

# SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY



## ***MSW Student Handbook***

*MSW Program  
Southeastern University  
Lakeland, FL*

**2020-2021**

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## Welcome

Welcome to the MSW Program! Social work is an exciting profession and provides a diverse selection of career opportunities.

The social work profession historically worked with the poor, advocated for social justice, and empowered communities to create social change. Throughout history, social workers responded to emerging social problems by mobilizing people to care for each other. Today, our graduate degree in social work prepares students to use professional knowledge, values, and skills to help alleviate a variety of social problems and advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice through clinical social work practice. At Southeastern University, your social work education includes courses about what social workers know (knowledge), who they are (values), what they can do (skills), how they think (critical processing), and what they feel (affective processing).

In order to promote a successful learning environment, the *MSW Student Handbook* serves as a guide for completing a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree at Southeastern University. Its purpose is:

- To provide information regarding the mission, goals, and curriculum of the MSW Program
- To articulate the program requirements, policies, procedures, and practices
- To inform students of their rights and responsibilities

The handbook should be used with the *MSW Field Manual* and the *Graduate Catalog* developed by the university. Together, these references provide supporting information about the policies, procedures, expectations, and curriculum for students pursuing a MSW degree at Southeastern University. If you have questions, please ask. Social work faculty are happy to help.

Along with the social work faculty, we wish you all the best in your educational journey.

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## **MSW Program Overview**

The Master in Social Work (MSW) Program offers graduate education preparing social workers to enter the workplace as clinical social work practitioners. In order to ensure a quality social work education, the program mission, goals, and curriculum align with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) competencies and practice behaviors. The following section articulates the program mission, goals, and curriculum in relation to the CSWE competencies and practices.

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### **MSW Program Mission Statement and Goals**

Placing an emphasis on the core values of the social work profession and building upon the foundation of generalist practice, the mission of the Master of Social Work Program at Southeastern University is to equip students to become competent clinical social work practitioners who will enhance the quality of life in their local communities and beyond by modeling Christ's example of demonstrating love, grace, compassion, and respect to diverse clients across a variety of practice settings.

The program goals are:

1. To equip students with the knowledge, values, skills, behaviors, cognitive processes, and affective processes necessary to engage in competent social work practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
  2. To promote a strengths-based perspective that fosters a commitment to the values and ethics of the social work profession including the core values of social justice, the importance of human relationships and human rights, the dignity and worth of each individual, integrity, and professional competence.
  3. To create a learning environment that fosters critical thinking and enables students to apply evidence-based theoretical frameworks and interventions in clinical practice.
  4. To prepare students to apply a person-in-environment perspective in social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
  5. To promote advocacy for human rights and social and economic justice, especially among oppressed populations.
  6. To actively demonstrate the ethical integration of faith and practice by applying Christ's teachings of service, respect for all humans, appreciation of cultural diversity, compassion, gentleness, grace, and love in social work practice.
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## **MSW Curriculum**

MSW students complete their graduate social work education through one of two options: Traditional MSW Program or Advanced Standing MSW Program. The Traditional MSW Program is for students without a CSWE-accredited, undergraduate degree in social work. Their curriculum requires courses in generalist and clinical social work practice. The Advanced Standing MSW Program is for students with a CSWE-accredited, undergraduate degree in social work. Similar to the second year traditional students, their coursework focuses on clinical social work. The following provides definitions of generalist and clinical social work practice, identifies the CSWE competencies and behaviors associated with each area of practice, and describes the traditional and advanced standing curricula.

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

Generalist practice requires collaboration with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. In order to help others, generalist social workers use a variety of practice roles. They may work as an advocate, broker/linker, case manager, community developer, educational trainer, fundraiser, grant writer, program planner, researcher, social change activist, or volunteer coordinator. In order to fulfill the professional responsibilities related to each role, generalist social workers use their skills to engage, assess, plan, intervene, and evaluate their practice with their clients. Therefore, generalist social workers use an intentional helping process with multiple roles.

The person-in-environment framework and a strengths-based practice model are foundational to generalist practice. Social workers assess the internal and external strengths, challenges, and needs of people and their social environments. In order to intervene, they apply evidence-informed knowledge while building on strengths and resiliency of their clients and social systems. Hence, generalist social workers help people achieve their goals through the application of strengths-based, research-supported interventions.

The relationship between practice, research, policy, and ethics directs the decision-making processes of generalist practitioners. Research provides foundational knowledge, and practice produces new research questions. The NASW Code of Ethics (2017) presents guidelines for ethical, responsible social work practice. Organizational and social policies establish the parameters of practice. Therefore, generalist social workers value the process whereby research, policy, and ethics inform their practice.

Generalist social workers are professionals who are committed to helping people reach their fullest potential. They value service, social justice, the dignity and worth of all people, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Their practice demonstrates respect for all people regardless of differences, empowerment of human and social well-being, and advocacy for social, economic, and environmental justice.

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#### References

Kirst-Ashman, K.K., & Hull, Jr., G.H. (2017). *Understanding generalist practice* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Miley, K. K., O'Melia, M., & Miley, K. K. (2013). *Generalist social work practice: An empowering approach* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

National Association of Social Workers (NASW). (2017). *NASW code of ethics*. <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

## **Generalist Social Work Competencies & Behaviors**

The generalist social work definition aligns with the competencies set forth in the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Based on these competencies, the MSW Program developed essential behaviors related to generalist knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes. In order to complete the generalist curriculum, students must demonstrate the following:

### **Competency 1 – Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

- #1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.
- #2. Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.
- #3. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
- #4. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.
- #5. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

### **Competency 2 – Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

- #6. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- #7. Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.
- #8. Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

### **Competency 3 – Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

- #9. Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.
- #10. Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

### **Competency 4 – Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

- #11. Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.
- #12. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.
- #13. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.
- #14. Use research methods to evaluate clinical practice effectiveness and/or agency outcomes.

### **Competency 5 – Engage in Policy Practice**

- #15. Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.
- #16. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.
- #17. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

#### Competency 6 – Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- #18. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
- #19. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies.

#### Competency 7 – Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- #20. Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.
- #21. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.
- #22. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies.
- #23. Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

#### Competency 8 – Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- #24. Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.
- #25. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.
- #26. Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.
- #27. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.
- #28. Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

#### Competency 9 – Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- #29. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.
- #30. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.
- #31. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes.
- #32. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

#### Competency 10 – Integrate Faith and Social Work Practice in a Way that Embraces Diversity and is Consistent with both the Christian Faith and the NASW Code of Ethics

- #33. Understand and work effectively with the religious, faith, and spirituality dimensions of persons and communities.
- #34. Understand and work effectively within the context of the practice setting in regards to faith and spirituality.
- #35. Draw from one's own faith and spirituality to practice self-care and to empower one's ability to engage in effective social work practice.

#### Reference

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). (2015). *2015 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)*. <https://cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf.aspx>

## **Clinical Social Work Practice Definition**

Clinical social work builds on the knowledge and skills of generalist practice. In that, a clinical social worker applies the strengths and person-and-environment perspectives to the holistic assessment of individuals, families, couples, and groups. In addition, a clinical practitioner recognizes the value of referring clients to community services and effectively collaborates with other professionals to enable and advocate for clients to receive those services.

The goal of clinical social work practice is to facilitate cognitive, affective, and behavioral changes consistent with treatment goals. Social workers in clinical settings use assessment, diagnostic, prevention, and intervention skills in order to provide counseling, case management, consultation, client-center advocacy, and psychosocial education. Clinical knowledge develops competence in applying evidence-informed interventions such as trauma-informed, cognitive behavior, crisis prevention, substance abuse, solution-focused, and family systems treatment models. Therefore, a clinical social worker applies specialized knowledge and skills in order to promote human and social well-being of their clients.

Clinical social work is adaptable to a variety of client-centered settings. Community mental health centers, hospitals, substance use treatment, recovery programs, domestic violence shelters, youth services centers, schools, primary health care centers, child welfare agencies, aging services, employee assistance programs, law enforcement, probation, and private practice settings commonly employ clinical social workers. Ultimately, clinical social workers strive to offer their clients hope by empowering them to heal from life situations and challenges.

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### References

Grant, D. (2013). *Clinical social work*. In Encyclopedia of Social Work. doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780199975839.013.63

National Association of Social Work (NASW). (2005). *NASW standards for clinical social work in social work practice*. <https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=YQg4gdefLBE%3d&portalid=0>

Regulations of Professions and Occupations, Title XXXII, Fl. Stat. §§ 491.003-7(a)–7(d). (2012). <https://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2012/Chapter491/All>



## **Clinical Social Work Competencies & Behaviors**

The clinical social work definition aligns with the competencies set forth in the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Based on these competencies, the MSW Program developed essential behaviors related to clinical social work knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes. In order to complete the clinical social work curriculum, students must demonstrate the following:

### **Competency 1 – Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

- #35. Effectively manage professional boundaries in clinical practice.
- #36. Apply the NASW Code of Ethics and strategies of ethical-decision making to clinical practice and interpersonal interventions with clients.
- #37. Demonstrate professional use of self in clinical practice.
- #38. Identify professional strengths, limitations, and challenges in practice.

### **Competency 2 – Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

- #39. Research and apply knowledge of diverse client populations including the cultural, spiritual, and ethnic values and beliefs of clients to enhance well-being.
- #40. Demonstrate advanced insight into personal biases and values and their influence on the client-worker relationship.
- #41. Apply cultural humility to clinical practice and extend dignity and respect to all clients.

### **Competency 3 – Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

- #42. Apply knowledge of the effects of oppression, discrimination, and historical trauma on clients to guide clinical assessment and intervention.

### **Competency 4 – Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

- #43. Use the evidence-based process to identify and apply effective clinical practice interventions for clients.
- #44. Use research methods to evaluate clinical practice effectiveness and/or agency outcomes.

### **Competency 5 – Engage in Policy Practice**

- #45. Advocate for social policies and/or agency policies that will enhance client well-being, service delivery, and/or access to social services.

