



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MERIDIAN

**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY- MERIDIAN
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Division of Arts and Sciences
Mississippi State University-Meridian
Revised January 6, 2020

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Welcome

If you have the ability to value people and draw them into their own strength and power, their heritage and diversity, their innate dignity even in despair, and if you have the tenacity to help them and their neighbors achieve their highest potential, then welcome into our profession.

-Anonymous

Introduction

The mission, policies and procedures in this handbook are subordinate to and may be superseded by the policies and procedures of Mississippi State University and the College of Arts and Sciences.

This handbook provides an overview of the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University-Meridian. Information which, at the time of preparation for printing, most accurately described the courses, curricula, policies, procedures, regulations and requirements of the Mississippi State University-Meridian Social Work Program. Mississippi State University-Meridian Social Work Program reserves the right to delete, substitute for, change, or supplement any statement in this manual without prior notice.

Program rules, regulations, and procedures are included in this handbook. Social Work majors are bound by the principles herein described.

Mission of Social Work Program

The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally (CSWE 2015).

Mission

Our program's purpose and mission are inextricably related to the purpose and mission of the University, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Meridian Campus. The mission statements of the University, College of Arts and Sciences, Meridian Campus Social Work Program, and the purpose of the Social Work profession reflect a strong commitment to students, community and service to society.

With the liberal arts as our foundation, the **mission** of the Social Work Program Mississippi State University-Meridian is to prepare BSW graduates to engage in entry-level generalist social work practice to competently and effectively work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations within a multicultural society and to continue their formal education in social work or graduate discipline.

It is the **vision** of the Program that students will diligently work toward the achievement of civil rights for all populations, including the impoverished, underserved, undereducated, disenfranchised, and biopsychosocially vulnerable. The Program further expects students to become trustworthy, dedicated leaders in social service delivery through professional expertise, evidence informed practices, and systematic advocacy.

As such, it is our **goal** that upon completion of the Program, students are prepared to:

1. Practice according to the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession. (Competencies 1 & 2)
2. Influence social policies with the goal of alleviating poverty, oppression, and social injustice as well as advocating for human rights. (Core Competencies 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9)
3. Provide communities with professional social work services in a manner that reflects a commitment to the historic mission of social work and empower communities to address issues of social and economic injustice. (Competencies 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 & 9)
4. Identify and affect the bio-psycho-social, spiritual, and cultural functioning of people. (Competencies 6, 7, 8 & 9)
5. Engage in research-informed entry-level generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations within a diverse and multicultural society. (Competency 4)

Social Work Competencies

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Adapted with permission of the Council on Social Work Education

Social Work Program

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University Meridian accreditation was reaffirmed by the Council on Social Work Education until 2021. The profession of social work, as the entry level professional degree, recognizes the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree. The BSW graduate is prepared to address the diverse needs of individuals, families, small groups, communities, and organizations; to work with a wide range of systems and with appropriate supervision; and can practice effectively with individuals and collectives from diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds to promote social and economic justice for their client systems. Students, prior to graduation, are instructed on the social work licensure application process necessary to practice in the states of Mississippi and Alabama. Social work students are eligible to take the scheduled licensing examination during their last semester of course work if their course load does not exceed fifteen (15) semester hours. The Social Work Program offers an exam review workshop for social work students and graduates prior to the licensure examination.

What does Generalist Social Work Practice mean?

The definition of generalist practice is as follows:

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. (CSWE EPAS 2015). *Adapted with permission of the Council on Social Work Education*

Liberal Arts Perspective

The Social Work Program integrates a liberal arts perspective into the social work curriculum. This liberal arts perspective enhances the person-in-environment focus of Generalist Social Work practice. Mississippi State University-Meridian Campus, an Upper Division University, offers courses (face to face) equivalent to the third and fourth years. The Social Work Program does accept course credit through transfer (up to 62 hours) from other accredited universities and colleges.

Freshman Year							
First Semester				Second Semester			
EN	1103	English Composition	3	EN	1113	English Composition	3
FL	1114	Elem. Foreign Lang	3	FL	1124	Elem. Foreign Lang	3
MA	1313	College Algebra	3			Biology Sciences/Lab	3
SO	1003	Intro. to Sociology	3			Fine Arts Core	3
PS	1113	American Government	3			PSY 1013 General Psychology	3

Total Credit Hours	15	Total Credit Hours	15
Sophomore Year			
First Semester		Second Semester	
EC 2113 Principle of Eco. I	3	BIO 1004 Anatomy & Phys./Lab	4
Literature Core	3	History Core	3
PH 1013 Physical Sci./Lab PH 1011	4	CO 1003 Fund. of Pub. Speech	3
CS 1013 Basic Computer Concepts	3	Humanities Elective	3
Total Credit Hours	13	Total Credit Hours	13
**Shaded area indicates 56 semester university/college transfer hours approved for BSW degree			

Critical Thinking

The profession of social work demands competent writing and speech skills. Successful completion of these requirements-English Composition I, English Composition II, and Fundamentals of Public Speech -is vital to successful pursuit of the major. The required Introduction to Philosophy course is extremely important because the social work curriculum examines a wide spectrum of philosophies, ethics, and values systems that are relevant to the profession. The capstone course, SW 4713 Senior Seminar, is not intended to fulfill the foundation requirement. It not only supports and extends learning through review of writing skills in practice, as well as research writing skills, but also meets the University's senior level writing requirement.

Historical Consciousness

The required courses in humanities such as world history, literature, and religion are important for understanding the emergence of professional social work and its antecedents. The evolution of historic values, ideas, and events has directly shaped the nature of our profession. History has recorded the evolution of the social, religious, cultural, economic, and political foundations of our society. Literature promotes critical appraisals of various forms of writing which help to record the social ills addressed by the larger environments over time. History and literature are especially relevant for social work course contents in the areas of philosophy, human behavior, practice, diverse populations, and the ethnology of social welfare policy.

