registration holds must be cleared by the appropriate advisor before course registration can occur.
- Consult with program faculty or staff regarding professional interests, career goals, opportunities for further learning, and resources to address areas of concern.
- Communicate with the BSW Program Director, Field Coordinator, or another appropriate faculty member when academic, personal, or professional challenges may affect successful completion of coursework or program requirements.
- Review the current degree monitoring platform regularly to monitor progress toward degree completion and promptly reporting any discrepancies to the assigned advisor.
- Seek guidance regarding professional and developmental advising needs and work with appropriate faculty/staff to identify applicable support resources.
- Take primary responsibility for monitoring academic progress, understanding program requirements, and meeting all deadlines related to degree completion.

FACULTY AND STAFF ADVISING RESPONSIBILITIES

The areas below provide an overview of the primary contacts for common advising and student support responsibilities within the Social Work Program. Because advising needs may vary, this list is not exhaustive. Students are encouraged to maintain regular communication with their advisor and consult with program faculty or staff as needed.

Academic Advisors:

- Assist students in planning their course of study.
- Advise students on appropriate course selection prior to registration.
- Assist students in assessing performance in liberal arts foundation courses.

- Assist students in assessing performance in professional social work courses.
- Initiate and review junior check-sheets with students.
- Guide students in completing University forms related to advising and academic progress (e.g., course substitutions and permission to enroll off-campus).
- Refer students to academic, personal, professional, and campus support resources.
- Provide feedback regarding academic progress, professional development, and readiness for a social work career.
- Refer students for professional and developmental advising as needed.

BSW Program Director:

- Assists students in evaluating their interest in and aptitude for a social work career.
- Assists students in assessing performance in professional social work courses.
- Provides feedback regarding academic progress, professional development, and readiness for a social work career.
- Assists students in understanding Social Work Program and University policies and procedures.
- Communicates course and curriculum changes that may affect degree plans.
- Provides guidance regarding academic standing, progression, retention, and suspension concerns.
- Supports students in identifying educational, professional, and career development opportunities.
- Maintains communication regarding degree requirements and program expectations.

Field Coordinator:

- Assists students in evaluating their interest in and aptitude for a social work career.
- Assists students in assessing performance in professional social work courses.
- Provides feedback regarding academic progress and professional development.
- Assists students in understanding Social Work Program and University policies and procedures.
- Assists students with field education applications and placement requirements.
- Refers students to appropriate support resources.
- Provides guidance regarding academic standing and progression concerns.
- Supports educational and career development opportunities.

Social Work Faculty:

- Assist students in evaluating their interest in and aptitude for a social work career.
- Assist students in assessing performance in professional social work courses.
- Provide feedback regarding academic progress, professional development, and readiness for a social work career.
- Assist students in understanding Social Work Program and University policies and procedures.
- Refer students to appropriate support resources.
- Refer students for professional and developmental advising as needed.
- Support educational, professional, and career development opportunities.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

MSU recognizes the academic achievements of full-time students enrolled in at least 12 semester hours.

- **President's Scholars:** GPA of 3.80 or higher
- **Dean's Scholars:** GPA of 3.50–3.79

ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT SOCIAL WORKERS

The [Association of Student Social Workers](#) (ASSW) is open to all MSU students with an interest in social work. ASSW provides opportunities for leadership, service, professional development, networking, and community engagement. Students are encouraged to participate in the organization's activities, committees, and events to enhance their educational and professional experience.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

Social work students are eligible for [student membership in the National Association of Social Workers](#) and are encouraged to participate in national, state, and local professional activities. Student membership provides access to professional resources, publications, networking opportunities, career development tools, and reduced-cost professional liability insurance. The [National Association of Social Workers Mississippi Chapter](#) hosts professional development events and an annual conference, offering students valuable opportunities to engage with practicing social workers and stay informed about issues affecting the profession.

The Social Work Program selects a Student of the Year to serve as its nominee for the National Association of Social Workers Mississippi Chapter's annual BSW Student Award. The selected student is recognized for academic achievement, professional development, service, and commitment to the social work profession. When funding is available, the Social Work Program will provide financial support for the student to attend the National Association of Social Workers Mississippi Chapter's Annual Conference.