### **Competency 6 – Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

- #46. Apply a strengths-based, person-in-environment perspective to establish rapport and maintain therapeutic relationships with clients.
- #47. Attend to the interpersonal dynamics and contextual factors that both strengthen and potentially weaken the therapeutic worker-client alliance.
- #48. Establish worker-client relationships that promote client participation in the establishment of mutually agreed upon treatment goals and objectives.

### **Competency 7 – Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

- #49. Utilize multidimensional bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment forms and tools.
- #50. Assess client readiness for change.
- #51. As appropriate, apply differential and multi-axial diagnoses.

### **Competency 8 – Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

- #52. Critically evaluate, select, and apply evidence-based practice interventions.

- #53. Implement treatment plans and/or contracts with clients to meet mutually agreed upon goals.
- #54. Demonstrate use of appropriate clinical interventions for a range of presenting concerns.
- #55. Modify clinical interventions as necessary throughout the treatment process.

#### Competency 9 – Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- #56. Develop evaluation plans to monitor client progress and measure the efficacy of clinical interventions.

#### Competency 10 – Integrate Faith and Social Work Practice in a Way that Embraces Diversity and is Consistent with both the Christian Faith and the NASW Code of Ethics

- #57. Include an examination of client's spirituality in the assessment process.
- #58. As appropriate, utilize client's own faith, religious practice, and/or spirituality as a potential coping mechanism.

#### Reference

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). (2015). *2015 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)*. <https://cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf.aspx>

### **Traditional MSW Program Plan**

In order to graduate with an MSW degree, the traditional program plan requires 65 credit hours. A traditional student has an undergraduate degree in any field or discipline. Therefore, the first year of the traditional program provides a generalist social work education. At the end of the first year, traditional students join the advanced standing students and continue their education in the specialized area of clinical social work practice. The required course sequence for the traditional program plan is in the following list and table. Course descriptions are available in Appendix A.

#### Fall- First Year

- SOWK 5021- Academic Writing at the Graduate Level (1 hour)
- SOWK 5043- Foundations of Social Work Practice (3 hours)
- SOWK 5073- Interviewing and Helping Skills (3 hours)
- SOWK 5013- Generalist Practice with Individuals and Families (3 hours)
- SOWK 5023- Human Behavior and the Social Environment (3 hours)

#### Spring- First Year

- SOWK 5053- Engaging Diversity and Difference in Practice (3 hours)
- SOWK 5083- Social Welfare Policy (3 hours)
- SOWK 5063- Methods of Social Work Research (3 hours)
- SOWK 5033- Generalist Practice with Groups, Communities, and Organizations (3 hours)

#### Summer- First Year

- SOWK 5014 Field Experience/Seminar I (4 hours)
- SOWK 5024 Field Experience/Seminar II (4 hours)

#### Fall -Second Year

- SOWK 6014- Field Experience/Seminar III (4 hours)

- SOWK 6043- Psychopathology (3 hours)
- SOWK 6013- Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals (3 hours)
- SOWK 6023- Advanced Clinical Practice with Couples, Children, and Families (3 hours)
- SOWK 6053- Trauma Informed Clinical Practice (3 hours)

Spring- Second Year

- SOWK 6024- Field Experience/Seminar IV (4 hours)
- SOWK 6063- Evaluation of Social Work Practice (3 hours)
- SOWK 6033- Advanced Clinical Practice with Groups (3 hours)
- SOWK 6073- Social Work Administration and Leadership (3 hours)
- SOWK 5XX3- Clinical Practice Elective (3 hours)

**Traditional MSW Program Plan**

First Year in Traditional MSW Program Plan					
Fall Semester Term A	Fall Semester Term B	Spring Semester Term A	Spring Semester Term B	Summer Term A	Summer Term B
SOWK 5021 SOWK 5043 SOWK 5073	SOWK 5013 SOWK 5023	SOWK 5053 SOWK 5083	SOWK 5063 SOWK 5033	SOWK 5014 (25 – 28 hours in field agency)	SOWK 5024 (25 – 28 hours in field agency)

Second Year in Traditional MSW Program Plan				
Fall Semester Term A	Fall Semester Term B	Spring Semester Term A	Spring Semester Term B	
SOWK 6014 (16 - 18 hours in field agency)		SOWK 6024 (16 - 18 hours in field agency)		
SOWK 6043 SOWK 6013	SOWK 6023 SOWK 6053	SOWK 6063 SOWK 6033	SOWK 6073 SOWK 5XX3	

*Notes about Field Courses*

- SOWK 5014 *Field Experience and Seminar I* (4 credit hours) and SOWK 5024 *Field Experience and Seminar II* (4 credit hours) occur as a block placement during the first summer of enrollment in the program. Students accrue 400 clock hours over 16 weeks, which is approximately 25 to 28 hours a week in the field agency. Field hours take place during the hours the agency is open.
- SOWK 6014 *Field Experience and Seminar III* (4 credit hours) and SOWK 6024 *Field Experience and Seminar IV* (4 credit hours) happen concurrently with other course work in the fall and spring semesters. Students accumulate 500 clock hours over both semesters. Each semester is 16 weeks; therefore, students spend approximately 16 – 18 hours a week in the field agency. Field hours take place during the hours the agency is open.

Note: For additional details about the field experience, see the MSW Field Manual.

## **Advanced Standing MSW Program Plan**

In order to graduate with an MSW degree, this option requires 32-33 credit hours. An advanced standing student earned an undergraduate degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program or has a degree recognized by the International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services of CSWE. Advanced standing students join the second-year traditional students in order to complete their graduate work in the specialized area of clinical social work practice. The required course sequence for the advanced standing program is in the following list and table. Course descriptions are available in Appendix A.

### Fall

- SOWK 5021- Academic Writing at the Graduate Level - 1 hour (only required for advanced-standing students who completed baccalaureate degrees more than 5 years prior to admission or are provisionally admitted to the Advanced Standing MSW Program with this course requirement)
- SOWK 6014- Field Experience/Seminar III (4 hours)
- SOWK 6043- Psychopathology (3 hours)
- SOWK 6013- Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals (3 hours)
- SOWK 6023- Advanced Clinical Practice with Couples, Children, and Families (3 hours)
- SOWK 6053- Trauma Informed Clinical Practice (3 hours)

### Spring

- SOWK 6024- Field Experience/Seminar IV (4 hours)
- SOWK 6063- Evaluation of Social Work Practice (3 hours)
- SOWK 6033- Advanced Clinical Practice with Groups (3 hours)
- SOWK 6073- Social Work Administration and Leadership (3 hours)
- SOWK 5XX3- Clinical Practice Elective (3 hours)

**Advanced Standing MSW Program Plan**

First Year in Advanced Standing MSW Program				
Fall Semester Term A	Fall Semester Term B	Spring Semester Term A	Spring Semester Term B	
SOWK 6014 (16 - 18 hours in field agency)		SOWK 6024 (16 - 18 hours in field agency)		
SOWK 6043 SOWK 6013	SOWK 6023 SOWK 6053	SOWK 6063 SOWK 6033	SOWK 6073 SOWK 5XX3	

*Notes about Field Courses*

- SOWK 6014 *Field Experience and Seminar III* (4 credit hours) and SOWK 6024 *Field Experience and Seminar IV* (4 credit hours) happen concurrently with other course work in the fall and spring semesters. Students accumulate 500 clock hours over both semesters. Each semester is 16 weeks; therefore, students spend approximately 16 – 18 hours a week in the field agency. Field hours take place during the hours the agency is open. For more details regarding the field experience, see the MSW Field Manual.

**Course Delivery**

All social work courses are 8-week terms. The delivery method is face-to-face in a classroom on campus. The 4-hour classes meet on two evenings a week. During the fall semester, two courses occur during the first 8 weeks while two additional courses happen in the last 8 weeks. The spring semester courses repeat the same pattern. No online courses are available.

In addition to in-class courses, students complete their field experience in community-based agencies. The students in the Traditional MSW Program complete two 8-week field courses during the first summer of their enrollment in the program. For the specialized curriculum, students complete one field practicum course during the fall semester and another during the spring semester. The specialized field practicum is concurrent with the academic courses in clinical social work. Additional information about field requirements is in the MSW Field Manual.

The design of the course sequence requires dedicated time for study and completion of field practicum activities. As such, students are advised to find employment positions with flexibility and, if possible, to reduce the number of employment hours. In addition, the program recommends students develop time management, assertive communication, and professional self-care skills along with a using strong social support system.

## **MSW Program Accreditation**

Accreditation is a system for recognizing professional degree programs as having a level of performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public they serve. The Commission on Accreditation (COA) of the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) is authorized to accredit baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work.

The COA granted the MSW Program initial accreditation in February 2020. The accreditation is retroactive to the graduating class of 2017-2018. Our next reaffirmation of accreditation is in 2025.

(Adapted from the Handbook of Accreditation Standards and Procedures by CSWE)

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### Reference

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). (2015). *Accreditation*. <https://cswe.org/Accreditation>

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## **MSW Program Policies**

MSW Program policies guide the academic and professional development of the MSW students.

Each policy contains a rationale explaining the purpose for the policy and offers the policy statement. In some cases, program practices and procedures describe the implementation of the policy.

The policies in this section of the handbook include:

- Academic & Professional Advising Policy
- Academic & Professional Performance and Academic Progress Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Appeals & Grievance Policy
- Attendance & Participation Policy
- Life-Work Experience Policy
- Non-discrimination Policy
- Social Media & Technology Policy
- Student Rights & Responsibilities Policy
- Textbook Policy
- Transfer of Credit Policy

## **Academic & Professional Advising Policy**

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### **RATIONALE**

The MSW Program views advising as a holistic and relational process requiring teamwork between students and social work faculty members. As such, advising is a mentoring process whereby faculty guide students as they make academic, professional, and career choices. The goal is to enhance professional skills, create realistic career goals, and offer opportunities to socialize students to the profession.