Scientific Methods

Mastery of this core requirement, with its emphasis on developing systematized knowledge gained from observation, study, and experimentation (when possible), promotes understanding of the physiology of human development and increases the student's ability to understand the physical and environmental context of psycho-social functioning. This core helps the student understand the social work curriculum in all content areas.

Art Appreciation

Art and the study of esthetics are vital for social work practice. Critical sensitivity to tactile, visual, and auditory environments has implications for many parts of the social work curriculum. Art and art forms enhance the cultural heritage of people. The visual and auditory environments at social service agencies directly influence client dynamics and perception of services.

Numerical Literacy

Many social welfare policy and service decisions are based on mathematical and statistical research. This core enhances the student's knowledge of the quantitative aspect of social problems; assists the student in evaluating social welfare policies and delivery systems; enhances the student's abilities to understand, design, and evaluate research; and enhances

the student's abilities to assist clients with resource management.

Social Inquiry

The systematic and disciplined study of social institutions provides a frame of reference to explore social problems and social conditions encountered by various populations-at-risk; to examine theories, fields, and methods relating to the human's biological and cultural development; and to introduce the study of human behavior to include motivation, conflict, learning, thinking, perception, intelligence, and social influences. This core exposes the student to a wide variety of people from many cultures and ethnic heritages and studies economic relationships such as free enterprise principles, policies, institutions, national employment, and government finances. Social sciences strengthen the student's understanding and preparation for further studies in the area of practice and build a foundation for practice with larger systems which address social and economic justice.

Cross-Cultural Understanding

Social workers practice with people from many cultures and ethnic heritages. The exposure to cultural understanding is integral to much of the Program's course work because of the profession's and Program's commitment to cultural diversity and social and economic justice for oppressed peoples.

Political Science

These courses develop the student's understanding of the nature and function of government. The foundation for further study in the areas of social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior in the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, and research is provided by this course.

Computer Literacy

This course provides students with an understanding of the basic concept of computing using large-scale and microcomputers that is integral to contemporary social work practice. The basic computer course also enhances the student's documentation and research skills, which are integral components of contemporary social work practice.

Proficiency in Foreign Languages

The proficiency in additional languages will improve the practice abilities and cross-cultural sensitivities of the beginning practitioner by providing an opportunity to explore different cultures and to enhance communication skills to meet the needs of diverse client populations.

General Admission Information

Admission into the Social Work Program is a mutual process. The student must have the desire, potential ability, and adequate preparation, and the faculty must approve the student for admission through an equitable and reasoned admission process. Admission into the program is a privilege extended to the student by the Program faculty and the University.

The purpose of the admission criteria and academic guidelines is twofold: to allow the student the opportunity to examine motivation and interest in social work as a career; and to assist faculty to assess the strengths and weaknesses of prospective students so that

appropriate advisement can occur early in the educational process.

Social Work Admission Requirements

Mississippi State University encourages each student to declare a major. Application forms may be obtained by contacting a Social Work faculty advisor. Although students may informally declare Social Work as a major, there is a two-level formal admission process for all potential Social Work majors for admission into the Social Work Program and admission for the Field Practicum. ***Social Work majors may repeat a Social Work core course only once during their academic career.***

When to apply?

Students may formally apply for admission to the Program after having completed forty-five semester hours of foundation courses, ancillary courses, and at least two introductory social work courses with a minimum grade of B; and twenty learning service hours.

Admission into the Major

Although students may enroll in social work as their major, there is a formal admission process into the Social Work Program. Criteria for admission into the program include:

1. Cumulative GPA of 2.0
2. Completion of the following liberal arts requirements:
 - English Composition I and II
 - College Algebra
 - Introduction to Sociology
 - American Government
 - General Psychology
 - Anatomy & Physiology
 - Principles of Economics
 - Fundamentals of Public Speech
 - Basic Computer Concepts & Applications
 - Social Work with At-Risk Populations
3. Completion of a minimum of two of the following social work courses with a grade of "B" or higher
 - SW 3003 Social Work with At-Risk Populations
 - SW 2313 Introduction to Social Work (including 20 hours of volunteer/service-learning hours. **(Students must have a minimum grade of B in SW 2313)**)
 - SW 2303 Social Welfare Policy I
 - SW 3013 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I
4. Completion of Application for Admission to the Social Work Program
5. Students must submit three reference letters on provided forms
6. Completion of a fingerprint Criminal History Record Information, Child Abuse/Neglect and Sex Offender Registry checks .
7. Participate in a personal interview with Social Work Program Admissions Committee

Criteria for Admission to the Social Work Program

The program has written policies and procedures for formal admission to the Social Work Program. Once the completed student application is received, reviewed, and approved for the interview process by the Program Director; the Program Director then

schedules the student admission interviews for one week after final exams and sends a notification letter, including day, date, and time of interview to students for them to come to campus and complete the interview process, via Mississippi State University official student email account and admission committee members via official email account.

Committee members and students are asked to sign a statement of confidentiality prior to the interview process. This is the first of 2 steps in the admission process. This first step ensures that students have completed the core academic requirements and have successfully completed a minimum of two social work courses with a grade of “B” or higher.

Prior to the interview and as part of the admission process, the student is asked to analyze a case scenario. Answers to specific questions pertaining to values and ethics, diversity and culture, knowledge, client strengths, areas of concern, and appropriate steps of action are sought. The student’s written response to the case scenario, a copy of the student’s completed application and their letters of recommendation, and verification of 20 learning service hours is shared with the admissions committee. The student meets with the admission committee, answers questions committee members may have regarding their case scenario responses, explains their statement of purpose, elaborates on reasons for entering the Social Work Program, and shares their plans for a professional career.

Committee recommendations and additional feedback are written on the Interview and Assessment Guide, dated, signed by all members, and given to the Program Director.

The committee is asked to either “Recommend” or “Recommend with Reservations” to the Program. In an effort to establish an equal, fair, and just admission process, the Social Work Faculty have established two lines of review. The first line of review is the interviewing team. The second line of review is the Program Director or, in his/her absence, the Director of Field Education.