PHI ALPHA SOCIAL WORK HONOR SOCIETY

[Phi Alpha](#) is the national honor society for social work students. Its mission is to promote scholarship, leadership, and service while fostering humanitarian values and a commitment to the social work profession. Through recognition of academic excellence and the promotion of fellowship among social work students, Phi Alpha encourages high standards in social work education and professional development. MSU's Social Work Program is home to the Pi Iota Chapter of Phi Alpha. Membership in Phi Alpha recognizes outstanding academic achievement and provides opportunities for professional engagement, leadership development, networking, and service to the social work profession and community. Membership eligibility for Phi Alpha is established by the national organization. According to [Phi Alpha Bylaws, Article V, Section 5.02\(a\)](#), undergraduate students are eligible for membership when they:

- Are enrolled at the institution represented by the chapter;
- Have declared Social Work as their major;
- Have completed at least 9 semester hours of required social work coursework;
- Have completed at least 37.5% of the total credit hours required for the degree, whichever requirement is achieved later; and
- Rank within the top 35% of their class academically.

Students who meet these criteria may be invited to join the Pi Iota Chapter of Phi Alpha at MSU in recognition of their academic achievement and commitment to the social work profession. Additional information regarding Phi Alpha can be found in their [online handbook](#).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Social Work Program encourages student participation in professional development activities and, when funding is available, may provide financial support to assist students with attendance and participation. These opportunities allow students to expand their professional knowledge, develop networking connections, and engage with current issues affecting the social work profession.

Professional development opportunities commonly attended by social work students include:

- Alabama–Mississippi Social Work Education Conference
- Mississippi Conference on Social Welfare (annual forum and regional conferences)
- National Association of Social Workers Mississippi Chapter Annual Conference
- Local, regional, and campus-based workshops, trainings, and conferences

Students are also encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities offered by other academic departments, community agencies, and professional organizations. In addition, the Social Work Program promotes ongoing engagement with social work practitioners through guest presentations in social work courses. Many guest speakers are graduates of the MSU Social Work Program who share their professional experiences and insights from practice. These presentations reinforce the theories, values, knowledge, and skills taught in the classroom while providing students with valuable opportunities for professional networking and career exploration.

UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

MSU offers a wide range of opportunities that support student learning, leadership development, service, and community engagement. Participation in campus organizations and activities can enhance students' preparation for generalist social work practice by fostering interpersonal skills, cultural awareness, leadership abilities, civic engagement, and professional growth.

Examples of involvement opportunities include:

- Campus Activities Board
- Cultural and international organizations
- Honor societies and honorary organizations

- Intramural sports
- Maroon Volunteer Center
- Political and advocacy organizations
- Residence hall programming and leadership opportunities
- Student Government Association
- Additional student organizations, clubs, and service opportunities across campus

Social work students are encouraged to engage in co-curricular experiences that complement their academic studies and contribute to their personal and professional development. Information about student organizations and involvement opportunities is available through the [MSU Student Leadership and Community Engagement](#), as well as via [Student Activities](#).

FINANCIAL AID

The primary sources of financial aid available to MSU students include federal, state, institutional, and private funding sources. Students are encouraged to visit the [MSU Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships](#) website for information about completing financial aid applications, reviewing eligibility requirements, monitoring the status of financial aid awards, and accessing additional financial resources and planning tools. Information regarding the various types of financial aid available can also be found through the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

Additional information regarding scholarships available through MSU, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Social Work Program can be found in the Scholarship Information section of this handbook.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Information regarding University scholarships and financial aid is available through the [MSU Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships](#). Scholarship applications are submitted through the University's online scholarship platform, which typically opens on October 1 and closes on March 1. Social Work Program scholarship applications are reviewed by the Social Work Scholarship Committee, who select recipients following a comprehensive evaluation of all eligible applications. Awards are made for the subsequent academic year.