### **ADVISING POLICY**

Upon enrollment in the MSW program, all students are assigned social work faculty members as advisors. In most cases, each student receives academic and professional guidance from multiple individuals. Those include the Academic Program Liaison, MSW Field Director, MSW Program Director, and MSW faculty members. Their responsibilities are as follows:

- The Academic Program Liaison ensures students enroll in classes according to the MSW course sequence. The liaison has a MSW degree from a CSWE-accreditation institution.
  - The MSW Field Director provides field advising throughout the field placement process and field experience.
  - The MSW Program Director offers students assistance with university policies and procedures related to academic courses and non-academic concerns.
  - Each MSW faculty member serves as a faculty advisor and provides academic advising and professional mentoring. Faculty advisors are available to discuss career planning, professional development, licensure process and doctoral program interests.
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## **Academic & Professional Performance and Academic Progress Policy including Student Excellence Standards**

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### **RATIONALE**

Students must demonstrate scholarly and professional behaviors in the classroom, field agencies, university, and broader community. Their academic and professional performance must be consistent with the social work profession, NASW Code of Ethics, and policies articulated by the MSW Program, field agency, and university. By doing so, students display knowledge, values, skills, and the cognitive and affective processing required for competent social work practice. The expected academic and professional performance behaviors are the Student Excellence Standards.

By virtue of enrollment in the MSW Program, all students agree to practice within the framework of the Academic and Professional Performance policy. The policy has three sections:

1. Academic & Professional Performance: Student Excellence Standards
2. Process for Evaluating Academic & Professional Performance
3. Remediation of Academic & Professional Performance

### **ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE: STUDENT EXCELLENCE STANDARDS**

The Student Excellence Standards integrate the MSW Program and Southeastern University policies regarding academic and non-academic performance. Four areas of academic and professional performance comprise the Student Excellence Standards. More specifically, the areas are:

1. Basic Abilities to Acquire Professional Skills
2. Mental and Emotional Abilities
3. Professional Performance Skills
4. Scholastic Performance

### ***Student Excellence Standards***

#### **1. Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills**

- a. Communication Skills - Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.
  - i. Written
    - Writes clearly
    - Uses correct grammar and spelling
    - Applies appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, with appropriate source citation and documentation
    - Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program
    - Adequately completes all written assignments, as specified by faculty
  - ii. Oral
    - Effectively and sensitively communicates with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals
    - Expresses ideas and feelings clearly
    - Demonstrates willingness and ability to listen to others
    - Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program

## 1. Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills

- Adequately completes all oral assignments and meets the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty
- iii. Technology
  - Applies the rules of respectful communication when using technology ([Netiquette](#))
- b. Interpersonal Skills
  - i. Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others
  - ii. Takes appropriate responsibility for own actions and considers the impact of these actions on others
- c. Cognitive Skills
  - i. Exhibits sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field
  - ii. Demonstrates grounding in relevant social, behavioral, and biological science knowledge and research, including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice
  - iii. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge to professional practice

## 2. Emotional and Mental Abilities

- a. Stress Management
  - i. Demonstrates ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms
  - ii. Handles stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others
- b. Emotional and Mental Capacities
  - i. Uses sound judgment
  - ii. Seeks and effectively uses help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance
  - iii. Engages in counseling or seeks out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties do any of the following:
    - compromise scholastic and other performance
    - interfere with professional judgment and behavior
    - jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the current Codes of Ethics by the National Association of Social Workers)

## 3. Professional Performance Skills

- a. Professional Commitment
  - i. Exhibits a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession, as specified in the [NASW Code of Ethics](#)
  - ii. Demonstrates a commitment to the essential values of social work, including the respect for the dignity and worth of every individual, importance of human relationship, and his/her right to a just share of society's resources (social, economic, and environmental justice)
- b. Professional Behavior
  - i. Exhibits behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in classroom, field, and

### 3. Professional Performance Skills

- community
- ii. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect a professional manner
- iii. Shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior to practice within the scope of social work by:
  - respecting others
  - being punctual and dependable
  - prioritizing responsibilities
  - attending class regularly
  - observing deadlines
  - completing assignments on time
  - keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements
  - accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner
- iv. Works effectively with others, regardless of authority level
- v. Advocates for self in an appropriate and responsible manner and uses proper channels for conflict resolution
- vi. Shows a willingness to accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, as well as to use such feedback to enhance professional development
- c. Self-awareness
  - i. Shows awareness of self and how one is perceived by others
  - ii. Exhibits knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships
  - iii. Accurately assesses one's own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice
  - iv. Reflects on one's own limitations as they relate to professional capacities
  - v. Is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals
- d. Ethical Obligations
  - i. Demonstration of adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice as noted in the NASW Code of Ethics
  - ii. Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way
  - iii. Suspension of personal biases during interactions with others
  - iv. Comprehension of another individual's way of life and values. Empathic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship
  - v. Appreciation of the value of diversity
  - vi. Effective and nonjudgmental work with others who are different from oneself
  - vii. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or value system
  - viii. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients
  - ix. Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination
  - x. Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and field placement
  - xi. Demonstration of honesty and integrity by:
    - being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications
    - doing one's own work
    - giving credit for the ideas of others
    - providing proper citation of source materials
  - xii. Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries
  - xiii. A history of and/or current charges and/or convictions of an offense may impact

### 3. Professional Performance Skills

- admission and status in the program as well as create challenges with obtaining a field placement
- xiv. Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways; or participate in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist.

### 4. Scholastic Performance

- a. Maintain a cumulative 3.0 or higher grade point average
- b. Earn grade of B (B-, B or B+) or above in all social work courses
- c. Upholds academic integrity by doing own work and giving credit where credit is due. Accurate use of APA writing style helps avoid plagiarism. Academic integrity is defined as not engaging in plagiarism or cheating.

(Note: These standards have been adapted with permission from the University of Texas, Standard for Social Work Education. Southeastern University policies are also part of the excellence standards.)

## PROCESS FOR EVALUATING ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

MSW students must demonstrate academic and professional behaviors as outlined in the Student Excellence Standards. MSW Program faculty and field instructors engage in ongoing evaluation of the students. Evaluation occurs within the classroom, field practicum settings, and in the broader community. Students are responsible for acting within the guidelines the Student Excellence Standards and engaging in self-assessment of their own academic and professional performance.

When a student demonstrates academic and professional performance as noted in the Student Excellence Standards, the student remains in good standing within the MSW Program and university. In this case, the student progresses through the MSW curriculum as outlined in the MSW Student Handbook.

## REMEDICATION OF ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

If a student does not meet the academic and/or professional performance criteria as noted in the Student Excellence Standards, then the MSW Program Director engages students in developmental activities. Those activities may include the use of an Informal Plan, a Student Development Plan, and/or change of the academic standing and progress within the MSW Program and university. The following narrative describes the processes of empowering the student to remediate academic and professional performance.

### ***Informal Written Plan & Student Development Plan***

If a student does not meet the academic and/or professional performance criteria as noted in the Student Excellence Standards, then the MSW Program may require the student to complete additional tasks. The developmental activities increase the knowledge, values, skills, and/or cognitive and affective processing needed for competent social work practice. The process for doing so may be either an informal written plan or a student development plan.

- ***Informal Written Plan:*** The social work faculty member, MSW Field Coordinator, and/or MSW Program Director meet with the student to discuss the problematic areas and the strengths while referencing the Student Excellence Standards. Based on this information, all parties collaboratively develop an Informal Written Plan. This plan guides the professional and academic development of the student. The plan contains measurable tasks with a review date and becomes documentation of the meeting. An example of an Informal Written Plan is available in Appendix B.
- ***Student Development Plan:*** Sometimes the Informal Written Plan does not create the desired academic and/or professional performance, or the infringement of the Student

Excellence Standards warrants a more structured plan. In these cases, the student, field instructor and/or social work faculty member, MSW Field Coordinator, and MSW Program Director meet to develop a Student Development Plan. This plan guides the professional and academic development of the student by identifying measurable tasks with a review date and becomes documentation of the meeting. An example of the Student Development Plan is available in Appendix B.

### **MSW Program Standing and Progress through the Curriculum**

If a student does not meet the academic and/or professional performance criteria as noted in the Student Excellence Standards, then the student's standing in the MSW Program may change to probationary status or dismissal from the program. The following discussion describes the impact of the change in program standing and subsequent progress through the curriculum.

- **Probation.** A student may be on probationary status if one of the following occurs.
  - A Student Development Plan has not been successful in helping the student remediate academic and/or professional performance concerns.
  - A cumulative grade point average drops below a 3.0
  - A grade of "C" (C+, C or C-) or below in any MSW course.
  - A field agency terminates a field placement due to unsatisfactory academic and/or professional performance related to the Student Excellence Standards.
  - A course instructor attempts to remediate unsatisfactory academic and professional performance related to the Student Excellence Standards yet persistent problems impact the learning environment in the classroom setting.
  - A field instructor and MSW Field Director attempts to remediate unsatisfactory academic and professional performance related to the Student Excellence Standards yet persistent problems impact the field agency and the clients served.

Whenever a student is on probationary status in the MSW Program, the student meets with the MSW Program Director and, as appropriate, others involved in the situation. During the meeting, all participants collaboratively create a Student Development Plan. The plan contains measurable tasks with a review date and becomes documentation of the meeting. On the review date, all parties meet to review the student progress. If the problem persists, a change of academic standing to dismissal from the MSW Program may occur. The student may reapply for admission into the MSW Program; however, the re-admission process follows the MSW Admission Policy.