Process for Notifying Applicants

Within two weeks of the interview, the student is sent a notification letter via MSU official student email account regarding the student’s acceptance into the Program. If the student is accepted with reservations, a meeting is scheduled with the Program Director to discuss the reason(s) for reservations and to discuss education alternatives. Students must be admitted to the Social Work Program before enrolling in further Social Work courses.

Felony Record

Applicants to the program will be asked at the time of admission if they have ever been arrested, charged, or convicted of a felony. If the application indicated that he or she has been convicted of a felony, the applicant will be asked to supply documentation on the nature of the offense and its disposition. If admitted to the program, conditions may be placed on that person, such as restrictions on the choice of field placement.

Applicants are further advised that some state boards of examiners, including Mississippi, may refuse to issue a license to any person who has been convicted in this or another state of a felony.

Based on the information provided, the Admission Committee will consider the nature of the offense, disposition, rehabilitation efforts and other relevant information to make an admission decision. The committee can make the following choices: Recommend, Recommend with Reservations or Deny Admission.

Once admitted to the Program, **students must notify the Program if they are arrested, charged, or convicted of a felony.** The student is also required to provide relevant documentation as to the nature of the offense and its disposition. Once the Program is notified, a formal counseling-in process will be implemented to review the nature of the felony, disposition, rehabilitation plans, and other relevant information. Based upon the review process a student can be terminated from the program, allowed to continue with conditions, or to continue without conditions. Students may automatically be denied admission, or if enrolled, be dismissed from the program, if that person has not been truthful or has provided inaccurate information in the application concerning felony convictions or after admission to the Program fails to notify the Program regarding the felony conviction.

Required Curriculum for Social Work Degree (BSW)

The required curriculum for Social Work is sequenced and completed as scheduled below. **Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience will not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation areas, specifically, Social Work Practice I, II, and III.** With declaration of the Social Work major, all students are assigned a Social Work faculty advisor.

Junior Year				
Fall Semester			Spring Semester	
SW 2313	Intro. to Social Work	3	Philosophy Core	3
SW 3003	SW At-Risk Populations	3	SW 2323	Social Welfare Policy II
ST 3113	Intro. to Statistical Inference	3	SW 3213	Intro. to Social Research
SW 2303	Social Welfare Policy I	3	SW 3513	Social Work Practice I
SW 3013	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3	SW 3023	Human Behavior in the Social Environment II
Total Credit Hours		15	SW 4613	Child Welfare Services
			Total Credit Hours	18
Summer Semester				
	Social Work Elective	3		
	Humanities Elective*	3		
	Humanities Elective*	3		
	Total Credit Hours	9		
Senior Year				
Fall Semester			Spring Semester	
SW 3523	Social Work Practice II	3	SW 4916	Field Practicum/Sem.
SW 3533	Social Work w/Communities & Orgs	3	SW 4926	Field Practicum/Sem.
	Anthropology Core	3	Total Credit Hours	12
SW 4713	Senior Seminar	3		
	General Elective	2		
Total Credit Hours		14		
Total Number Credit Hours for BSW Degree 124				
*Courses 3000/4000 level approved by advisor				

Eligibility for Field Practicum

The criteria for remaining in the program and entering field practicum include:

1. Completion of the Field Practicum Application Process (**The required field practicum hours (450) Monday through Thursday 8 am – 5pm**)
2. Maintain an overall minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0, with a minimum GPA of 2.75 or better in required Social Work courses.
3. Adhere to all academic expectations of the University and the Social Work Program.
4. Adhere to the National Association of Social Workers' *Code of Ethics*.
5. Complete a required fingerprint Criminal History Record Information and Child Abuse/Neglect and Sex Offender Registry check.

** Please note* if the commission of any misdemeanor or felony involving actual or threaten assault or injury to a person does occur either prior to formal admission into the Social Work program or during field practicum; this behavior may limit or prohibit student's opportunity for participating and/or securing field practicum agencies as well as sitting for the Mississippi State Social Work Licensure Exam as well as social service agency.*

- ❖ **Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience will not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation areas, specifically, Social Work Practice I, II and III.**

Criteria for Admission into Field Practicum

The program has written policies and procedures for admission into Field practicum. The student must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.75 in required social work courses. The integrated liberal arts perspective and social work curriculum, with exception of SW 4916 Field Practicum/Seminar I and SW 4926 Field Practicum/Seminar II which comprise the block practicum, **must be completed** before students apply for admission into field practicum.

Students enrolled in SW 3533 Social Work with Communities and Organizations must complete a membership application to the National Association of Social Workers. The semester prior to practicum, students complete three field placement orientation classes. The purpose of these classes is to discuss field education and the field practicum process, to distribute the Social Work Program Field Practicum Manual, and to review field practicum information, forms, and the field syllabus. Prior to agency interviews students must complete Form D, Authorization for Background Check, and Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry Check. Form E, Authorization to Release Non-Public Information is completed and retained in the student's record. Students are required to complete Form A, Application for Field Practicum and Resume', and three preplacement interviews with approved field agencies (Form B and Form C) which ranks the students' agency choice(s). In the preplacement interviews, the student and agency field instructor are encouraged to explore the placement fully before ranking the choice of agency placement.

Students are required to complete Forms A, B, C, D, and E and turn them into the Director of Field Education. Information shared by the students pertaining to their learning needs, interests, wants, and personal considerations concerning the field practicum are discussed with the Director of Field Education in an established office interview. The decision concerning choice of agency placement is based on the shared student information and agency field instructor interviews. The Director of Field Education has the final approval of the field placement agency.

Social work majors are **required to complete a semester and a minimum of 450 hours practicum Monday through Thursday 8 am – 5 pm in an agency setting.** Field practicum allows the student opportunities to link and apply theories learned in the classroom in a structured and educationally directed environment.

At the close of the fall semester students are required to obtain liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 or more prior to their first day of placement. Applications for liability insurance may be made through the National Association of Social Workers.

Field practicum is completed in a semester; face to face twelve (12) hour block. In addition to the required 450 hours Monday through Thursday 8 am – 5 pm spent in the agency setting, students are required to attend and actively participate in the field seminar that meets every other week (Friday 8 am – 1 pm ***this schedule is subject to change***). Students are required to complete registration and payment of tuition prior to entering the practicum agency and to provide evidence of malpractice insurance.

