

**Misericordia  
University**

**Social Work Program  
Student Handbook**

**2020-2021**

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## **Information and guidelines for social work students**

The title of this document is the Social Work Department Student Handbook. The policies found in this document supplement the policies found in the Misericordia University Student Handbook and the Misericordia University Course Catalog.

*This handbook, dated April 2020, supersedes all previous Social Work Student Handbooks.*

**ANY POLICY IN THIS HANDBOOK MAY CHANGE AT ANY TIME BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY. STUDENTS ARE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ALL POLICIES IN THIS HANDBOOK AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING A REVISED COPY EACH ACADEMIC YEAR. OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION OF POLICY CHANGES OCCURS VIA POSTING ON THE MISERICORDIA WEBSITE AND myMU STUDENT E-MAIL. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REGULARLY CHECK THE APPROPRIATE E-MAIL AND ELECTRONIC SOURCES. FACULTY ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR STUDENT FAILURE TO BE INFORMED ABOUT POLICY CHANGES OR FOR LACK OF STUDENT KNOWLEDGE OF POLICIES FOUND IN THIS HANDBOOK.**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission of Misericordia University's Social Work Program is to prepare students for entry-level generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations. Inherent within this mission is a commitment to the development of BSW graduates who are dedicated to improving social, economic, and environmental conditions among diverse populations locally, regionally, and globally, and to promoting the Sisters of Mercy values which include mercy, service, justice and hospitality.

## **HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK AT MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY**

The professional social work education program evolved out of the Religious Sisters of Mercy's own call to compassionate service through the ministries of teaching and healing. Social work courses designed to help students develop and act on a sense of responsibility for the critical issues of justice, service and mercy were first offered by the University (formerly - College Misericordia) in the 1950's. Expansion of course offerings through the 1960's eventually led to the development of a formal undergraduate social work major in the latter half of the decade. By 1975 Misericordia's Social Work Program received full accreditation status by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), making it among the first in the country to receive this distinction. Accredited status has since been reaffirmed five times, the last in February, 2012.

## **CURRICULUM POLICY STATEMENT**

Misericordia University's Social Work Program curriculum is organized around the Program's primary goal of preparing competent baccalaureate-level generalist practitioners. It evolved institutionally from the Religious Sisters of Mercy's own call to compassionate service through the ministries of teaching and healing and developed according to those mandates for curricular content established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). These mandates include a liberal arts perspective, which is also the base for all professional programs at the University, and a professional foundation composed of required social work courses and field practicums designed to provide an integrated experience to educate students in the critical areas of social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, at-risk populations, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policies and services, social work practice and research.

## **UNIVERSITY GOALS**

In fulfillment of its mission, Misericordia University provides a learning community which prepares graduates who:

1. Reflect the values of mercy, justice and hospitality in their actions.
2. Contribute to their communities through service and leadership
3. Consider ethical issues and values and make reasoned judgments about them.
4. Think independently and creatively, analyze information critically, and solve problems.
5. Respect and understand cultural differences.

6. Understand global perspectives.
7. Communicate and interact effectively.
8. Understand and appreciate the arts, humanities, science, and technology.
9. Succeed in their academic disciplines
10. Pursue life-long learning

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

The Primary goals of the Misericordia University Social Work Program are:

1. To educate and promote the development of problem-oriented, undergraduate generalist social work practitioners whose knowledge and skills base enables them to assess and address problematic situations among diverse individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations.
2. To foster students' ability to integrate the institutional and professional ideals of social justice and intervene on behalf of those discriminated against and oppressed.
3. To enhance students critical thinking and problem-solving skills for contextual understanding and intervention with all social systems.
4. To prepare students for graduate studies and foster commitment to a process of continued professional growth and development.

### **2015 CSWE EPAS SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE 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 on 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 their 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 inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the important 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 clause, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

Apply 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 the 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 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 inter-professional 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 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 to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional 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 in 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 value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational 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 to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

## **Essential Functions for Social Work Students**

To provide effective social services, a graduate of Misericordia University's Social Work program, across all program options, must possess a multitude of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Social work practice includes being able to evaluate information quickly, maintain records and documentation of activities, and communicate using verbal and written skills, and tolerate ambiguity.

Students who wish to qualify for admission and progression in the social work program must meet both academic and performance requirements. Academic requirements are described in the Department's policies on retention. In addition to the academic requirements, an entering student must be aware that the functional abilities and attributes described below are necessary to function as a social worker. If a student has a physical, mental, or any other disability and requires special accommodation to meet the social work program requirements, the student should contact the University's Office of Student Disabilities (OSD), which is located in the Student Success Center, lower level of Alumnae Hall, and can be reached at 570-674-6408. Once documentation of a Plan of Accommodation (POA) is received, the Social Work Department will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations for the student.