- **Dismissal.** In the event a student consistently fails to meet the Student Excellence Standards as described in the Student Development Plan or displays grossly disruptive, incompetent, or unprofessional behavior violating the NASW Code of Ethics, agency policies, university policies, or Student Excellence Standards, the student may be dismissed from the MSW Program. Circumstances resulting in termination from the MSW Program include, but are not limited to:
  1. Failure to demonstrate or maintain one or more of the qualities or conditions required in the admission criteria or the Student Excellence Standards.
  2. Failure to satisfy requirements for the removal of academic probation.
  3. Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements established by the faculty for the MSW Program. This includes maintaining an overall minimum GPA of 3.0.
  4. Failure to use practice skills and demonstrate Social Work values in ways judged to be in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics.
  5. Failure to fulfill the conditions of a Student Development Plan designed to remediate issues that may warrant dismissal from the program.
  6. Consistent and repeated tardiness and/or absence from class.
  7. Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying

- academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student.
8. Inability to develop the interpersonal skills necessary for effective clinical social work practice with clients and diverse populations or inability to establish and maintain functional and collegial relationships with fellow students, faculty members, and field educators.
  9. Failure to apply the knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom to the field experience as evidenced by unsatisfactory performance in the field.
  10. Evidence of chemical dependency or illegal use of drugs while enrolled in the program.
  11. Gross misconduct, which may result in immediate dismissal from the program.
  12. Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else.
  13. Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring either during the course of study or prior to admission to the Master of Social Work and becoming known after admission. This may include discovery of a felony conviction the student did not reveal during the admissions process.

### **Academic Standing and Progress in the University**

Likewise, if the student does not meet the academic policies as stated in the [Traditional Graduate and Post Graduate Catalog of Southeastern University](#), then the student may be on academic probation or suspension. Infringements of the Academic Integrity policy may also result in a change of academic status and progression through the MSW Program curriculum. Students are responsible for reading the university catalog and knowing the academic progress standards and academic integrity consequences for plagiarism and cheating. The following discussion describes the impact of university-imposed academic probation or suspension related to the student's enrollment in the MSW Program.

- **Academic Probation.** If a student is on academic probation by the university, the duration of the probationary period is one semester or term. The student remains on academic probation until he or she attains a cumulative average of 3.0 or higher. Probationary status permits the student to continue in the program while working with his or her academic advisor to address deficiencies and take corrective action for improvement. A student placed on academic probation may not enroll for more than 9 semester hours.

If the proceeding situation occurs, the student collaboratively works with the MSW Program Director and academic advisor to develop a Student Development Plan.

- **Academic Suspension.** A probationary student may be on a suspension from the program for one semester or term. In this event, the Registrar issues a letter of notification to the student, and the student transcript shows a permanent entry about the suspension.

While suspended from the MSW (degree) program on academic grounds, a student may only attempt to improve his or her cumulative average by repeating courses in which a grade is less than a B-. If the cumulative average reaches 2.5 or higher, the student may apply for readmission to the degree program. However, the MSW Program requires a cumulative average of 3.0. The student may reapply for admission into the MSW Program; however, the re-admission process follows the MSW Admission Policy.

## Academic Integrity Policy

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### RATIONALE

Integrity is a value of the social work profession. The NASW Code of Ethics (2017) requires social workers should be trustworthy, honest, and responsible within all areas of social work practice. In other words, social workers should respect the work of others by giving credit where credit is due.

### POLICY

***MSW students can face up to immediate dismissal from the MSW program for an incidence of plagiarism or cheating, whether intentional or unintentional.***

The university identifies two types of violations to academic integrity. Those infringements include cheating and plagiarism. The MSW Program uses the definitions academic integrity, cheating, and plagiarism as provided in [Southeastern University graduate handbook](#).

Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty is a form of theft and is a serious offence and an ethical abuse. It undermines the educational process and, when done intentionally, violates the integrity of the community and the social work profession. Plagiarism and cheating occur when a writer uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledging its source.

Students should consult the APA manual or use a reliable online source, such as [Purdue OWL](#), for the proper referencing and citation of sources.

Plagiarism includes unattributed use of any source, in any medium, published or unpublished. Some examples of plagiarism include:

- Quoting or paraphrasing material without attributing it to its source
- Copying segments from the work of others without giving proper credit
- Submitting as original work written entirely by someone else

Widely known facts do not require citation and do not count as plagiarism as long as they are communicated in the writer's own words. Ideas and observations original to the writer also do not require citation. Work previously submitted for a grade in one course may not be submitted for another course unless the professor specifically states otherwise.

Each time an instance of plagiarism occurs in a class, the professor will:

- a. Determine the level of the offense and the appropriate consequences according to the guidelines listed in the student handbook;
- b. Communicate with the offending student to discuss the nature of his or her plagiarism, the plagiarism policy, and the consequences to be assigned; and
- c. Submit a plagiarism report to the Academic Integrity Office.

Please refer to the plagiarism policy in the [Southeastern University graduate handbook](#) for further information.

## Admissions Policy

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### Admission to the MSW Program Policy

#### RATIONALE

The Master of Social Work (MSW) is a professional degree based on the mission and values of the social work profession. In the interest of serving vulnerable and diverse populations, all applicants admitted to the MSW Program must be committed to promoting the human and social well-being of all people. Thus, the program emphasizes admitting professionals who endeavor to value diversity within society, advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice, practice with integrity and competence, and view serving others as integral to their life purpose.

In order to ensure a goodness-of-fit between individuals seeking admission to the MSW Program and the social work profession, the program requires applicants to demonstrate the ability for scholarly work in graduate school and potential for clinical social work practice. The following sections discuss the admission process, criteria, application documents, due dates, and decision-making process.

#### POLICY

The admission policy for the MSW Program is composed of the following:

- Admission Process
- Admission Roles & Responsibilities
- Admission Criteria & Supporting Documents
- Admission Committee Decisions
- Admission Notification

#### Admission Process

The MSW Program uses the following admission process.

1. The applicant works with the Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment and Academic Program Liaison regarding questions about the MSW Program. The MSW Program Director is also available to meet with applicants.
2. The applicant applies for admission to the university by completing an online application. In order to do so, go to [www.seu.edu](http://www.seu.edu) and click on Admissions > Graduate > Apply Now.
3. The applicant applies to the MSW Program by submitting all admission documents to the Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment or Academic Program Liaison.
4. The MSW Program Admission Committee decides the admission status by using an admissions rubric. The admission committee decides the admission status for each applicant. The admission decision may be acceptance or denial into the MSW Program. Acceptance into the program may be full, full with conditions, or provisional. The following descriptions delineate each admission status.
5. An email message followed by a letter notifies the applicant of the admission decision.



## **Admission Roles & Responsibilities**

The following description articulates the roles and responsibilities of the applicant, Academic Program Liaison, Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment, and MSW Program Admission Committee.

### *Applicant Role & Responsibilities*

Those considering social work as a career must carefully evaluate their professional commitment to caring for others who are hurting, embracing all people regardless of difference, and advocating for the needs of vulnerable and oppressed people. An applicant, applying for admission to the MSW Program, must also commit to upholding the ethical standards of the profession. In addition, the applicant must be willing to participate in challenging experiences where knowledge deepens, values clarified, scholarly and clinical skills developed, and advocacy occurs with and on behalf of vulnerable and hurting people.

Throughout the application process, the applicant should engage in self-assessment regarding a goodness-of-fit with the social work profession. The admission documents should demonstrate the best scholarly and professional work aligning with the mission, vision, and values of the social work profession. In addition, the applicant self-manages the submission of all the required documentation.

### *Academic Program Liaison and Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment Role & Responsibilities*

The Academic Program Liaison and Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment answer questions about the university and MSW Program. They provide guidance to the applicant throughout the admission process and are the recipients of all admission documents. After the MSW Program Admission Committee makes an admission decision, the Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment notifies the applicant of the decision.

### *MSW Program Admission Committee Role & Responsibilities*

The MSW Program Admission Committee consists of the MSW Program Chair, MSW Program Director, MSW Faculty, and MSW Field Director as needed. The purpose of the committee is to evaluate the potential of an applicant for scholarly and professional work in graduate school. The committee uses a review process and an admission rubric to evaluate each document submitted by the applicant. Once the committee makes an admission decision, the MSW Program Director notifies the Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment. The Social Work Department Chair and Dean of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences provide consultation as needed.

## **Admission Criteria & Supporting Documents**

The MSW Program establishes admission criteria indicating the potential for success in graduate school. The supporting documentation submitted for admission to the MSW Program must represent the best professional and scholarly work of the applicant. The ability to write with correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and use of APA writing style is necessary.

Admission is not contingent on age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity or national origin, gender, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, tribal sovereign status, or veteran status. While past convictions do not necessarily preclude

admission to the MSW Program, they may affect availability of field practicum placements and future employability. In addition, individuals with felony convictions might not be eligible for licensure as a clinical social worker (LCSW) in the State of Florida or other jurisdictions within the United States.

The MSW Program offers admission to the following categories:

1. Traditional MSW Program Admission
2. Advanced Standing MSW Program Admission

The following information outlines the admission criteria for each category and describes the required documentation.

### *Traditional MSW Program Admission*

Generalist social work applicants who want to begin their MSW Program in 2020-2021 may begin submitting their applications on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 and no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The applicant must submit:

- Official transcripts from all universities attended. The transcripts must show the applicant:
  - Has a conferred baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited liberal arts institution.
  - Has a minimum GPA of 3.0\* in the last 60 credit hours of undergraduate coursework. (\*Applicants with a GPA below 3.0 must submit a request for exception. The request is in the form of a letter explaining reasons for the low GPA and identifying future changes to ensure academic achievement in the MSW Program.)
  - Completed an Introduction to Psychology and English Composition with a grade of “C” or better.
- Two references using the College of Behavioral and Social Science forms provided by the Academic Program Liaison or Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment. References include:
  - One academic reference
  - One professional/volunteer/work-related reference
- A professional resume demonstrating experiences related to employment, volunteer service, and/or mission work and continuing education trainings, certifications, licenses, or registrations related to professional practice
- Submit a writing sample on the form provided by the Academic Program Liaison or Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment. The writing sample requests narratives regarding:
  - Social Work Goals
  - Diversity and Values
  - Professional Self-Awareness
- Submit a notarized Florida Department of Children and Families “Affidavit of Good Moral Character” form provided by the Academic Program Liaison or Director of Graduate Enrollment
- If requested by the admission committee, complete an interview in order to clarify information in the application documents.