Each student is required to complete the 450-hour field practicum Monday thru Thursday 8 am – 5 pm. ***No EXCEPTIONS are made based on prior work experience. Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in place of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation areas.***

A student employed in a social service agency is *strongly* encouraged to complete the required 450-hour Monday thru Thursday 8 am – 5pm field practicum in another approved agency. The field practicum agency must be approved by the university and program. In the rare case that a student must remain employed in the agency at which the student is currently employed, there **must be clearly written objectives, the required field practicum hours (450) Monday through Thursday 8 am – 5pm must be completed in a unit other than their work unit, and a social worker other than the current instructor must provide supervision.** Both the Director of Field Education and Program Director must approve such field practicum arrangements.

Social Work Curriculum

SW 2303. Social Welfare Policy I. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisite: PS 2113, EC 2113. In-depth study of the historical and contemporary effects of social work welfare policy on client systems.

SW 2313. Introduction to Social Work/Social Welfare. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisites: EN 1103, EN 1113, CO 1003. A study of professional social work and the historical and philosophical development of social work and social welfare.

SW 2323. Social Welfare Policy II. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisites: SW 2313 and 2303. The course provides analysis and evaluation of social welfare policies as institutional responses to social problems, social injustice, and human needs.

SW 3003. Social Work At-Risk Populations. (3) Three hours lecture. Examines the role and interaction of social workers with vulnerable groups. Includes concepts of racism, sexism, homophobia, oppression, affirmative action, and xenophobia.

SW 3013. Human Behavior and the Social Environment I. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisites: BIO 1104, SO 1003, PSY 1013. Examines biological, psychological, social-structural, and cultural aspects of human development from conception through young adulthood from a social systems perspective, emphasizing diversity and oppression.

SW 3023. Human Behavior and the Social Environment II. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisites: PHI 1103, SW 3013. Examines biological, psychological, social-structure, and cultural aspects of human development from middle adulthood to death from a social systems perspective, emphasizing diversity and oppression.

SW 3213. Research Methods in Social Work. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisites: MA 1313, ST 3113, and junior standing. A survey of the general field of research and methodology, including an examination of the various types of research designs, techniques, and procedures.

SW 3513. Social Work Practice I. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisite: SW 3023. The course emphasizes problem solving methods utilizing communication theories and skills working with individuals, families, groups, and communities in preparation for generalist social work practice.

SW 3523. Social Work Practice II. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisite: SW 3513. The course focuses on processes involved in engaging client system(s) in data collection, assessment, intervention, evaluation, and termination in preparation for generalist social work practice.

SW 3533. Social Work with Communities and Organizations. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisites: SW 3523. The course focuses on processes involved in problem

solving with emphases on groups and larger systems in generalist social work practice.

4713. Social Work Senior Seminar. (3) Three hours lecture. Prerequisites: SW 3523. Critical evaluation of current issues in social work practice; examination of career opportunities; and assessment of personal educational preparations for practice.

SW 4916-4926. Social Work Field Practicum/Seminar I-II. (12) Twelve hours. Prerequisites: SW 3533, SW 4713. The course provides students opportunities to apply generalist social work

Methods by completing a minimum of 450 supervised hours in a social work agency.

Electives

SW 4533 Substance Abuse and Addictions in Social Work Services. (3). Role/interaction of social workers with people who use alcohol/drugs (AOD). Concepts of use, abuse, and dependence. Emphasis on the impact of AOD use on families/children.

SW 4613. Child Welfare Services. (3) Three hours lecture. Consent of Instructor. Assessment of parental and society's responsibilities in meeting physical, social psychological, and legal needs of children and examining the delivery, policies, systems, and services.

SW 4623. Social Work with the Aged. (3) Three hours lectures. Consent of the instructor. Assessment of social, psychological, physical, and economic needs of aged persons; their utilization of services, conjoint planning, and creation of new community-based resources.

SW 4633. Social Work in Health Care. (3) Three hours lecture. Consent of Instructor. Assessment of social work knowledge, values, and skills in understanding psychosocial aspects of illness, medical terminology, recording, discharge planning, ethics, team disciplines, and community resources.

SW 4643. Social Work Services in Schools. (3) Three hours lecture. Assessment of the development, concepts, policies, planning, implementation, evaluation of social work services in primary and secondary schools.

SW 4663. Administration in Social Work. (3) Three hours lecture. Assessment of functions of human service management, planning and program, organizational theory and design, resources, supervision, funding, information systems, and evaluation of service delivery.

Transferring Credits into Mississippi State University

MSU Meridian Social Work program has written policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credits. Mississippi State University accepts course credits through transfer from other accredited universities and colleges; however, the credits must be consistent with the curriculum and will not be accepted if these courses are vocational or remedial in nature. The Social Work Program will accept transfer credit hours for required social work courses

if the following criteria are met:

1. Transfer from Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program: Courses must be similar in content and credit value to the course(s) which they are being substituted. Students must have completed the course with a grade point average of no lower than 3.0.
2. Transfer from non CSWE accredited programs:
Acceptance of three (3) credit hours of social work content under this category will be granted on an individual basis after evaluation and agreement by social work faculty. The content and credit value must be similar to the course(s) being substituted. Students must have completed the course with a final grade of no lower than a "B". Students will be required to provide course syllabi and write a summary of individual learning activities. The course instructor's qualifications will also be evaluated for degree of social work knowledge.
3. **Credits for life experiences:**
*The Program does **not** grant, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum, or in the professional foundation content areas, academic credit for life experience and previous work experience.*

It is the belief of the social work program that practice wisdom does not one's theoretical understanding of Social Work Practice, but that the effective practitioner will blend both practice wisdom and theory.

****Academic Expectations

Completion of the Social Work Program is more than receiving a diploma. It represents the beginning of a professional practice that originated with academic performance of the social work student. The following guidelines will assist the student in understanding the importance of professional behavior and in developing this behavior during their academic years.