Essential or functional abilities for social work students may be defined as, but are not limited to:

### **Functional Ability Categories and Representative Activities/Attributes**

#### **Fine Motor Skills**

Write with pen or pencil (e.g. write in charts, document activities, take notes)

Key/type (e.g., use a computer)

#### **Physical Endurance**

Maintain physical tolerance (e.g., work with clients and colleagues for long stretches of time each day)

#### **Physical Strength**

Defend self against combative client

#### **Hearing**

Hear normal speaking level sounds (e.g., person-to-person report) or read lips.

#### **Reading**

Read and understand written document (e.g., policies, protocols)

**Arithmetic Competence**

Read and understand columns of information (flow sheet, charts)

Add, subtract, multiply, and/or divide whole numbers

Compute fractions (e.g., to process client and agency budgets)

**Emotional Stability**

Recognize appropriate personal boundaries

Adapt to changing environment/stress

Deal with the unexpected (e.g., client anger, crisis)

Focus attention on task

Monitor own emotions

Perform multiple responsibilities concurrently

Handle strong emotions (e.g., grief)

**Analytical Thinking**

Transfer knowledge from one situation to another

Process information (to be able to perform client and other assessments)

Evaluate outcomes

Problem solve

Prioritize tasks

Use long-term memory

Use short-term memory

**Critical Thinking**

Identify cause-effect relationships

Plan-facilitate activities with others

Synthesize knowledge and skills

Sequence information (e.g., action, behavior, consequence)

### **Interpersonal Skills**

Respect differences in clients

Establish rapport with clients

Establish rapport with co-workers

Express ideas and feelings and clearly demonstrate willingness to give/receive feedback

### **Communication Skills**

Speak audibly and listen actively

Give oral reports (e.g., reports to others on client)

Interact with others (e.g., sharing information with others on team)

Speak on the phone

Influence people (e.g., advocate for client or groups)

Direct activities of others (e.g., supervision, groups)

Convey information through writing (e.g., progress notes, advocacy)

### **Maintain Safety**

Possess sufficient intellectual-conceptual ability to maintain a safe environment for students, faculty, patients, and colleagues. Students must be able to:

- Recognize and respond appropriately and in a timely manner to a medical emergency
- Recognize and react in a timely manner to changes in environment that may result in injury or harm to students, faculty, clients, and colleagues.
- Recognize and react in a timely manner to changes in a patient's status that may result in injury or harm to students, faculty, clients, and colleagues.
- Recognize and react in a timely manner to personal limitations that may result in injury or harm to students, faculty, clients, and colleagues.

If a student cannot demonstrate the skills and abilities listed above, it is the responsibility of the student to request accommodations. If a student's health status should change and the student is

no longer able to participate in the classroom or clinical setting, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the Department Chair of the Social Work Department, who would ensure that the proper documentation is received from the student's health care provider and that information would be shared with the Director of Health Services. For more information regarding requesting reasonable accommodations, refer to the current Misericordia University Undergraduate Catalog or contact Kristen Ricardo, Director of Student Success Center/Office for Students with Disabilities at 570-674-6408.

### **GENERALIST PRACTICE**

Misericordia University's social work curriculum evolves from the following conception of generalist social work practice:

Generalist social work practice involves the use of a requisite knowledge and skills base subsumed by core professional values that enable the social work practitioner to effect desired social change at the individual, family, group, organizational and community level.

Generalist social workers apply a *systems perspective*, a *problem-solving process* and strict adherence to ethical guidelines prescribed by NASW to assess and intervene at all system levels. The generalist social worker may simultaneously work with many different systems and employ several roles such as counselor, mediator, broker, advocate, enabler or educator in an attempt to effect the desired change. A fundamental principle of generalist practice is that requisite knowledge, values and skills are transferable among diverse population groups, social service agencies and problem areas.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

A major in Social Work is offered by the Social Work Program within the College of Health Sciences and Education. A student is prepared for beginning professional practice by a curriculum that integrates theory, through classroom instruction, with practical experience in a Social Welfare Agency. A Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree is awarded to students who successfully complete all requirements. The Social Work Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Students wishing to continue their education may be eligible for advanced standing in scores of graduate schools of Social Work throughout the United States. Graduates will also be eligible to sit for the entry level licensure exam in Pennsylvania (and other states allowing entry level licensure).

## CURRICULA

The liberal arts core curriculum provides the knowledge that enables the student to have an integrated view of humankind and society. It fosters an understanding of social institutions, the nature of humankind, and the nature of science. It seeks to broaden the student's intellectual and humanistic perspectives.