### *Advanced Standing MSW Program Admission*

Clinical social work applicants who want to begin their MSW Program in 2020-2021 may begin submitting their applications on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 and no later than June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The applicant must submit:

- An official transcript from the degree granting university. The transcript must show the applicant:
  - Graduated with a bachelor of social work degree from an undergraduate program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or recognized through its International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services. Baccalaureate social work graduates entering the MSW Program will not be asked to repeat curriculum achieved in their baccalaureate social work programs.
  - Completed the BSW Program with a minimum GPA of 3.0\* in the last 60 credit hours of undergraduate coursework. (\*Applicants with a GPA below 3.0 must submit a request for exception. The request is in the form of a letter explaining reasons for the low GPA and identifying future changes to ensure academic achievement in the MSW Program.)
  - Earned grades of “B-” or higher in all BSW practice and field education/seminar courses
- Two references using the College of Behavioral and Social Science forms provided by the Academic Program Liaison or Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment. References include:
  - One academic reference
  - One professional/volunteer/work-related reference(\*\*Southeastern University BSW students may elect to complete a Comprehensive Reference Review instead of submitting two references from individuals other than Southeastern University social work faculty. Inquiry about the review process from the Academic Program Liaison.)
- A professional resume demonstrating experiences related to employment, volunteer service, and/or mission work and continuing education trainings, certifications, licenses, or registrations related to professional practice
- Submit a writing sample on the form provided by the Academic Program Liaison or Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment. The writing sample requests narratives regarding:
  - Social Work Goals
  - Diversity and Values
  - Professional Self-Awareness
- Submit a notarized Florida Department of Children and Families “Affidavit of Good Moral Character” form provided by the Academic Program Liaison or Director of Graduate Enrollment
- If requested by the admission committee, complete an interview in order to clarify information in the application documents.

### **Admission Committee Decisions**

The admission committee seeks to understand the academic potential for the study of social work on a graduate level. In order to do so, the admission committee evaluates the documents submitted by each applicant. The evaluation process uses a rubric with the following rating scale.

- Not Acceptable is 0 points.
- Below Expected Potential is 1 point.
- Expected Potential is 2 points.
- Above Expected Potential is 3 points.

In total, seven rubrics appraise the potential of each applicant by evaluating the admission documents. Those include the transcripts, references, resume, and writing sample. The following descriptions explain the content evaluated and the number of rubrics used to assess each document.

- **Official transcript:** One rubric measures academic performance such as the GPA for the last 60 credit hour and consistency of GPAs over all academic semesters. For traditional standing in generalist social work, the rubric assesses grades from the prerequisite courses. For advanced standing in clinical social work, the rubric assesses course grades in all social work practice and field courses.
- **Academic and Professional References:** One rubric measures professional dispositions and academic performance.
- **Resume:** One rubric measures life experiences and goodness-of-fit with the social work profession.
- **Writing Sample:** One rubric measures scholarly writing using APA style and another three rubrics measure content about social work goals, diversity and values, and professional self-awareness.

Since the admission committee has three raters, the committee averages the three scores for each rubric. In order to determine admission status, the committee calculates the mean score of the seven rubrics. This score is the Overall Average Score (OAS). If the OAS is 2.0 or higher, the applicant receives full acceptance or full acceptance with conditions. If the OAS is lower than 2.0, the applicant may receive provisional acceptance or be denied admission. The following descriptions delineate each admission status.

- **Full acceptance.** Full admission allows the applicant to matriculate into the MSW Program.
- **Full acceptance with conditions.** Full admission with conditions is for an applicant who is completing a bachelor of social work degree while making application to the MSW Program. The conditional status becomes full acceptance after the applicant furnishes an official transcript showing a conferred bachelor of social work degree, a GPA of 3.0 or higher during the last 60 credit hours, and a B- or better in all social work practice and field courses. Matriculation occurs after verification of the official transcript.
- **Provisional acceptance.** Provisional admission allows the applicant to matriculate into the MSW Program with provisions. Requirements to achieve full acceptance are in the admission letter. In cases where provisional admission warrants a Student Development Plan, the MSW Program Director meets with the student to create the plan.
- **Denial of admission.** Denial of admission does not permit the applicant to matriculate into the MSW Program. The program is not obligated to provide a rationale for the denial.

*Applicant Decision: Deferred Enrollment*

If an applicant has full admission into the MSW Program, an applicant may request a deferred enrollment for one year. If the applicant wishes to enter the program at the completion of a one-year deferment, the MSW Program may ask for additional information to support the original admission decision. An applicant may complete a one-year deferment then choose not to enter the program. After a one-year deferment with no matriculation into the program, an applicant must reapply for the program.

**Admission Decision Notification**

Applicants receive information about their admission status from the Director of Adult & Graduate Enrollment and Academic Program Liaison. Communication of the decision occurs through an email message. If granted full, full with conditions, and provisional admission, the Academic Program Liaison continues to provide instructions about the next steps for matriculation into the program.

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## Appeals & Grievance Policy

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### **RATIONALE**

Students have a right to seek academic appeal and review. The MSW Program follows the university guidelines governing the redress of concerns and complaints through university-wide policies. Concerns and complaints about the MSW Program use the procedures described below.

### **RESOLVING CONCERNS**

Professional social workers encounter situations where disagreements or concerns arise. According to the NASW Code of Ethics (2017), social workers should make every reasonable attempt to resolve issues with those involved in the situation. MSW students make efforts to resolve problems ethically.

In order to engage in seeking solutions to problems, students use the following protocol:

1. Schedule a meeting time to privately discuss the matter with the professor, field instructor, or academic advisor
2. Clearly state the problem using behavior specific language. Ask the professor, field instructor, or academic advisor to communicate his or her perspective of the problem. Summarize what you heard the other person say, then ask questions to clarify the problem
3. Identify strengths and resources available to resolve or reconcile the problem
4. Collaboratively generate possible solutions building on current strengths.
5. Agree on a possible solution
6. Implement the solution
7. Meet to discuss progress. If the solution is working, continue. If the solution is not working, discuss another alternative and try it.
8. Document your discussions and any paperwork.
9. If the above process is not successful, then contact the Field Coordinator or MSW Program Director.

### **MSW PROGRAM APPEAL PROCESS**

Once students matriculate into the MSW Program, they have a right to file an appeal related to program decisions about their academic and professional performance including their program standing such as probationary status.

If a student disagrees with a decision made by the MSW Program, the student may submit a written request seeking a review of the decision. The request for review must articulate specific reasons for reconsidering the decision. The MSW Program Director must receive the request within 10 days from the date of the unfavorable decision.

Once the MSW Program Director receives the request, the director convenes an ad hoc committee comprised of at least four individuals. The committee includes the Social Work Department Chair and at least one social work faculty member. Depending on the situation, the remaining committee members may come from Social Work Advisory Council members, field instructors, and MSW students. The MSW Program Director chooses the committee

members however; the student retains the right to approve them.

Within 10 days of the MSW Program Director receiving the written request, the ad hoc committee meets to discuss the request for appeal. During the deliberation, the committee uses the MSW Program policies from the MSW Student Handbook and MSW Field Manual as a guide in the decision making process. At the end of the meeting, the committee renders a decision regarding the request for appeal. The decision of the committee is final.

The MSW Program Director notifies the student of the committee's decision. The notification comes through email and/or letter.

If the student desires an appeal of a decision made by the MSW Program Director, the student submits the request to the Social Work Department Chair. The chair follows the above process only convening a review committee using the Dean of the College of Behavior and Social Sciences as the chair of the committee.

### **UNIVERSITY APPEAL PROCESSES**

Students also have right to submit a request for appeal to the university related to academic suspension, advising-registration-degree completion, course, grade and quality points, non-academic complaint, outcome of a course related to academic integrity, readmission under academic suspension, and transfer credit. Specific information about each of these policies is in the [Southeastern University graduate handbook](#). Students are responsible for reading and asking questions about the policies.

### **UNIVERSITY SEXUAL MISCONDUCT GRIEVANCE**

Southeastern has a responsibility to respond quickly, equitably, and effectively when the university becomes aware of sexual misconduct and any other conduct that is motivated by sex, gender, or gender-expression that creates a hostile educational environment for Southeastern students. Southeastern is committed to prevention of all forms of sexual misconduct as well as the protection and rehabilitation of victims of such acts. Investigations of reported conduct must be impartial and reliable. Responses to reported conduct must adequately stop the behavior, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects. Southeastern University is committed to upholding Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681). The Statute is an all-encompassing federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex of students and employees of educational institutions that receive federal financial assistance.

Title IX reads:

“No person in the United States, shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...” Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX).

For Southeastern's full Sexual Misconduct Policy, please see [www.seu.edu/titleix](http://www.seu.edu/titleix)

## Attendance & Participation Policy

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### RATIONALE

Students are to behave in a way demonstrating a professional integration of the core values and skills of the social work profession. Professional behavior includes punctuality to class, timely submission of assignments, and regular attendance in the classroom, field agency, and all professional work environments.

### POLICY

The following attendance policy applies to all classes in the MSW program and is in the syllabus for each social work course:

Graduate education requires a professional commitment to learning beyond that of undergraduate education. Most classes in the MSW Program require significant in-class work and participation. Attendance is crucial to both your learning experience and the learning experiences of your peers. Students are to attend and arrive on time or early to all class meetings. Students who miss more than four cumulative hours (or specific course equivalency) of class time will receive an automatic 10% reduction in the overall final course grade and may not be eligible to earn a passing grade in the course. Students who are late to class more than two times will receive an automatic 10% reduction in the overall final course grade and may not be eligible to earn a passing grade in the course. Students who must be late or absent due to extenuating or emergent circumstances are to contact their professor to inform her/him in advance of the absence or tardy and plan to complete any missed work they have missed. However, those absences and/or tardiness will still influence the overall course grade.