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS

The following scholarships are currently available through the Social Work Program. Scholarship amounts vary annually and are typically distributed between the fall and spring semesters. Unless otherwise specified, awards are not renewable. Scholarship funds are disbursed through the [MSU Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships](#) and may affect a student's eligibility for need-based financial aid. Students should consult the MSU scholarship portal for current application deadlines, requirements, and award information.

Reaves Davenport Excellence in SW Scholarship

Established: 1997

Purpose: To assist social work students with scholarship money.

Qualifications:

1. Be full time students at Mississippi State University and enrolled in the Social Work Program within the College of Arts & Sciences.
2. Be students majoring in Social Work, who have earned a minimum of 3.0 GPA based upon 4.0 system. The scholarship should not be limited to the highest GPA, but academic achievement should be a major criterion.
3. Financial need may be considered, but this criterion is secondary to academic and general excellence.
4. Leadership in social work organizations (e.g., National Association of Social Workers, student social work organization) and other university or community organizations with a strong volunteer/service orientation.
5. Preference should be given to students interested in rural social work. This criterion should not prevent the scholarship from being awarded on an annual basis if students with rural interests are unavailable.
6. Be a second semester junior, senior, or graduate student, if and when a graduate degree in social work is established.
7. Demonstrate conduct consistent with the ethical standards of the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.

Social Work Endowment for Quality and Excellence Scholarship

Established: 2021

Purpose: Support students through, but not limited to, providing a portion of tuition and fees, books, stipend, and possibly any other fees. Other considerations for the fund could include professional development, cross-college collaborations and any other value-experience opportunities that promote academic knowledge in the social work field outside of the classroom.

Other considerations and selection criteria:

1. Be fulltime undergraduate students who have declared a Social Work concentration with the Department of Sociology within the College of Arts and Sciences at Mississippi State University.
2. Demonstrate academic excellence through a 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale).
3. Exhibits moral and ethical qualities.
4. Demonstrates leadership ability.
5. Driven to promote positive change with the social work program, the state and beyond.

Leigh Jensen Crawford Social Work Annual & Social Work Endowed Scholarship

Established: 2024

Considerations and Criteria:

1. Be an upper-level undergraduate student (junior or senior classification) pursuing a degree in Social Work with the College of Arts & Sciences at Mississippi State University.
2. Preference given to Social Work majors who have earned at least 30 credit hours toward their degree and are in good standing with the social work program.
3. Have demonstrated academic achievement with a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 system.
4. The scholarship is to be awarded for 4 semesters as long as the student is in good standing with the university and maintains a 2.5 grade point average based on a 4.0 scale.

Mississippi Academic Pathways (MAP) Collaborative Project: Title IV-E Program

Established: 2023

Purpose: Support and prepare social work students interested in child welfare careers through scholarships, dedicated internships, and career coaching, creating pathways to employment with the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS).

Qualifications:

1. Be an upper-level undergraduate student (senior classification) pursuing a degree in Social Work with the College of Arts & Sciences at Mississippi State University.
2. Have demonstrated a strong interest and commitment to child welfare.
3. Be willing to complete their 450-field hours with MDCPS.*
4. Be willing to sign a contract committing to one of employment after graduation.*

*Note: Failure to complete the required internship and employment commitment will result in repayment of scholarship funds, as outlined in the contract executed by the student, MSU, and MDCPS.

STUDENT INPUT

The Social Work Program values students as active partners in the educational process and recognizes the important contributions they make to the continued growth and improvement of the program. Students are encouraged to provide feedback regarding their educational experiences, curriculum, and program services. Opportunities for student input include course and faculty evaluations, participation in faculty search processes, and exit evaluations. Student feedback is reviewed alongside other assessment data to evaluate program effectiveness and support continuous improvement efforts.

COURSE AND FACULTY EVALUATIONS

MSU provides students with the opportunity to evaluate their instructors each semester through a standardized course evaluation process. Student feedback is collected confidentially, and evaluation results are compiled and distributed to faculty members after the conclusion of the semester. Faculty use this feedback to assess and strengthen course content, instructional methods, learning experiences, and overall teaching effectiveness.

Student evaluations play an important role in supporting continuous improvement and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning within the Social Work Program and the University.