The social work major course requirements are divided into five major areas: 1) Human Behavior; 2) Social Welfare; 3) Methods and Processes of Practice; 4) Field Instruction; 5) Research and content specific to critical thinking skills, issues of diversity, at risk populations, values and ethics, and promoting social and economic justice.

- 1) The Human Behavior Courses provide knowledge of human behavior in the social environment. They foster an understanding of the many dimensions of humans-in-society. Human Behavior and the Social Environment I and II are sequential course offerings in the student's junior year. The purpose of these courses is to integrate learning in the Practice Sequence.
- 2) The Social Welfare Sequence offers two courses. The first course, Introduction to Social Welfare, deals with the history and philosophy of the American Social Welfare system and the development of the profession of social work. Content is offered in a chronological sequence that relates social welfare and social work to political, economic, and social institutions in American society. The second course, Social Welfare Policy and Services, focuses on the planning and implementation of social welfare programs in contemporary society in the USA. It seeks to provide the student with the conceptual framework and tools to assess present-day social welfare programs.
- 3) During their junior and senior years, students must take SWK 366, 367, 466: Methods and Processes I, II and III and SWK 490: Capstone Course. These practice courses and the SWK 101: Introduction to Social Work course expose students to the Generalist Intervention Model, Social Work Ethics, and intervention knowledge and skills for working with individuals, families, groups and communities. Content in these courses provides the knowledge and understanding of the values, skills, and methods necessary for beginning level social work practice. The Field Instruction Seminars, taken concurrently with Field Instruction in the senior year, stress the application and integration of conceptual material learned in these courses.
- 4) All students in Field Instruction attend a weekly seminar on campus. Field Instruction begins in the junior year and continues in the senior year. Field seminar is designed to:
  - a. Help the student integrate practice theory learned in the classroom with his/her practice in the agency.
  - b. Help the student to discuss and find solutions for problems that might develop in the field.
  - c. Help the student gain an awareness of the network of agencies in the community and the services they provide through class discussion.
  - d. Help the student develop a professional self.
  - e. Help the student develop the ability to evaluate his/her professional competence.

The seminar focuses on the student as a beginning practitioner and on his/her transition to a professional social worker. The skills, values, and knowledge learned in the Practice Sequence will be related to the student's activities in the field. A prime objective of the seminar is to help each student develop a systematic approach to practice that will allow him/her to accept increasing responsibility in the agency. The helping process will be reviewed from the first contact with a client to the termination and it will be related to the realities of practice. The seminar is expected to enhance the learning process in the field.

- 5) Senior Capstone Course is taken in the spring semester of the senior year. It is meant to provide a cohesive integration of all knowledge, values and skills for professional practice. In addition, it is the arena to demonstrate readiness for professional practice with the successful completion of the PORTFOLIO. The outline for the BSW Portfolio may be found on the Social Work webpage.
  
- 6) Research Methods is also offered in the senior year and is taught by a member of the social work faculty. It fosters an understanding of the scientific method that enables the student to analyze, synthesize and Interpret data. Content in this course deals with research pertinent to social work. It aids in the development of the problem-solving approach that is utilized in the Practice Sequence and in the field.

Additional Concerns:

Electives in Social Work may be taken focusing on areas of interest for the student.

Different topics and courses are regularly offered throughout the academic year.

#### FINAL NOTE

Please check [Misericordia.edu/academics/socialwork](http://Misericordia.edu/academics/socialwork) for all forms and additional information.



### **Social Work (Core) Program Requirements:**

A total of 121 credits is required for a BSW Degree at Misericordia University. Of those, 49 credits comprise the Liberal Arts core curriculum; completion of the Social Work Core requires 73 credits. Certain courses – such as Comparative Sociology and Introduction to Psychology – fulfill both core and major requirements. This allows the Social Work major a greater selection of elective courses and/or the opportunity to select a minor concentration. A student must receive a grade of C or better in all social work (SWK) courses. Required courses for Social Work majors are:

BIO 105	Essential Biology with lab*	4
MTH 115	Basic Statistics*	3
POL 100	American National Government *	3
PSY 123	Introduction to Psychology*	3
SOC 101	Comparative Sociology*	3
SOC 122	Social Problems	3
SOC 221	Cultural Minorities	3
SWK 101	Introduction to Social Work	3
SWK 232	Research Methods	3
SWK 251	Introduction to Social Welfare	3
SWK 252	Social Welfare Policies & Services	3
SWK 350	HBSE I	3
SWK 351	HBSE II	3
SWK 366	Social Work Methods & Processes I	3
SWK 367	Social Work Methods & Processes II	3
SWK 466	Social Work Methods & Processes III	3
SWK 371	Field Instruction I	3
SWK 472	Field Instruction Seminar I	1