MSW students must also actively participate and be engaged during each class session. The verbal participation of the student should show an ability to:

- a. Make conscious, purposeful use of self in interactions within the classroom;
- b. Display awareness of her or his own feelings, behaviors, and motivations;
- c. Express receptiveness to feedback and an ability to integrate feedback into behavioral change;
- d. Show an ability to make appropriate use of "air time" in class (i.e., willingness both to use it and to limit one's use of it);
- e. Respect difference and for others' feelings, including a nonjudgmental attitude, sensitivity to ethnic diversity and oppressed groups, and respect for confidentiality and client self-determination; and
- f. Demonstrate an ability to contribute comments that are clearly stated and immediately relevant to the focal issues under discussion.

The student's comments should demonstrate that assigned readings, lectures, or assignments were completed on time and were understood, that opinions are supported by data and/or logical argument, and that class content is integrated with field experiences (when applicable).



## Life-Work Experience Credit Policy

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### **RATIONALE**

The MSW Program recognizes the value of life and previous work experiences. The knowledge and skills gained from these experiences are beneficial, because they often increase professional and critical thinking skills and provide valuable connections to social work theory and social issues. Student contributions in the classroom and field experiences enhance their own and other students learning experiences; however, life and previous work experiences are not a replacement for academic learning.

### **POLICY**

The following policy describes the life and work experience policy.

#### *Life or Work Experience Credit*

In accordance with the education policies and academic standards of the Council on Social Work Education, the Social Work Program does not grant social work course credit for life or previous work experience. In other words, life or previous work experience does not translate or transfer into credit for social work courses including the field practicum experiences and seminars.

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## **Nondiscrimination Policy**

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### **RATIONALE**

*Social Work faculty members* educate students who are equipped to work respectfully with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. In order to do so, faculty integrate diversity content throughout the explicit and implicit social work curriculum. Faculty also assess student preparedness to practice with diverse people groups by assessing cultural competence.

*Social work students* uphold the ethical standards and best practices related to culturally competent social work. In order to do so, students engage in ongoing assessment of their personal backgrounds, values, worldviews, and biases. Regardless of differences, the students demonstrate the ability to provide culturally competent services to diverse people groups.

*The Social Work Program* provides a variety of learning experiences with diverse populations. These activities may include field trips, guest speakers, cross-cultural experiences, student organization speakers, diverse faculty and staff, reading and research assignments, instructional methods, and field practicum experiences.

### **POLICY**

The Social Work Program at Southeastern University maintains a policy of nondiscrimination based on race, color, gender, age, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. This policy is consistent with the rich tradition and values of the social work profession, which celebrate diversity and stand against social injustice.

The universally accepted “Golden Rule” proclaimed by Jesus Christ, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Luke 6:31) is the foundational principle which informs the Social Work Program’s nondiscrimination policy. This principle precludes exclusion of people based on of their differences and encourages the acceptance of all people groups on the basis of their ultimate oneness under God. In the New Testament, Paul writes, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Jesus Christ” (Galatians 3:28). In addition, the Kingdom of God is consists of people “out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation...” (Rev. 5:9).

The MSW Program’s policy of nondiscrimination is congruent with Southeastern University’s nondiscrimination policy. As an Assembly of God Institution, Southeastern University’s religious standards are exempt from the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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## Social Media & Technology Policy

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### RATIONALE

Technology, including social media, is a tool used to promote effective communication. As such, technology should enhance the academic learning environment and foster respectful, professional relationships. The following policy takes into consideration the legal, moral, and ethical guidelines for the prudent use of technology.

Public social networks are not private. Even with networks for invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, students should assume anything posted may be seen, read, and critiqued. Online information is accessible, archived, and potentially poses harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

### SOCIAL MEDIA – TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. email and blogs) must be mindful about how others perceive their communication. Because of this, social work students should manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information or photos or use any language that might jeopardize their professional image.

Students should consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and block any client access to their social networks. Students should not mention client information in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the Social Work Department at Southeastern University, the Florida code of conduct for clinical social workers (as specified in Title XXXII, Chapter 491 of the Florida Statutes), and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they are representing professional social work practice and Southeastern University while in the classroom, the university, and broader communities.

### SOCIAL MEDIA - TECHNOLOGY PRACTICES

Students are responsible for using social media and technology to enhance their learning especially when using Southeastern University technology services and equipment. The following practices and online learning tools are required of all MSW Students.

1. **MyFire:** The Learning Management System (LMS), used by the university, is MyFire. Course communication occurs through this LMS.
2. **Grades:** The points or grades for each assignment are in MyFire. Students should read professor feedback and make changes in future assignments.
3. **Help Desk:** Do you need help? Ask the Help Desk by emailing [helpdesk@seu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@seu.edu).
4. **Internet Browsers:** Having more than one browser is wise. If one browser is not

working, try another.

5. **Procrastination** – Technology often fails at the last minute. Technology failures are not an excuse for a late assignment. Tips to work around technology failures:
  - a. Plan and work ahead.
  - b. Switch to alternative browsers.
  - c. Plan a time to submit assignments using campus computers.
  
6. **Social Media and e-Communication:** e-communication becomes an “official document in perpetuity.” Carefully think about what you say and how you say it. Use [netiquette](#). Helpful hints include:
  - a. Brief and concise is best.
  - b. Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Do not use symbols and shortened words typically used in texting.
  - c. Professionally present yourself by using respectful communication. If you disagree with a discussion board posting, then restate the other person’s position following with your position. Several ways to communicate a differing views are:
    - “I hear that you are saying \_\_\_\_\_; however, I have been thinking that \_\_\_\_\_.”
    - “On one hand I am hearing \_\_\_\_\_, but on the other hand I am thinking \_\_\_\_\_.”
    - “I can tell that you are passionate about \_\_\_\_\_. I am viewing this situation a little differently and would like to have us discuss \_\_\_\_\_.”
  - d. Feelings do not communicate well via online postings and through email messages. If you are angry, frustrated, irritated, confused, etc., please contact the professor for a phone or face-to-face meeting to discuss your feelings. The professor can help you find the appropriate words to convey your message.
  - e. Plagiarism guidelines are applicable to online writing. If you use someone else’s work, you must reference the information. APA guidelines require references to include the author and year and citations to include author, year, and page or line number. Page number is for paper copy; line number is for electronic copy.
  - f. Abide by all policies covering written work as noted above under Classroom Policies.
  - g. Recognize the difference between the use of social media and professional academic use of technology. Professionalism is required at all times.
  
7. **Southeastern University Library:** Social work courses rely on resources available through the university’s library. Supplemental readings and videos are available via links. Please acquaint yourself with the [library home page](#) and the Social Work Libguide.
  
8. **Uploading Assignment Problems:** If a social work course required the uploading assignments in MyFire, do so. Most professors have a late assignment submission policy, so leave ample time for technology failure. Please carefully read the course syllabus for your professor’s assignment policy. Helpful hints to ensure successful uploading of an assignment:
  - a. **Double Check Upload:** After uploading an assignment, double check to make sure you can see the correct assignment in the proper formatting. Scroll through

the entire assignment to make sure the correct document and formatting are appearing in the assignment window.

- b. **Technology Failures while Uploading:** If a problem with uploading occurs, the student must submit a Help Desk ticket. After submission, someone from the Help Desk will respond via the student's Southeastern University email. The response helps identify the problem and solution. The student is responsible for working with the Help Desk to resolve the technology problem. If an assignment is late due to a university technology problem, the Help Desk ticket response will say so.

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## Student Rights & Responsibilities Policy

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### RATIONALE

Critical and reflective thinking is foundational to life-long learning. The learning process also depends on a reciprocity in the relationship between learners – the student and teacher. As a result, students have rights and responsibilities related to taking ownership of their own learning and, subsequently, their own academic success. This policy discusses the rights and responsibilities of students as related to the learning process and learning relationship.

### POLICY

#### Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for choosing behaviors supportive the integration of professional ethics and faith into their social work practice. Graduate school is an opportunity to identify a professional identity congruent with a responsible, ethical social work practitioner. The following sections more clearly identify student responsibilities related to the MSW Program, Southeastern University, the social work profession, and the Christian faith community.

#### Student Responsibilities – MSW Program

The MSW Student Handbook and the MSW Field Manual outlines policies specifically associated with responsibilities of social work students. Those policies include, but are not limited to:

- Expectations of academic and professional performance
- Responsibilities for ethical, responsible use of social media and technology
- Protection of students, such as the nondiscrimination policy of the social work program
- Opportunities for students to advocate for themselves by organizing and providing feedback to the program

Students are responsible for reading, asking questions about, and following the policies and procedures provided in the MSW Student Handbook and Field Manual. The dissemination of these documents occur by posting them in social work courses and the MSW Program Community.

#### Student Responsibilities – Southeastern University

The university also articulates student responsibilities in the [Southeastern University graduate handbook](#). Students are responsible for reading and asking questions about the graduate handbook of the institution.

#### Student Responsibilities – Social Work Profession

In addition, students are responsible for practicing within the guidelines set forth by the NASW Code of Ethics. Students are to read and adhere to the ethical standards of the social work profession as defined by the [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\)](#).

Social work students are eligible to join the National Association of Social Workers and attend local chapter meetings as well as state and national conferences. Student membership is available at one-quarter the regular dues and, following graduation, the

graduate pays only one-half the regular dues for 2 years. Benefits of NASW membership include discounted or free local training, eligibility for NASW's professional liability insurance at competitive rates, full subscription to the journal, *Social Work*, and the periodical, *NASW News*, along with opportunities for leadership and interaction with local social workers and resources.

### **Student Responsibilities – Faith Community**

Christian social workers should also become familiar with the [North American Association of Christians in Social Work Statement of Faith and Practice](#).