FACULTY SEARCH PROCESSES

The Social Work Program values student input in the faculty hiring process. When faculty positions become available, students may have opportunities to interact with prospective candidates through formal and informal meetings, presentations, or interviews. Student feedback is collected and shared with the departmental search committee for consideration during the candidate evaluation process. Student feedback is advisory in nature and is one of several factors considered by the search committee. Student perspectives provide valuable insight and contribute to the selection of faculty who will support the mission and goals of the Social Work Program.

EXIT EVALUATIONS

Each student will complete the Student Evaluation of the Learning Experience (SELE) during the final two weeks of the practicum semester using an accessible survey link. The SELE is used to gather student perceptions of the field practicum, Field Instructor, Field Coordinator, and the Social Work Program. The SELE is not anonymous, as several items are designed to help the program better understand supervision practices, client engagement opportunities, and generalist practice experiences available through field education. Information obtained through the SELE will be reviewed by appropriate program personnel and used for educational and program improvement purposes.

Student feedback contributes to the Social Work Program's ongoing assessment processes and is considered in curriculum development, program planning, and continuous quality improvement efforts.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

Graduates of the Social Work Program have a strong history of securing employment following graduation. Many students obtain positions with agencies where they completed their field practicum, reflecting the value of field education as a pathway to professional employment.

The Social Work Program encourages students to take advantage of the following career development and employment resources:

MSU SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS FACEBOOK GROUP

The Social Work Program maintains a private Facebook group, **MSU Social Work Students**, for currently enrolled students and program alumni. The group serves as a communication and networking resource where faculty, alumni, and community partners share job openings, professional development opportunities, continuing education events, scholarship information, and graduate school opportunities. The group also supports ongoing connections among current students and alumni.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIAL WORK (SW2333), SOCIAL WORK SENIOR SEMINAR (SW4713) AND FIELD PRACTICUM (SW4916/4926)

Professional Development in Social Work (SW 2333), Social Work Senior Seminar (SW 4713), and Field Practicum (SW4916/4926) are designed to support students' progression from entry into the social work major through their transition into professional practice. Together, these bookend courses emphasize the development of the knowledge, skills, values, and professional behaviors necessary for success in social work education, field placement, employment, and professional licensure.

Through these courses, students develop essential professional competencies, including communication, teamwork, leadership, networking, ethical decision-making, critical thinking, time management, and professional self-presentation. Students also strengthen career readiness skills through résumé and cover letter development, interviewing techniques, job-search strategies, career planning, and professional networking opportunities.

In addition, students refine practice-related skills necessary for effective social work practice, including assessment, professional documentation, case management, interdisciplinary collaboration, professional communication, and the application of social work values, ethics, and evidence-informed practice. Coursework also provides information related to social work licensure, examination preparation, continuing education, graduate education, and emerging trends within the profession. Collectively, these courses are designed to enhance students' readiness for field education, employment, professional licensure, and lifelong professional development as social workers.

MSU CAREER CENTER

The [MSU Career Center](#) provides comprehensive career planning and employment services for students and alumni. Career Center staff assist students with career exploration, job searches, résumé and cover letter reviews, interview preparation, career counseling, and employment referrals. Additional services include employer recruitment events, on-campus interviews, career fairs, networking opportunities, and career development programming. Dedicated support is available for students within the College of Arts and Sciences. Students are encouraged to utilize these resources throughout their academic careers to support professional development, career readiness, and successful entry into the social work profession.

STUDENT RESOURCES

BULLY'S PANTRY

[Bully's Pantry](#) provides current MSU students experiencing food insecurity with access to nutritious food, toiletries, school supplies, and other essential items at no cost. The pantry is located at 120 Morgan Avenue and is part of MSU's Food Security Network.

CAREER CENTER

The [Career Center](#) assists students and alumni with career exploration, job searches, résumé and cover letter development, interview preparation, networking opportunities, career fairs, and employment resources. Students are encouraged to utilize these services throughout their academic careers to support career readiness and professional development.