1. *Class Attendance:* Students are expected to:
 - a. attend all classes
 - b. be on time
 - c. be prepared
 - d. participate in class discussions and activities
 - e. complete assignments

When it is necessary to be absent from class (illness, death of family members, accidents, etc.), the student is responsible for completing the work missed, as well as notifying the instructor, in advance if possible. Further, when a social work student wishes to attend professional conferences and workshops, it is the student's responsibility to seek permission from the instructor for any classes to be missed.

Absence is defined as being away from class and failing to remain in class after attendance is taken. Students must make up missed work from absences, excused and unexcused. Students should speak with their course instructor concerning Policy on Missed Classes on return to class.

2. *Academic Conduct:* It is expected that social work majors will adhere to academic standards, **University Honor Code**, in regard to completing all assignments and examinations.
3. *Assignments:* Unless there is undue hardship supported by documentation, all tests and assignments are due at the time scheduled by instructor.
4. *Responsibility for learning:* Students are expected to utilize the library and to participate in the planned tours and explanations of library services.
5. *"Reading Days" & final examination schedule:* "Reading Days" are those days designated by the University at the end of each semester during which no assignments, projects or tests may be due. The reading days and the final examination schedule are listed on the web under **Current Students**. Other Student Services, and Academic Calendar at the following address <http://msu.edu/web/campus.html>.
6. *Confidentiality:* It is the student's responsibility to maintain confidentiality in ALL PRACTICE, LEARNING SERVICE HOURS, CLASSROOM LEARNING EXPERIENCES, and FIELD PRACTICUM. Fictitious names are to be used in all papers and reports. The University and each student shall comply with all applicable state, federal, and local laws regarding the confidentiality of patient information and medical records.
7. *Adhere to all policies established by Mississippi State University re: **Academic Operating Policy and Procedure*** is to ensure a clear understanding and to standardize the procedures concerning the concerning the **University Honor Code**. Mississippi State has an approved Honor Code that applies to all students. The code is as follows: "As a Mississippi State University student, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do. "Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor Code. Student will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the MSU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor Code. For additional information, please visit: <http://honorcode.msstate.edu/policy>
Students are asked to place the Honor Code statement on each written assignment. The statement should be signed and dated before the assignment is turned in.

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

Assignment of Advisor

Social work students/majors are assigned alphabetically to an academic advisor. The Social Work Program philosophy of advising reflects the social work person-in-environment focus and promotes an interfacing process between the student and the advisor. Responsibilities of the student and the advisor are noted below.

Advisor's Responsibilities

1. Assist students in evaluating their performance in the liberal arts foundation courses.
2. Assist students in evaluating their performance in the professional social work courses.
3. Provide feedback to the student in regard to his/her continued motivation and performance for a social work career.
4. Assist students in understanding the policies and procedures of the social work program, and Mississippi State University.
5. Provide students with general information on any course or curriculum changes that would directly affect the student's proposed course of study.
6. Assist students in sequencing appropriate courses for each semester and by signing the student schedule.
7. Assist students, as needed, in completing forms for field education.
8. Refer students, as needed, to appropriate resources for help with academic or personal problems.

Student's Responsibilities

1. Make appointments to meet with the advisor to schedule courses, discuss areas of interest either for additional study and/or exploration or seek appropriate resources for areas of concern.
2. Complete individual schedules after the student has been advised of appropriate course sequencing.
3. Sign the admission form confirming that advisement has taken place.
4. Confer with the advisor on specific problems that impede the student's successful completion of all classes involved.
5. Complete a yearly evaluation of advisement process.

Policies and Procedures for Grievance

Within University policy, students have rights that include due process of appeal. University policies relating to handling of academic misconduct, grade appeal, etc. are stated clearly in the University Policies and Procedures Manual and can be found at the following address:

<http://catalog.msstate.edu/graduate/other-information/student-grievances/> or <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/>

Students who feel that they have an academic grievance may appeal as follows:

Students who feel that they have an academic grievance and/or wish to appeal are instructed to proceed as follows:

1. Students are encouraged to schedule a meeting to discuss the problem with the instructor first and seek a solution. This initial contact should be made by email or writing with the correspondence dated. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved in conference with the instructor, the student may acquire a grade appeal form from any academic dean's office or from the Registrar's Office to complete. The completed document shall be taken to the Social Work Program Director and Division Head of Arts and Sciences within 30 days after the beginning of the following regular semester (Fall, Spring). The Program Director and Division Head acknowledges the receipt of the form and returns a copy to the student
2. The Division Head of Arts and Sciences will rule on the grade appeal, if the problem is not satisfactorily resolved the student, *or* the instructor may appeal this ruling to the academic dean to whom the Division Head reports. If appealed, the Division Head shall immediately forward the appeal form with a letter of recommendation to the dean.
3. The Division Head will then send copies of all materials to the student's dean, *if different from that of the department head's dean*. Both the department head and dean's review will occur within a reasonable time and in ordinary circumstances will take no longer than two weeks for each level.
4. ***If not satisfactorily resolved***, the student *or* the instructor may appeal this ruling to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs may then refer the case to the Academic Review Board within two weeks. If not satisfactorily resolved, the student or the instructor may request a hearing to resolve the problem. ***If still not satisfactorily resolved, the student can request for a hearing to resolve the problem.***

Dismissal from the Social Work Program for Academic and Professional Reasons:

The faculty of the Social Work Program has the professional obligation to assure that its graduates are not only academically prepared but also emotionally and ethically prepared, exhibit behavior consistent with the values and ethics of the profession, and demonstrate emotional preparedness expected in the profession. A student may be dismissed from the program for failure to meet these standards. Specific examples of such violations may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Failure to meet or maintain the 2.00 MSU overall grade point average (GPA) and the 2.75 MSU Social Work Program required GPA.
2. Conduct that violates any of the provisions in the code of ethical established by the National Association of Social Workers, and Mississippi State University Honor Code, including academic plagiarism, lying, or deception.