SWK 473	Field Instruction Seminar II	1
SWK 474	Field Instruction Seminar III	1
SWK 475	Field Instruction II	3
SWK 476 or 477	Field Instruction III or IV	3-6
SWK 490	Capstone Course	3
Social Work Electives		9

\*Fulfilled Core (General Education) Requirements

### Social Work Core Course Descriptions

#### **BIO 105 Essential Biology *with Lab* (Fall)**

**4 Credits**

This survey course is an introduction to the fundamental concepts of modern biology, starting with its chemical nature and cells and proceeding to organisms and their roles in their environment. Lecture: 3 hours. May be taken concurrently with BIO 105L: Essential Biology Laboratory to complete the laboratory science requirement of the core.

#### **MTH 115 Basic Statistics**

**3 Credits**

Liberal Arts and Social Work Core course intended to provide social work students with the quantitative skills necessary for competent research involvement as a component of generalist social work practice. Introduces students to the use of statistical methods with emphasis on practical applications. Course includes descriptive statistics, frequency, distributions, estimation of parameters, introduction to hypothesis testing, correlations, linear regression and the use of computer in statistics.

Prerequisites: None

#### **POL 100 American National Government (Fall)**

**3 Credits**

This course enables the social work student to understand the legislative process and to reinforce macro-level practice skills through study of the American political system. Emphasis is placed on the structure and operation of the National Government; the Constitution; Citizenship and Democratic Processes.

Prerequisites: None

**PSY 123 Introduction to Psychology****3 Credits**

Liberal Arts and Social Work Core course required of social work students as an introduction to the psychological perspective in understanding human behavior. The course will survey the science of psychology, including its methods, findings, theoretical foundations and practical applications. Topics for discussion include the biological basis of behavior, developmental processes, perception, learning, motivation, personality, sexuality, abnormal behavior, therapy and social behavior.

Prerequisites: None

**SOC 101 Comparative Sociology****3 Credits**

Provides students with an understanding of the basic principles of human cultural and evolutionary development. Emphasis is placed on the range and variability of human cultures through an examination of selected African, Asiatic, Native and Oceanic Societies. Includes discussions of social change, social stratification, culture and personality, culture and language, ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, and social control. Students learn to appreciate differences based on culture and how these differences relate to structural inequality.

Prerequisites/Corequisites: None

**SOC 122 Social Problems (Spring)****3 Credits**

This course intends to provide students with a critical thinking approach to understanding social problems in both a micro and macro context. Emphasis is placed on development of guidelines for critical reasoning and analysis, appreciation for social problems as constructed realities, application of critical analysis to contemporary social issues and problems, and the importance of applying critical thinking strategies to all areas of educational development. Representative problems addressed include: Inequality and Gender; Women in the Third World; Race and Social Equality; Drugs; Street Crime and Gangs; The Homeless; Health and Medical Care; AIDS; and School Dropouts.

Prerequisites/Corequisites: None

**SOC 221 Cultural Minorities****3 Credits**

Explores the nature of majority-minority relations as it relates to people of color in American society. Majority-minority relationships will be examined from the sociological perspective, which identifies majority status as one of dominance and minority status as one of subordination. In doing so, students will identify and analyze those historical, psycho-social, and socio-

structural factors which have contributed to the making of minority groups and to the perpetuation of prejudice and racism. Majority-minority relationships in the United States will be illustrated by studying the social experience of four selected groups: Black Americans, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Rican Americans. Students will be expected to apply their knowledge of both the strengths which minority groups develop and the negative stressors which minority groups face to their own future professional roles.

Prerequisites: SOC 101 Comparative Sociology

### **SWK 101 Introduction to Social Work (Spring)**

**3 Credits**

This course is an introduction to the profession of social work through an examination of the philosophical, societal, and organizational contexts within which professional social work activities are practiced. Students may explore their interest in and potential for a career in social work through this introduction of the knowledge, skills, values, and beliefs of the social work profession and by exploring the role of social workers within a variety of settings. Grounded in a social work perspective that includes a strengths-based approach, this course will enhance a student's cognitive and self-assessment skills to assist students in assessing the congruence between their own values and those of the profession.

Prerequisites: None

### **SWK 232 Research Methods (Fall)**

**3 Credits**

Quantitative and qualitative research methodology, and appreciation of the scientific method as applied to the behavioral sciences and social work. Course content includes the language science, concepts, propositions, models, hypothesis, and empirical laws. Exposure to analysis of concepts of the experimental, correlational and case study methods, as well as discussion of the ethical standards for scientific inquiry are fundamental to course. Students will be exposed to critical reading of research, and presented with strategies and designs, notable single-subject design, that will enable them to evaluate their own practice effectiveness.