NACSW supports the integration of Christian faith and professional social work practice in the lives of its members, the profession and the church, promoting justice in social service and social reform. Student dues are less than one-third the cost of regular dues. Services and benefits of membership include opportunities to network with other Christians in social work and other Christian organizations and resources, free or discounted publications and materials as well as discounted rates at conventions and conferences, access to current job postings and employment information, and eligibility for NACSW's professional liability insurance at competitive rates.

### **Student Rights**

The MSW Student Handbook and the MSW Field Manual outlines policies specifically associated with the rights of social work students. Those policies include, but are not limited to:

1. Students have the right to be treated, in all aspects of the MSW Program, without discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation
2. Students have the right of privacy of personal information especially those as outlined by [FERPA](#) and the [NASW Code of Ethics](#)
3. Students have the right to express grievances and make appeals within the MSW Program and through the university
4. Students have the right to an environment that is free of harassment or any other unreasonable interference with the student's performance per Title IX requirements
5. Students have the right to have a voice in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of program policies and curriculum.
6. Students have the right to form their own organizations

### *Student Responsibilities*

1. Students have the responsibility to pursue excellence in their academic and career development.
2. Students have the responsibility to act ethically and follow the NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Students have the responsibility to behave professionally as beginning, master's level social workers.
4. Students have the responsibility to provide input into the planning, revision, and evaluation of program policies and curriculum.

5. Students have the responsibility to observe all duly established university, local, state, and federal regulations.
6. Students have the responsibility to refrain from actions that deny other members of the community their rights as listed above.
7. Students have the responsibility to give correct contact information, including local and permanent addresses and telephone numbers, to both the Office of the Registrar and the MSW Program Office. Students should immediately notify both offices of any changes in telephone number or address. The last address available through the Registrar's Office is the official mailing address. If the student has moved and failed to provide updated contact information, he or she will not be relieved of responsibility based on the grounds the correspondence was not delivered or received.
8. Students have the responsibility of checking their university-sponsored email accounts regularly as that will be the official and primary mode of communication for the MSW Program.
9. Students have the responsibility of purchasing or renting all required course materials including textbooks.
10. Students are responsible for reading, asking questions about, and following the policies and procedures provided in the MSW Student Handbook and Field Manual. The dissemination of these documents occur by posting them in the course sites in MyFire and the MSW Program Community.
11. The university also articulates student responsibilities in the [Southeastern University graduate handbook](#). Students are responsible for reading and asking questions about the graduate handbook of the institution.

### **Student Organizations**

Students have the right to organize and advocate for their best interest. The MSW Program offers students the opportunity to participate in student clubs and organizations where they may formulate and modify policies affecting academic and student affairs. In addition, the MSW Program Director is available to speak with students on an individual or small group basis about their concerns and advocacy intentions.

### **Social Work Ambassador Team**

The program uses a Student – Social Work Ambassador Team for the purpose of engaging students in the formulation and modification of policies affecting academic and student affairs.

The Student – Social Work Ambassador Team is an advisory group designed to give voice to the comments and concerns of the MSW students. The purpose of the team is to engage social work graduate students in the formulation and modification of policies affecting academic and student affairs and, to do so, within the University policies for academic and student affairs. The ambassador team suggests improvements in the areas of course-related curriculum, professional development activities, program policies and procedures, and program recruiting efforts. More specifically, ambassadors provide feedback on professional development activities preferred by the MSW students.

The team is composed of student ambassadors, who are in the MSW Program. Ambassadors include students who are in the generalist and clinical social work curriculums. At the beginning of the academic year, the program seeks five to seven



students to volunteer for the ambassador positions. If more than seven individuals volunteer, the students select their ambassadors through an election.

The ambassadors are responsible for gathering peer feedback and presenting suggestions for program improvements. The program may ask ambassadors to gather information related to specific questions. In addition, MSW students may ask one of their ambassadors to bring concerns or comments to the MSW Program Director.

### **Social Work Club**

The Social Work Club is a student-led organization focusing on student social work activities. The constitution and by-laws for the organization were student-developed and are student-lead. Its stated purpose in the club's constitution is "to accurately promote awareness of the Social work profession, positively affect the surrounding community, and to encourage, uplift, and fellowship with fellow social work majors." The Social Work Club has an executive council that consists of at least three officers (President, Vice President, Media Specialist, and Secretary). The elected officers meet to plan activities for social work students. The club charges no dues for membership and is open to all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at the university. The Social Work Club President represents the club and interests of Social Work students on the Student Government Organization and on the Social Work Program Advisory Council. The Social Work Club advisor/sponsor is a social work faculty member.

### **Phi Alpha Honor Society**

Since 2006, the Xi Psi Chapter of the Phi Alpha Honor Society provides service activities to promote humanitarian ideals. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites to membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work. For a graduate student to receive an invitation to join Phi Alpha, the student must meet the following requirements:

- Completed a minimum of nine credit hours of social work courses
  - Rank in the top 35% of their class
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## **Textbook Policy**

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### **RATIONALE**

Graduate school offers an opportunity to develop curiosity and critical thinking through reading. In turn, students give back to the profession through their scholarly activities by publicly sharing of their thoughts and ideas. In order to do so, students are responsible for their own learning. The first step is to purchase and read the required texts and other identified learning resources. Specific required readings are in the syllabus.

### **POLICY**

At the graduate level, students are to take ownership of their learning. Part of this ownership is by gaining access to all required course materials in a timely manner. MSW students are required to purchase or rent ALL required textbooks prior to the start of each class.

The MSW Program makes every effort to select the most affordable textbooks when possible. However, textbook costs at the graduate level can be high, so students are encouraged to budget accordingly. Students will not continue in the class or the MSW Program without the purchase or rental of required textbooks. Unless otherwise directed by the professor, students must bring the assigned textbook(s) and/or readings to each class.

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## Transfer of Credit Policy

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### **RATIONALE**

The Transfer of Credit policy intends to:

- a) establish MSW Program policies consistent with institutional policies and the Council on Social Work Education policy and academic standards
- b) ensure transfer courses are earned from a MSW Program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education
- c) avoid academic redundancy by recognizing prior achievement of BSW graduates from CSWE-accredited programs
- d) promote the academic integrity of the MSW Program by verifying the transfer courses are aligned with the academic standards set forth by the Council on Social Work Education

### **POLICY**

The following policy elaborates on the institutional and MSW Program policies for transfer of credit regarding graduate social work courses.

#### *Transfer of Credit – Institutional Policy*

The MSW Program adheres to the institutional policies as set forth in the [Southeastern University graduate student handbook](#). In order for a course to be considered for transfer of credit, the applicant must submit an official transcript in a sealed envelope from the college or university awarding the credit OR the institution issuing the official transcripts sends an electronic copy directly to the Academic Program Liaison or Director of Graduate Enrollment. Credits for academic courses accepted in transfer must be graded with a “B-” or higher.

#### *Transfer of Credit – MSW Program Policy*

Once a course has met the institutional transfer of credit requirements, the Registrar’s Office and the MSW Program Director collaboratively decide on the acceptance of social work courses from other MSW Programs accredited by CSWE. During the review of transfer courses, the MSW Program Director may request additional documentation such as university catalogs, course syllabi, and completed assignments. The applicant is responsible for submitting the requested documentation. In some cases, the MSW Program Director may ask the applicant for permission to communicate with the applicant’s previous social work instructors.

Each transfer of credit situation is unique; therefore, the MSW Program Director makes decisions on a case-by-case basis.

#### *Life or Work Experience Credit*

In accordance with the education policies and academic standards of the Council on Social Work Education, the Social Work Program does not grant social work course credit for life or previous work experience. In other words, life or previous work experience does not translate or transfer into credit for social work courses including the field practicum experiences and seminars.

## Appendices

## Appendix A

### Course Descriptions

#### **Generalist Practices Courses**

The course descriptions for the generalist social work courses follow.

***SOWK 5013 Generalist Practice with Individuals and Families*** (3 hours) - This generalist practice course prepares students to apply the Generalist Intervention Model to develop strengths-based approaches for engagement, assessment, intervention and evaluation with individuals and families. Evidence-based theoretical frameworks and models for working with individuals and families are explored. The course uses case studies, role-plays, and small group work to enable students to actively engage in applying the planned change process to realistic situations encountered in the field. Students are challenged to use critical thinking to apply relevant theoretical frameworks, assess individual and family situations, and make decisions regarding appropriate interventions, as well as how to evaluate those interventions.

***SOWK 5014 Field Experience/Seminar I*** (4 hours) - This course provides an educationally directed practicum, introducing the student to agency-based social work practice. The student completes 200 hours in a social service setting, engaging in direct social work practice, under the guidance of a professional social worker. The student begins to integrate theory and practice and demonstrates beginning social work practice behaviors. Concurrently, the field seminar provides an opportunity to discuss practicum experiences with other students and to integrate social work theories with practice. Students discuss field experiences, agency contexts, and assessment of client strengths and needs.

***SOWK 5021 Academic Writing at the Graduate Level*** (1 hour) - This course prepares students to engage in effective written communication for graduate education. Importance is placed on academic writing in social work to identify and build upon the work of reliable authors. This course employs guidelines set by the current Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) style for writing style, references, and citations.

***SOWK 5023 Human Behavior and the Social Environment*** (3 hours) - This course focuses on skill development in assessment and intervention, using a “person-in-environment” perspective throughout the life cycle. Social work theories, including ecological systems theory, will be explored. This foundational social work course is aimed at helping students acquire basic knowledge of human functioning and is a study of the interaction of biological, psychological, sociological, cultural, spiritual, and systemic influences on human functioning.

***SOWK 5024 Field Experience/Seminar II*** (4 hours) - This course is a continuation of SOWK 5014, with the student completing an additional 200 hours in the same social work practicum agency. This course provides continued experience in generalist social work practice under the supervision of a professional social worker. Concurrently, the field seminar provides an opportunity to discuss practicum experiences with other students and to integrate social work theories with practice. Students discuss field experiences, agency contexts, and

biopsychosocial assessment of clients. Students must demonstrate all social work competencies designated by the Council on Social Work Education.