3. Unresolved biopsychosocial challenges that, in the professional judgment of the social work program faculty, and/or Field Instructor that may impair the personal or professional ethical quality of services.
4. Conduct that would adversely reflect on a person's fitness to perform as a student and/or future social worker.
5. Failure to develop the appropriate interpersonal skills necessary for effective and ethical social work practice as evaluated and judged by the social work program faculty.
6. Commission of any misdemeanor or felony involving actual or threaten assault or injury to a person.
** Please note * If the above does occur either prior to formal admission into Mississippi State University-Meridian Campus Social Work program or during field practicum; this behavior may limit or prohibit student's opportunity for participating and/or securing field practicum agencies as well as sitting for the Mississippi State Social Work Licensure Exam as well as social service agency.*
7. False, incomplete, deceptive, or misleading oral or written statements made during application to the program.

Problems identified during the course of the semester will be investigated by the social work program director, faculty, staff and field instructors, or other students may present alleged problem(s). Identified problem(s) must be presented to the student and director in writing. All information relevant to the student's evaluation should be as thorough as possible, including the specification of the sources providing the information.

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

The Program Director, student, and his/her advisor will evaluate the allegation(s) and, if necessary, agree on a resolution of the difficulty. Recommendation will be one of the following: (1) the student will be encouraged to continue in the program; (2) the specific problem will be identified, and the student will be advised concerning a recommendation and/or correction; or (3) the student will be dismissed. A written plan for correction and/or indefinite and/or temporary withdrawal will be prepared. The written plan will include a statement of the specific problem, a plan of action, the period of time for correction of the behavior, the period of time which must expire before the student can apply for reinstatement, and/or the period of time for the withdrawal before the student can reenter the program. The student and Program Director must sign the plan.

Students may appeal decisions made by the Program Director and/or faculty that affect the student's ability to pursue or continue in the program through the normal channels and mechanisms specified by the University. The appeal process varies according to the type of offense. The descriptions related to each may be found in the

University Academic Operating and Operating Policies (AOP) 13.14 at the following address: <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/>

The faculty advisor's role is to ensure that the student is aware of the procedure which will be followed. The advisor is expected to be present at the various stages of the evaluation and appeal process providing relevant information as requested. The advisor is a source for the student to consult as to his/her rights and options.

National Association of Social Workers, Mississippi Chapter, Meridian Program Unit

Students are eligible for student membership in NASW and are encouraged to actively participate in the program unit activities. Meetings are held monthly, and the location is rotated. Students have the opportunity to participate in organizational committees. National benefits of student membership consist of *Social Work* and *NASW News* and low cost NASW malpractice insurance.

Professional Development

Workshops: The Social Work Program and the Association of Student Social Workers encourage and assist with financial support for students to attend and participate in professional workshops. Workshops commonly attended by student social workers include the following:

- Alabama-Mississippi Social Work Education Conference
- Council on Social Work Education
- Meridian Program Unit of the National Association of Social Workers
- Mississippi Chapter of National Association of Social Workers' Annual Program Meeting
- Mississippi Conference on Social Welfare (annual forum and regional conferences)

Students are also encouraged to attend additional workshops and conferences held on campus and those offered by other departments and professional organizations in the community.

Guest Lecturers: The Social Work Program constantly keeps avenues of renewal open with social work practitioners by having guest lecturers in social work classes. Many of these guest lecturers are graduates of the MSU Social Work Program. The purpose of guest lecturers is to reinforce the theories, values, knowledge, and skills learned in the classroom setting.

Social Work Graduate Recruitment Day(s): Social work students have opportunities to interview with representatives from graduate schools of social work both on campus and through respective university graduate recruitment programs.

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

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

University Opportunities for Self Development

Mississippi State University provides diverse opportunities to develop the whole person. Through various avenues, social work students have opportunities that will strengthen preparation for a Generalist Social Work education. These include, but are not limited to the following areas:

Cultural and International Organizations	Political Organizations Campus
Honorary Organizations	Activities
Student Government Association Board	

More detailed information on these and other organizations is found in the **University Operating Policies and Procedures-Volume VIII-Student Affairs** at the following address: <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/>.

Students who need academic accommodations based on a disability should visit the Student Support Services located on the upper level of the College Park campus before any class assignments are due. Contact Ms. Amy Smith for help in this area: Phone: 601-484-0234. See: <http://www.meridian.msstate.edu/student-services>.

Academic Tutoring and Writing Center

The Academic Tutoring and Writing Center is available to help students with any part of the writing process, from understanding the assignment to the finished product. The ATWC mainly operates virtually through Canvas but is also physically open at the College Park campus on Wednesdays from 3:30-5:30 (no appointment needed). For more information, contact Leslie Pevey at atwc@meridian.msstate.edu or at (601) 484-0248 on Wednesdays during physical ATWC hours.

Mississippi State University Nondiscrimination Policy

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University Meridian maintains a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited. The program furthermore does not discriminate on any such basis in the administration of the program or the implementation of its curriculum. This policy is consistent with policies of similar intent held by Mississippi State University.

Mississippi State University Sexual Harassment Policy

Title IX: MSU is committed to complying with *Title IX*, a federal law that prohibits discrimination, including violence and harassment, based on sex. This means that MSU's educational programs and activities must be free from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct.

If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination, sexual violence and/or harassment by any member of the University community, you are encouraged to report the conduct to MSU's Director of Title IX/EEO Programs at 662-325-8124 or by E-mail to titleix@msstate.edu.

Additional resources are available at <http://www.msstate.edu/web/security>, or at <http://students.msstate.edu/sexualmisconduct/>

University Safety Statement. Mississippi State University values the safety of all campus community members. Students are encouraged to register for Maroon Alert texts and to download the Everbridge App. Visit the Personal Information section in Banner on your myState portal to register. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort via Safe Walk, call University Police at 601-934-0863, or in case of emergency, call 911. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit: <http://ready.msstate.edu>.

Mississippi State University Student Misconduct Policy

The Social Work Program follows the same general academic and disciplinary grievance procedures for all University students as described in the descriptions related to each found in the **University Operating Policies and Procedures-Volume VIII-Student Affairs** at the following address: <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/>. This is in regard to all aspects of misconduct.