Prerequisite/Corequisite: MTH 115 Basic Statistics

### **SWK 251 Introduction to Social Welfare (Fall)**

**3 Credits**

Introduces students to the field of social work and the social welfare system in the United States. Social welfare is defined and current institutions, agencies and programs are analyzed in the context of their historical and philosophical antecedents. A conscious attempt is made to identify

and understand the impact of racism, discrimination and oppression of vulnerable and minority groups in America. Course concern is the historical development of policy choices that have defined and influenced our current system of social welfare. The philosophy, values and attitudes fundamental to the development and perpetuation of social welfare and the concurrent development of social work sequence, the course intends to provide a historical perspective for understanding current social welfare policy.

Prerequisites: SOC 101 Comparative Sociology

### **SWK 252 Social Welfare Policies and Services (Spring)**

**3 Credits**

This course provides students with an understanding of current social welfare policies and develops the necessary knowledge and skills to execute policy analysis. Emphasis is placed on the interplay of social, political and economic forces that influence the planning and implementation of social welfare services. Philosophy, values and attitudes fundamental to our social welfare system will be reviewed and discussed. Planning and implementation of policy will also be examined with a perspective on the legislative process. Perceived by our Program as part of practice, the course provides students with an understanding of the relationship between policy and generalist social work practice. If scheduling requirements so dictate, although not recommended, the course can be taken before SWK 251, which presents a historical context for our current social welfare system.

Prerequisite: SWK 251 or permission of instructor

### **SWK 350 Human Behavior & the Social Environment I (Fall)**

**3 Credits**

(Conception to young adulthood)

### **SWK 351 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II (Spring)**

**3 Credits**

(Young adulthood to old age)

Fall/Spring Course sequence designed to provide social work majors with the opportunity to integrate required and elective behavioral and social science course into a practice framework in which theory, human behavior, diversity, and person-in-environment perspective are presented as themes for competent practice. Using an ecological model and lifespan approach the course reviews prior learning and introduces new content about individuals and their membership in families, groups, organizations and communities. In keeping with baccalaureate social work education's emphasis on developing competent generalist practitioners, course focus is on

reviewing and developing both explanatory and interventive knowledge in relation to the generalist social worker's role of strengthening and enriching people's resources. The course also enables social work students an opportunity to interact with their peers using a common knowledge base and language that promotes integration of the social work perspective and reinforces professional social work identity. SWK 350 examines conception to young adulthood. SWK 351 examines middle adulthood to old age. Courses restricted to social work majors/minors. Prerequisites/Corequisites: PSY103 Introduction to Psychology, SOC 101 Comparative Sociology

### **SWK 366 Social Work Methods and Processes I\*\* (Fall)**

**3 Credits**

Students are introduced to the art and science of generalist social work and to ecosystems, strengths, and change approaches needed for direct professional practice. Skills in communication, relationships, empowerment, assessment, planning, change, evaluation, and termination are emphasized, with a primary focus on individuals and families, especially those who are members of populations that are at risk of being disadvantaged or oppressed.

Social Work Methods and Processes I is the initial course in the social work practice sequence. It is designed to begin students' formal development as BSW-level social work practitioners. The purpose of this course is to expose students to the fundamental components of social work practice knowledge. These components include practice skills, practice strategies, professional values and utilization of one's knowledge of human development and behavior. The assumption is that there is a common set of social work practice skills which can be appropriately utilized in working with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations.

Emphasis will be placed on the conscious and deliberate use of self in the Generalist Intervention Model and application of critical thinking skills throughout the problem solving process as well as honing client interviewing skills. The social work relationship will be continually examined as that medium through which planned change occurs, and the commonality of human needs in a global society will be assessed. Priority will be placed on work with individuals and families since SWK 367 will focus more specifically on applying the generalist practice to groups and SWK 466 will focus on generalist practice in communities and organizations.

The professional development of competent social work practitioners cannot proceed without, among other things, an understanding of and appreciation for human diversity. Acceptance of difference among people, whether it be skin color, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, etc. is the foundation from which all social work activities evolve throughout this course. Students will be challenged to acknowledge and accept diversity, while at the same time, appreciate how difference, real or perceived, impedes individual and group access to those resources necessary for adequate social functioning.