CENTER FOR ADVISING

The [Center for Advising](#) provides comprehensive and proactive advising to students. Advisors emphasize academic success strategies, planning, coaching, career and personal discovery, education regarding institutional policies and procedures, and development of interpersonal skills. Using a student-centered approach, advisors promote student success and persistence through meaningful interaction with advisees.

CENTER FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS

The [Center for America's Veterans](#) supports military-affiliated students, including veterans, active-duty service members, reservists, National Guard members, and dependents. Services include educational benefits assistance, transition support, academic resources, and advocacy.

COMPUTER-BASED TESTING SERVICES

[Computer-Based Testing Services](#) administers a variety of national standardized examinations to support students' academic, professional, and licensure goals. Services include testing for academic admissions, professional certification, and other credentialing purposes.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

[Disability Resource Center](#) works to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for students with disabilities by coordinating reasonable accommodations and providing advocacy, consultation, and support services.

FIRST GENERATION SCHOLAR PROGRAM

MSU is committed to supporting the success of first-generation college students, defined as students who are the first in their families to earn a four-year bachelor's degree. Through the [MSU First Generation Scholar Program website](#), students and their families can access resources, information, and support designed to help them navigate the college experience and achieve their academic and personal goals. The program provides connections to campus resources, educational programming, community-building opportunities, and events that celebrate the accomplishments of first-generation students. Students may also find information related to mentoring, academic support services, and organizations that promote first-generation student success.

HOLMES CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

The [Holmes Center for Student Success](#) supports student achievement, engagement, retention, and success by providing programs, mentoring opportunities, and resources designed to help students thrive academically and personally. The center offers initiatives

that support student success, leadership development, and career readiness. Information about mentoring opportunities is available through the Holmes Center website. Additionally, the [TRiO Program](#) assists eligible first-generation, limited-income, and other qualifying students through academic support, mentoring, tutoring, financial literacy education, and graduate school preparation.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

[Information Technology Services](#) provides and maintains the University's technology infrastructure, including email services, wireless access, software resources, cybersecurity support, and technical assistance. All enrolled students receive an official MSU email account and are responsible for regularly monitoring it, as official University communications are sent to this address.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

The [International Institute](#) supports international students and scholars while promoting global engagement across the University community. Services include immigration advising, international student support, study-abroad opportunities, and assistance with international travel procedures.

LONGEST STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

The [Longest Student Health Center](#) provides healthcare services to currently enrolled students, including primary care, preventive services, health education, wellness resources, and referrals. The center is committed to supporting student health and well-being through quality, accessible healthcare services.

MITCHELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

[Mitchell Memorial Library](#) serves as the University's primary academic library and provides access to print and electronic resources, research databases, scholarly journals, archives, technology resources, study spaces, and research assistance.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

The [Office of Civil Rights Compliance](#) is charged with ensuring that the university meets the letter and spirit of laws prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on protected characteristics as defined by applicable law and University policy. These include Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act, FERPA compliance, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, and many others.

Title IX, Sexual Misconduct, and Gender Equity

MSU is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment and takes all forms of sexual misconduct, sexual violence, relationship violence, stalking, and sex-based discrimination seriously. Faculty are mandated reporters regarding a disclosure of sexual misconduct by a student. The University has a designated Title IX Coordinator who oversees compliance with Title IX and coordinates the University's response to reports of sex-based discrimination and misconduct. Students seeking information about reporting options, supportive measures, available resources, or the University's Title IX processes should consult the [Office of Civil Rights Compliance](#)

[website](#) and/or review the [University's policy governing sexual misconduct and Title IX compliance](#). Students are encouraged to seek assistance promptly if they experience or witness conduct that may violate University policy. Supportive resources are available regardless of whether a formal complaint is filed.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

MSU is committed to providing an educational and work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Consistent with University policy and applicable law, discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disability, age, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic is prohibited. The University also prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports concerns, participates in an investigation, or assists in addressing allegations of discrimination or harassment. Students seeking information about reporting procedures, available resources, supportive measures, or the University's nondiscrimination policies should consult the [Office of Civil Rights Compliance website](#) and/or review the [University's policy regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation](#). Students who believe they have experienced discrimination, harassment, or retaliation are encouraged to report their concerns promptly so that the University can provide appropriate support and address the matter in accordance with applicable policies and procedures.