Student Input

Social work students are adult learners and as such have valuable feedback to offer the faculty for the growth of the Social Work Program. With this in mind, it is very important to have student input in at least four critical areas: faculty evaluation, advisory board, faculty hiring, and student field practicums.

Faculty/Program/Course Evaluation

All students enrolled at Mississippi State University have an opportunity annually to evaluate faculty on a standardized faculty evaluation form. Students in the Social Work Program have the opportunity to evaluate faculty with an additional evaluation instrument. The final evaluations done by the program and the University are confidential with the results being computer-generated. These evaluations are returned to the faculty to utilize in strengthening course content, teaching, and learning methods to facilitate student learning and to affirm and improve the educational program.

Social Work Advisory Board

Through a student representative, students have the opportunity to provide input as well as solicit information regarding the Social Work Program. The advisory board meets twice a year and a student representative, the president of the Association of Student Social Workers, attends these meetings.

Hiring of Social Work Faculty

As additional social work faculty positions become available, there will be student input regarding hiring decisions. Students will have opportunities, both formally and informally, to meet with prospective candidates. Students' comments will be a part of the package of recommendations sent through the appropriate University channels.

Student Field Practicum

At the beginning of the placement semester, a learning contract is completed by the student and the field instructor. At mid-term, progress toward the task identified in the contract is assessed and adjustments made, if indicated. At the end of the placement semester, the field instructor completes an evaluation of the student's performance for that semester. Field practicum evaluations are used by the faculty to affirm and improve the educational program.

Employment Opportunities: Graduates of the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University have a strong recorded history of obtaining employment shortly upon and/or after graduation. Many students have been hired by the agency where they completed their Field Practicum.

Social work students are encouraged to utilize the following services:

The Career Service Center: of Mississippi State University is dedicated to assisting all students for job leads. The Social Work Program shares social work job opportunities with the Career Service Center. There is a designee in the Career Service Center to work with all students in the College of Arts & Sciences. Job placement and career planning services are provided for Mississippi State University students and alumni through the Career Services Center. Providing individual career and job counseling, furnishing career information, making placement referrals, arranging for employers to interview on campus, and organizing career outreach programs are services included in the scope of Career Services.

Career Day: at Mississippi State University is held twice per year and prospective employers are on campus to recruit students. The Social Work Program provides a roster of employers who are seeking undergraduate social work majors.

Social Work Bulletin Board: Job announcements are continuously updated as the faculty learns of job opportunities. These announcements are shared through the bulletin board located in the Division of Arts and Sciences office suite.

Association of Student Social Workers: Through the Scholarship and Employment Committee of the Association of Social Workers, students are kept current on employment opportunities, graduate schools of social work, and financial assistance programs. Ms. Rhonda G. Carr is the faculty advisor for the association.

Phi Alpha Honor Society: The Iota Psi chapter of Phi Alpha at Mississippi State University is affiliated with the national organization Phi Alpha Honor Society and to its National Council. An undergraduate student is eligible for membership after meeting the following requirements: Social Work as a major, sophomore status, completion of eight semester hours of required social work courses, an overall grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), a 3.25 grade point average in required social work courses, and local chapter eligibility requirements. Ms. Angela Savage is the faculty advisor.

Student Services

Please refer to the **Campus Life Other Student Services** at the following address: <https://www.admissions.msstate.edu/freshmen/campus-life/> for a more detailed description of available student services.

Mitchell Memorial Library

The Mitchell Memorial Library, located on the Starkville Campus, currently contains more than 1, 325, 819 volumes of various kinds (micro-text, manuscripts, etc.) to support the education effort of the University. Most of the social work volumes are located on the 2nd floor (main entrance) of the library.

Bibliographic, on-line, and retrieval search services are available. The Scholarly Information Network (SIN) provides in-house and remote access to multiple CD-ROM databases covering an array of subjects. The Library belongs to the National Library of Medicine's MEDLINE Information Network. Telecopy services are also available.

Phil Hardin Foundation Library

The Phil Hardin Foundation Library at MSU-Meridian, College Park Campus is a branch of the Mississippi State University Libraries and serves as a local facility for accessing print and electronic materials, obtaining reference assistance, library research help and consultations, and library instruction. Its goal is to support the teaching, research, and service needs of the faculty, staff, graduate students, and upper level undergraduates enrolled at MSU-Meridian.

The Phil Hardin Foundation Library at MSU-Meridian, College Park Campus is located on the upper floor of the College Park Campus at MSU-Meridian. The Library has a total of over 8000 volumes, including print and electronic resources to support social work instruction and research.

The Academic Tutoring and Writing Center

The Academic Tutoring and Writing Center is available to help students with any part of the writing process, from understanding the assignment to the finished product. The ATWC mainly operates virtually through Canvas but is also physically open at the College Park campus on Wednesdays from 3:30-5:30 (no appointment needed). For more information,

contact Leslie Pevey at atwc@meridian.msstate.edu or at (601) 484-0248 on Wednesdays during physical ATWC hours

Student Support Services

Students with disabilities, according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1971 and the Americans with Disabilities Act should see the Director of Student Services, and Financial Aid to make arrangements for specific needs.

Students who need academic accommodations based on a disability should visit the Student Support Services located on the upper level of the College Park campus before any class assignments are due. Contact Ms. Amy Smith for help in this area: Phone: 601-484-0234. See: <http://www.meridian.msstate.edu/student-services>.

Student Mentor Program

Though the Association of Student Social Workers, senior level social work students serve as mentors to new students. The mentor role includes assisting students in adapting to the University and to the demands of the Social Work Program.

Greater Meridian Health Clinic

This clinic provides primary ambulatory health care, dental care, pharmacy services for clinic patients, and a full range of medical services.

Weems Community Mental Health Center

Mental health services are available for persons of every age and varying problems through Weems Community Mental Center, which maintains offices in all counties in the MSU-Meridian service area.