Prerequisites: SWK 251 and SWK 285 or permission of the instructor

**SWK 367 Social Work Methods and Processes II\*\* (Spring)****3 Credits**

The first social work practice course, SWK 366: Methods & Processes I, focused on the basic concepts, values and skills of social work practice and the conscious use of self as an agent of change in the problem-solving process with the focus on work with individuals and families. Methods and Processes II will build on this foundation with the emphasis on social work practice with groups and Methods and Processes III. An assumption throughout the course is that the social worker needs to be aware of the client, organizational and community context in which students works. In this regard the appreciation of cultural differences and societal dynamics which affect the lives of the people who are served is essential. More specifically, the impact of prejudice, discrimination and institutional barriers to life chances will be important issues for consideration as we examine the use of family and group strategies to effect desired change.

Prerequisite: SWK 366 Social Work Methods & Processes I

**SWK 466 Social Work Methods and Processes III\*\* (Fall)****3 Credits**

The first social work practice course, SWK 366: Methods & Processes I, focused on the basic concepts, values and skills of social work practice and the conscious use of self as an agent of change in the problem-solving process with the focus on work with individuals. The second, SWK 367: Methods & Processes II, built on this foundation with the emphasis on social work practice with families and groups still focused on generalist practice.

Social Work Methods and Processes III will focus on communities and organizations, the macro practice areas. Throughout this course, students will be challenged with understanding organizations both for social services delivery and other as well as communities as they affect a client or a client system (case to cause). Strengths of communities and organizations will be a focus as well as identifying areas for improved processes with organizations and groups. In this regard the appreciation of cultural differences and societal dynamics which affect the lives of the people who are served is essential. More specifically, the impact of prejudice, discrimination and institutional barriers to life chances will be important issues for consideration as we examine the use of family and group strategies to effect desired changed.

The professional development of competent social work practitioners cannot proceed without, among other things, an understanding of and appreciation for human diversity. Acceptance of difference among people, whether it be skin color, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, etc. is the foundation from which all social work activities evolve throughout this course. Students will be challenged to acknowledge and accept diversity, while at the same time, appreciate how difference, real or perceived, impedes individual and group access to those resources necessary for adequate social functioning.

Prerequisites: SWK 366 and SWK 367: Social Work Methods & Processes I & II

**SWK 371/472 Field Instruction I and Seminar\*\*****4 Credits**

Two-hundred hour supervised field experience in a social service agency and accompanying sixty minute seminar for junior social work majors. Junior field is the initial practicum experience acclimating students to actual practice and skill building. The experience is progressive in that initially students gain familiarity with the specific agency as well as the overall framework of social welfare in the community and then moves deliberately toward increasing direct intervention and assumptions of greater levels of professional responsibility. Students receive exposure to all modes of social work practice, i.e., case interview, family or small group, and the community intervention perspective. Understanding of the agency as a social system and resource is examined through student completion of an Organizational Context of Practice Paper. Weekly seminars provide opportunity for sharing agency experience and integrating knowledge values and skills from the classroom. Course restricted to Social work majors. **There is a course fee attached to this SWK 371 which covers costs of clearances, special training and required liability insurance.**

Prerequisites/Corequisites: SWK 251, Introduction to Social Welfare, SWK 252, Social Welfare Policies and Services, SWK 366, Social Work Methods and Processes I

**SWK 475/476/473/474 Field Instruction II and III and Seminars\*\*****8 Credits**

Four-hundred-hour concurrent (Fall/Spring) senior field experience and accompanying sixty-minute integrating seminar. The progressive nature of the field experience assumes that the senior student will be ready for the direct service involvement within two to three weeks of beginning placement. Senior-level students must complete a case assignment and Professional Context of Practice paper as part of course and program requirements. Knowledge and skills development will be varied and emphasize sensitivity to diversity and generalist practice. The range of experiences is broad and will include such areas as: research; community assessment and intervention; program administration and planning; group work; case work; and program evaluation. Weekly seminars provide opportunity for discussion of professional values and ethics, interventive strategies and other areas pertinent to effective practice. Restricted to Social Work majors.

Prerequisites/Corequisites: Same as Junior field plus SWK 232, Research Methods and SWK 367, Social Work Methods & Processes II.

**SWK 477/473/474 Block Field Instruction\*\*****8 Credits**

Four-hundred-hour senior field experience and accompanying seminars completed in a one-semester, 12-15 week period. Students complete all work described under SWK 475/476 concurrent field, but in a condensed time frame. Workload and intensity of placement limits this



option to students who meet the criteria defined on page 28 of this handbook. Restricted to Social Work majors. **There is a course fee attached to this SWK 371 which covers costs of clearances, special training and required liability insurance.**

Prerequisites/Corequisites: Same as those for SWK 475/476 described above. Permission of the program director is required.

### **SWK 490 Capstone Course\*\* (Spring)**

**3 credits**

This course is designed to serve as an integrative seminar with a capstone portfolio to the social work practice sequence. Students will demonstrate their understanding of working on micro, mezzo and macro levels of practice integrating theory, empirical research, values and skills as integral to the generalist practice of social work.