SPEAKING CENTER

The [Speaking Center](#) offers free one-on-one consultations to help students improve public speaking, presentations, interviews, and professional communication skills. Students can schedule appointments with trained consultants to build confidence and strengthen their communication abilities.

STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES

[Student Counseling Services](#) provides mental health and wellness support to eligible MSU students through individual counseling, group counseling, consultation services, crisis intervention, outreach programming, and other mental health resources. Services are confidential and are designed to promote personal growth, resilience, and academic success.

STUDENT SUCCESS

The [Student Success](#) website serves as a centralized resource for MSU students, connecting them with services and support designed to promote academic achievement, personal well-being, financial stability, and student engagement. The site provides easy access to resources related to academic support, student life, financial assistance, and technology, helping students navigate their university experience and access the tools needed for success both inside and outside the classroom. Students are encouraged to explore the website to identify available resources and support services throughout their academic journey.

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

The [University Writing Center](#) supports students at all stages of the writing process by providing individualized consultations, writing support, and feedback on academic, professional, and personal writing projects. Services are available in-person and online and are offered at no cost to students.

SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE INFORMATION

Social work licensure is regulated by individual state licensing boards, which establish requirements for licensure, continuing education, and professional practice within their jurisdiction. Students interested in becoming licensed social workers should familiarize themselves with the requirements of the state(s) in which they plan to practice. Because licensure requirements vary by jurisdiction and may change over time, students should regularly review licensing requirements in the state(s) where they intend to practice.

In Mississippi, licensure is administered by the [Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists](#). Licensure requirements and regulations vary by state and are subject to change. The [Association of Social Work Boards](#) develops and administers the national licensing examinations used by most jurisdictions as part of the licensure process. They also [provide a database](#) to use in finding and comparing license requirements.

The [Social Work Licensure Compact](#) is an interstate agreement designed to increase license portability and support multistate practice among participating states. The Compact creates an additional pathway for eligible licensed social workers to practice across member states while maintaining public protection standards. The number of participating states continues to grow as additional jurisdictions adopt Compact legislation. Although the Compact has been enacted and implementation efforts are ongoing, multistate social work licenses are not currently being issued. Mississippi is a member of the Social Work Licensure Compact; however, students and graduates should consult the Compact website and their licensing board for the most current information regarding implementation, eligibility requirements, and multistate practice opportunities.

Students in the Social Work Program may be eligible to apply for the appropriate social work licensing examination while enrolled in their field practicum or following graduation, subject to the requirements established by the state in which they are seeking licensure. Students are encouraged to review current licensure requirements and application procedures directly with the appropriate licensing board. Students are also encouraged to begin exploring licensure requirements early in their academic program, particularly if they anticipate seeking licensure or employment in a state other than Mississippi.

Please note: Completion of the BSW degree does not guarantee eligibility for licensure. Eligibility determinations, including examination approval, licensure requirements, and

authorization to practice, are made by the applicable licensing board. Licensing boards may consider factors such as criminal history, professional conduct, ethical violations, or other matters when determining eligibility for licensure. Students are responsible for verifying current requirements directly with the licensing board in the state where they intend to seek licensure.

The Social Work Program provides information and resources related to the licensure process, examination preparation, and professional credentialing as part of students' preparation for entry into the profession. Students are encouraged to consult with faculty regarding licensure requirements and professional goals.

Resources

For the most current licensure requirements, examination information, and interstate practice updates, students should consult these resources directly.

- [Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists](#)
- [Association of Social Work Boards](#)
- [Social Work Licensure Compact](#)

Important: Licensure laws, regulations, examination requirements, and Compact participation may change over time. The Social Work Program provides information about licensure as a service to students but does not establish or administer licensure requirements. It is each student's responsibility to verify current licensure requirements with the appropriate state licensing board and other relevant organizations before applying for licensure or seeking employment in a regulated social work position. Students seeking licensure outside Mississippi should consult the licensing board in the state where they intend to practice.