Social Work Faculty Study Skill Sessions

Social work faculty offers study skill sessions weekly. Students have the opportunity to enhance and improve their professional development through individual contact with the faculty. Selected senior social work majors also contribute by interacting on a one-to-one basis in working with students who are in academic difficulty.

Financial Aid

The primary sources of financial aid at Mississippi State University are federal sources and University sources. Please contact the Student Service/Financial Aid Officer at 601-484-0134 for a more detailed listing and procedures to secure financial aid. Sources include:

Federal Pell Grants

Federal College Work-Study

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants

Federal (Perkins) Student Loans

Mississippi Guaranteed Student Loans

Mississippi Tuition Assistance Grant

Institutional sources include:

Academic Scholarships
Regional Scholarships
University Scholarships

Emergency Short-Term Loans
Middle-Income Loans

College of Arts and Sciences Scholarships and Memorials

The Henry Daum Scholarship is awarded each year to a full-time social work major.

General Information

Identification Cards

The student identification (ID) card issued during registration is often required for attending professional conferences to ensure a complimentary or reduced rate. The card is utilized in many University activities.

Books

Textbooks are purchased via the internet through the Mississippi State University/Barnes and Nobles Bookstore. Students are strongly encouraged to begin building an individual social work library. Required texts in one course may be used as supplemental texts in subsequent social work courses. The texts are also good referral sources for use in the field practicum and in preparation for the social work licensing examination.

Minor in Social Work

The Social Work Program at Mississippi State University does **not** offer a minor. Some lower level social work courses are open to any MSU student interested in learning more about social work and social welfare. CSWE and the states of Alabama and Mississippi do not accept a minor as preparation for entry-level social work practice.

Cellular Telephones/Pagers

The ringing of communication devices is intrusive and disruptive during classroom activities. If you carry a cellular telephone or pager, please ensure that it is **turned off** when you enter the classroom. There may be special circumstances in which it is imperative that you be contacted; please notify the instructor of this before class so arrangements may be made. Work-related activities are **not** considered special circumstances.

Social Work Licensure

Social work students are eligible to take the scheduled licensing examination during their last semester of course work if their course load does not exceed fifteen (15) semester hours. The Social Work Program offers an exam review workshop for social work students and graduates prior to the licensure examination. A complete guide of licensing policies and procedures is available through;

Mississippi Board of Examiners for
Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists
P. O. Box 4508 Jackson, MS 39236-4508
Telephone: (601) 987-6806 www.msboeswmft.com

Social Work Faculty

The Social Work faculty at Mississippi State University demonstrate/offer a wide array of professional social work practice experiences. All faculty members meet the requirements of an M.S.W. from a CSWE-accredited School of Social Work and have numerous years of post-M.S.W. practice experience.

Rhonda G. Carr, MSW, LCSW, ACSW

Ms. Carr was appointed Program Director in 2012 (formally, Director of Field Education). She has twenty-eight years of academic experience and thirty-eight years post-MSW practice in health care and mental health. She is the instructor for Introduction to Social Work, Social Welfare Policy I, Social Welfare Policy II, and Child Welfare Services.

Angela Savage, DSW, MSW, LMSW

Dr. Savage serves as Director of Field Education, effective summer 2012. She has seven years of academic experience as Field Instructor and nine years post-MSW practice in the area of mental health. She is the instructor for, Field Practicum and Seminar, Social Work Practice I and II, Social Work with Community and Organizations, and Senior Seminar.

Marian Swindell, Ph. D. MSW

Dr. Swindell joined the faculty in the summer of 2000. She has nineteen years of academic experience and twenty-five years post-MSW practice in the area of health care and children and family services. She is the instructor for At-Risk Populations, HBSE I, HBSE II, and Research Methods in Social Work.

**Mississippi State University-Meridian
Social Work Program**

Form D: Authorization for Background Check

To: Alabama/Mississippi State and Local Law Enforcement Agency

From: Rhonda G. Carr, Program Director
Mississippi State University-Meridian
Social Work Program
1000 Hwy 19 North
Meridian, MS 39307
601-484-0146

MSU Student ID #: _____

(Print) Full Name (list maiden name & any aliases)

I, Rhonda G. Carr, Program Director of Mississippi State University-Meridian Social Work Program, am requesting a background screening with: Law enforcement, the Child Abuse Central Registry, the Sex Offender Registries, previous employers, and any other persons to determine the suitability of the above-named student in working with children and families. This request is a part of the admission application process for the Mississippi State University-Meridian Campus Social Work Program and Field Practicum. This information will only be used for purposes as stated and will not be re-disseminated to other persons.

By signing this form, the above-named student gives Mississippi State University Meridian Campus Social Work Program permission to conduct a background screening with law enforcement, the Child Abuse Central Registry, the Sex Offender Registries, previous employers, and any other persons to determine my suitability in working with children and families. I understand that this information will be used for purposes as stated and will not be re-disseminated to other persons.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Revised 01/06/2020

**Mississippi State University-Meridian
Social Work Program**

Student Handbook

I, _____ received a copy of the Student Handbook for the Social Work Program at the Mississippi State University, Meridian Campus. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and abide by the policies within the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to discuss with my advisor questions and concerns about the material contained in the handbook.

I hereby affirm and agree that I will abide by the *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers. I further understand that any violations including plagiarism, lying, or deception will be grounds for dismissal from the Social Work Program at Mississippi State University, Meridian Campus, and/or the University.

I hereby affirm and agree to develop the appropriate interpersonal skills necessary for effective and ethical social work practice as evaluated and judged by the program.

Signature

Date

MSU Student ID #

Revised January 6, 2020

Council on Social Work Education --- Social Work Competencies (2015)

The nine Social Work Competencies are listed below. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, while the preceding statements represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors.

Competency 1–Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession’s history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in interprofessional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social Workers:

- 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;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2 –Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of 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. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.

Social Workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- 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

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social Workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and

- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4 –Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

Social Workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency 5 –Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels.

Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

Social Workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;

- 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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social Workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers

understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

Social Workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- 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;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- 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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and interorganizational collaboration.

Social Workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;

- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes.

Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social Workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

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