Prerequisites or Corequisites: SWK 101: Introduction to Social Work, SWK 366, 367, 466: Social Work Methods I, II and III and SWK 232: Research Methods.

### **Social Work Electives**

**9 Credits**

Social Work majors are required to complete a minimum of three, three-credit social work elective courses as part of the Social Work Core. Elective coursework is offered each semester in the areas of Child Welfare, Gerontology and Substance Abuse. There are also additional elective courses, e.g., Family Therapy; Mental Health Services; etc. that are regularly offered. Social Work majors are required to take at least one, three-credit elective in Substance Abuse (ADC). Elective courses intend to enrich curriculum offerings by providing students the opportunity to study and research topics of interest that are relevant to effective social work practice. Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor if required.

The following is a list of electives regularly offered by the Social Work Program:

\*SWK 201 Professional Ethics

SWK 222 Drug Pharmacology

SWK 320 Trauma and Resiliency

SWK 333 Substance Abuse in the Adolescent Population

SWK 335	Substance Abuse in Special Populations
SWK 337	Substance Abuse Treatment Methods
SWK 340A	Alcoholism
SWK 341	Substance Abuse and the Aged
SWK 342	Families in Addiction and Dependency
SWK 355	Sexuality in Childhood and Adolescence
SWK 356	Developing Cultural Competence with Children and Families
*SWK 360	Special Topics in Social Work Practice
	e.g. Documentation
	Spirituality and Social Work Practice
	Suicide Assessment and Intervention
SWK 363	Child Welfare Services
SWK 375	Aging Policies & Programs
SWK 390	Seminar (e.g. Family Therapy)
SWK 392	Child Abuse and Neglect
SWK 395A	Permanency Planning

All of the above are 3 credit courses except SWK 201 and SWK 360 which are 1 to 3 credits each.

\*\*These courses are restricted to Social Work Majors.

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

***Whether a freshmen or transfer student, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have met credit and course requirements to be conferred a degree of Bachelor of Social Work from Misericordia University.***

**Misericordia University**

**Traditional Social Work Program - Suggested Order of Classes**

First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
<p>FYE – First Year Experience</p> <p>SWK club participation and/or other service recommended, and continue through four years</p>	<p>Preliminary acceptance to SWK program</p> <p>Application for Social Work Program (spring semester) – see criteria in Student Handbook</p> <p>Program Interview (spring)</p> <p>Application for Junior Practicum (spring)</p>	<p>Professional Orientation in SW program (fall semester)</p> <p>Junior Field Placement (fall) 200 hrs</p> <p>End of junior year self-assessment</p> <p>Evaluation and interview with Program Faculty (spring)</p> <p>Acceptance into SW Program (spring)</p> <p>Assignment of Senior Field Placement (spring)</p>	<p>Senior Field Work (400 hours)</p> <p>SWK Portfolio Review Process (spring)</p> <p>SWK Portfolio submitted (spring)</p> <p>GRADUATION</p>

Courses	Courses	Courses	Courses
Fall	Fall	Fall	Fall
BIO 105/105L (4)* PSY 123 (3)* Soc 101 (3)* POL 100 (3)* ENG/RLS/HIS 151 (3)	FA Core (3) ENG/HIS/POL/RLS CORE(3) MTH 115 (3) PHL 100 (3) SOC 221 (3)	SWK 251 (3) SWK 350 (3)* SWK 366 (3)* SWK ELECTIVE (3) FREE ELECTIVE (3)	FREE ELECTIVE (3) SWK 466 (3)* SWK 475 (3)* SWK 473 (1)* SWK 232 (3)*
Spring	Spring	Spring	Spring
SCI CORE (NON-LAB) (3) SOC 122 (3)* ENG/HIS/POL/RLS CORE(3) ENG/HIS/POL/RLS CORE(3) MTH Group A (3)	FA Core (3) ENG/HIS/POL/RLS CORE(3) ENG/HIS/POL/RLS CORE(3) PHL CORE (3) SWK 101 (3)	SWK 351 (3)* SWK 367 (3)* SWK 371 (3)* SWK 372 (1)* FREE ELECTIVE (3) SWK ELECTIVE (3)	FREE ELECTIVE (3) FREE ELECTIVE (3) SWK ELECTIVE (3) SWK 490 (3)* SWK 476 (3)* SWK 474 (1)*

2 Writing + ENG 151. FA102 and FA104 not core. RLS 151 fulfills the *World Religion* requirement; otherwise take RLS 104. 121 credits required for graduation. **Students MUST complete the \* courses as part of CSWE accreditation.** SWK 477 can replace SWK 475 and SWK 476, but not encouraged.