***SOWK 5033 Generalist Practice with Groups, Communities, and Organizations*** (3 hours) - This generalist practice course prepares students to apply evidence-based theoretical frameworks and interventions while utilizing a strengths-based perspective to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate practice with groups, communities, and organizations.

***SOWK 5043 Foundations of Social Work Practice*** (3 hours) - This introductory course surveys the historical, philosophical and ethical foundations of the social work profession with an emphasis on adhering to professional values and understanding theoretical frameworks for practicing social work. Students will develop the personal, professional, ethical, and intellectual foundations necessary for practicing social work. Attention is given to the various practice settings found within the social work profession and the roles/responsibilities that social workers and social welfare policies hold within each setting.

***SOWK 5053 Engaging Diversity and Difference in Practice*** (3 hours) - This course examines the complex nature of culture and personal identity, explores populations-at-risk, and encourages students to understand and appreciate diversity. An emphasis is placed on cultural competence, awareness of the patterns of power, privilege, and oppression experienced by diverse cultures, and skills relevant to engaging diversity and difference in social work practice. Students examine personal and social work values and their intersectionality with multiple factors including, but not limited to, age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Through experiential learning, assimilation projects, and analytical approaches, students will explore various theoretical perspectives to develop cultural competence.

***SOWK 5063 Methods of Social Work Research*** (3 hours) - This course prepares students to become effective consumers and producers of research. Students critically evaluate social work research and its application to social work practice with individuals, groups, communities, and organizations. Topics include: the scientific method of inquiry; research sampling, design, and data collection; ethical issues in social work research; conceptualization and operationalization of research studies; quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods of inquiry; and bivariate and univariate statistical analysis and interpretation.

***SOWK 5073 Interviewing and Helping Skills*** (3 hours)- This generalist practice course facilitates the development of the interpersonal and communication skills that are foundational to each level of social work practice. A primary focus of the course is on providing students with opportunities for role-play and experiential learning experiences that will facilitate their ability to apply the skills learned through practice. Students are encouraged to develop self-awareness through reflection on their current practices and opportunities to improve their skills. Students explore the impact of diversity on communication styles and help-seeking behaviors. Taken concurrently with SOWK 5013, students integrate content on individuals and families with helping skills gained in this course.

**SOWK 5083 Social Welfare Policy** (3 hours) -This course surveys the history of social welfare as an institution and current state of social welfare programs in America. Attention is given to the analysis of social, economic, environmental, and political forces that shape current policies and programs, including the values and ethics impacting policy. This course encourages critical thinking and explores analytical approaches to contemporary social welfare issues, policies, and programs. Strategies that influence organizational, local, state, and federal policy formation will be explored.

### **Clinical Social Work Courses** (Specialized Curriculum)

**SOWK 6013 Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals** (3 hours) - Building upon the foundation of generalist social work practice, this advanced clinical course emphasizes the application of multiple theoretical orientations and evidence-based practice models for assessment and intervention with individuals. Strengths-based strategies for working with diverse populations and within a broad array of practice contexts are addressed.

**SOWK 6014 Field Experience/Seminar III** (4 hours) - This practicum experience requires the student to complete 250 hours in an approved social work agency with an approved MSW supervisor. The specialization field experience requires that the student utilize clinical practice skills in the social work practice setting, thus strengthening the student's emerging identity as a social work practitioner. Concurrently, students will participate in field seminar, which requires that students discuss theoretical frameworks and practice methods, as they apply to cases that are presented in the classroom. As a capstone course, students begin a clinical practice portfolio, which demonstrates their proficiency in the accomplishment of all of the competencies and behaviors required by the Council on Social Work Education for master's level social work practitioners. Students are exposed to all ten competencies during this course.

**SOWK 6023 Advanced Clinical Practice with Couples, Children, and Families** (3 hours) - This advanced clinical course explores evidence-based theories and strengths-based intervention strategies for use with couples, children and/or families. Issues of gender, ethnicity, empowerment, and multiculturalism are explored. Family-centered interventions include skills that mitigate the effects of trauma, family transitions, oppression, and social and economic injustices on families. Interventions to assist children navigating substantial changes, including loss and harm within the family system will also be explored.

**SOWK 6024 Field Experience/Seminar IV** (4 hours) - This course is a continuation of SOWK 6014, with the student completing an additional 250 hours in the same social work practicum agency. This course provides continued experience in gaining clinical expertise in assessing, intervening and evaluating individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. This course further strengthens the student's emerging identity as a social work practitioner.

**SOWK 6033 Advanced Clinical Practice with Groups** (3 hours) This advanced clinical course is an examination of group work practice with clients experiencing a variety of social, emotional, and/or psychological circumstances. Using the classroom as an experiential

learning laboratory, students will apply various theoretical perspectives and intervention strategies to successfully plan, implement, and facilitate groups across a diversity of practice settings

***SOWK 6043 Psychopathology*** (3 hours) - This course is a critical examination of mental health assessment, diagnosis, and intervention. Recognizing indicators of mental disorders, the context in which they occur, and identifying diagnostic criteria of mental health disorders, as described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual is emphasized. Students will explore biopsychosocial etiologies and their relationship to clinical assessment, diagnosis, intervention and prognosis. Particular attention is given to the relationship between the social environment, cultural influences, and emotional and mental health.

***SOWK 6053 Trauma Informed Clinical Practice*** (3 hours) - This course addresses trauma-informed concepts with an emphasis on the strengths and resilience of clients experiencing traumatic stress. The evaluation of evidenced-based models and implementation of multidimensional assessment and intervention is explored. Biological, psychological, emotional, social, cultural, familial, and environmental influences that contribute to traumatic stress are examined. Particular attention is given to the impact of vicarious trauma and the importance of self-care for those who provide trauma-informed care.

***SOWK 6063 Evaluation of Social Work Practice*** (3 hours) - Building on content acquired in “Methods of Social Work Research,” this course focuses on the evaluation of direct social work practices, processes, and outcomes at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Students will examine the implementation of the single system and group designs to measure and evaluate client goals, progress, and interventions. Program evaluation methods will also be explored. The ethical implications, responsibilities, and limitations of using research to inform clinical practice and using practice to inform social work research will be explored.

***SOWK 6073 Social Work Administration and Leadership*** (3 hours) - This practice course explores the theories, models of supervision, and fundamental skills of leadership and administration evident in social service organizations. A variety of topics will be addressed to promote effective administrative skills including emotional intelligence, leadership styles, conflict management, power and influence, team building and group facilitation, establishing collaborative relationships with internal and external constituents, and fundraising. Students will also engage in a personal exploration of leadership styles and skills including strengths and areas for growth.



# Appendix B

## Southeastern University - MSW Program

### Informal Written Plan & Student Development Plan

Student Name	Date
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#### **Purpose**

The Informal Written Plan and Student Development Plan is an agreement between the Social Work Program and the student. The purpose of the plan is to improve academic scholarship and/or non-academic professionalism while empowering a student to complete the MSW curriculum. Selection of strength and development areas are from the Standards of Excellence as outline in the MSW Student Handbook. The writing of an Informal Written Plan or Student Development Plan may occur at the time of the admission to the program or during progression through the academic course of study.

#### **Informal Written Plan OR Student Development Plan** (Check one type of plan)

- Informal Written Plan
- Student Development Plan – First Plan
- Student Development Plan – Second and Final Plan

#### **Program Status** (Check one type of program status prior to the writing of the plan)

- Provisional admission prior to matriculation into MSW Program
- Good standing
- Probationary standing

#### **Student Strengths** (List strengths by referencing the Standards of Excellence)

1.	
2.	
3.	

#### **Student Development Areas** (Check all areas of concern then reference the Standards of Excellence)

- Basic Abilities to Acquire Professional Skills
  - Communication
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Cognitive Skills

- Emotional and Mental Abilities
  - Stress Management
  - Emotional and Mental Capacities

- Professional Performance Skills
  - Professional Commitment
  - Professional Behavior
  - Self-Awareness
  - Ethical Obligation

- Scholastic Performance

<b><u>Rationale</u></b> (Describe concerns)
---

Academic and/or Professional Performance Goals		Review Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

<b>Anticipated Outcomes for Unsatisfactory Completion of the Plan</b> (Check the anticipated outcomes.)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	An initial Student Development Plan will be written.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A second Student Development Plan will be written.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Good standing in the program will be changed to provisional standing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dismissal from the program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

**Student Response** (May be attached.)

--

**Signatures and Dates**

*My signature represents my: 1) participation in reviewing the plan, 2) understanding that I have the opportunity to make written comments about the plan, and 3) understanding that I agree to demonstrate the Standards of Excellence and work toward developing my competencies as a professional social worker. My signature further indicates that I have read, agree with, and wish to continue with the **Student Development Plan**. I also acknowledge that I had an opportunity to ask questions and understand the review date to be on or before \_\_\_\_\_ (date).*

Student Signature	Date
Field Instructor and/or Course Instructor	Date
Field Coordinator and/or Field Director	Date
MSW Program Director	Date

Southeastern University - MSW Program

**Student Development Plan Review**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

The original Student Development Plan written on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) is attached.

This is the  first review or  second and final review.

Objective Number	FC= fully completed PC= partially completed	Comments
1		
2		
3		
4		

This student has:

- Fully met the objectives
- Has partially met the objectives
- Has not met the objectives

Recommendations:

- Remove from provisional admission status
- Retain in the program
- Remove from probationary status
- Revise plan and review again on (date)
- Dismiss this student from the program
- Other (specify below)

Student Comments:

Faculty Comments:

*My signature represents my: 1) participation in reviewing these objectives, 2) understanding that I have the opportunity to make written comments about the outcome of this review, and 3) understanding that I may pursue the review process outlined in the Student Handbook if I do not believe this review was fair or objective.*

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
MSW Program Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date