## ARCH Accelerated Undergraduate Bachelor of Social Work Delivery Model Matrix

**Curriculum:**

**Semester I (Session One) 6 Credits (Online)**

SWK 101 40 Introduction to Social Work

SWK 350 40 Human Behavior & Social Environment

**Semester I (Session Two) 6 credits (Online – hybrid)**

SWK 251 L2 Introduction to Social Welfare (Hybrid LCCC)

SWK 351 45 HBSE (seven week online)

**Semester II (Session One) 6 Credits (Online and hybrid)**

SWK 252 40 Social Work Policy (Seven week online)

SWK 366 L1 Social Work Methods I (Hybrid LCCC)

**Semester II (Session Two) 3 Credits (Hybrid)**

SWK 367 L2 Social Work Methods II (Hybrid LCCC)

**Semester II (Full Semester) 4 Credits (Hybrid)**

SWK 371 LF Field Instruction I (Full Sem) **200 Hrs.**

SWK 472 LF Field Seminar (Full Semester) (14 week hybrid)

**Semester III (Summer) 6 Credits (Online)**

Social Work Elective

Social Work Elective

**Semester IV (Session One) 3 Credits (Hybrid)**

SWK 466 L1 Social Work Methods

**Semester IV (Session Two) 3 Credits (Online)**

Social Work Elective

**Semester IV (Full Session) 4 Credits (Hybrid)**SWK 475 LF Field Instruction II **200 Hours**

SWK 473 LF Field Seminar (1 credit)

**Semester V (Full Session) 3 Credits (Online)**

SWK 232 50 Research Methods

**Semester V (Session Two) 3 Credits (Hybrid)**

SWK 490 L2 Senior Integrative Seminar (Hybrid LCCC)

**Semester V (Full Session) 4 Credits (Hybrid)**SWK 476 LF Field Instruction III **200 Hours**

SWK 474 LF Field Seminar (1 credit)

## CURRICULUM OPTIONS

Core and major course requirements are completed in a manner that allows students several options for minor areas of study or the Addictions Counseling Certificate. In addition, the student majoring in Social Work may select a minor concentration in other areas as well, such as History, Philosophy or English. A double major is also possible for students who have decided upon this option in their freshman year and are then able to plan accordingly.

### Addictions Counseling Certificate/Minor

ADC 222	Drug Pharmacology	3
ADC 337	Substance Abuse/Treatment Methods	3
ADC 340A	Chemical Addiction and Dependency	3
SWK 201	Professional Ethics	1

*Select two (2) additional courses from the following:*

ADC 335	Substance Abuse in Special Populations	(3)
ADC 341	Substance Abuse and the Aged	(3)
ADC 342	Families in Addiction and Dependence	(3)
ADC 339	Substance Abuse and Criminality	(3)

**Approved Field Practicum** (3)

**For a Total of:                      16 Credits**

**Gerontology Minor**

GER 241 Introduction to Social Gerontology 3

GER 375 Aging Policies and Programs 3

*Select three (3) additional courses from the following:*

GER 277 Adult Development and Aging (3)

GER 306 Health & Physiology of Aging (3)

GER 341 Substance Abuse & the Aged (3)

GER 358 Counseling the Older Adult (3)

GER 365 Alzheimers Disease (3)

GER 370 Remotivation Therapy (3)

GER 392 Seminar (3)

GER 410 Adult Protective Services (3)

GER 470 Practicum (3)

GER 413 Gerontology Co-op Education (3)

GER 480 Independent Study (3)

**Approved Field Practicum** (3)

**For a Total of: 15 Credits**



## **ADMISSION, RETENTION AND TERMINATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### Admissions

Social Work is the professional activity of helping individuals, families, groups and communities to enhance their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favorable to their goals. To be effective as a social work practitioner requires an acceptance of and appreciation for wide diversities among the populations served. These diversities include race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental and physical disability, or any other personal characteristic, condition or status. As we practice social work in the twenty-first century, increasing diversity among the populations we serve demands that social work programs become even more vigilant in recruitment of students who both reflect and value diversity, especially as it exists within those at risk and vulnerable populations who historically have been most discriminated against and oppressed. It is the student who sincerely cares about the needs of others and who is both appreciative of and sensitive to issues of diversity that the Social Work Program seeks to attract and recruit.

### Freshmen Admission (Institutional)

Misericordia University accords students of any race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation or sexual orientation all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students of the University.

Admission of freshmen students into Misericordia University is based on a careful review of each applicant's grade point average, class rank, standardized test scores, high school history and extracurricular activities and guidance counselor recommendations. Freshmen students who indicate an interest in Social Work as a major are "conditionally admitted" for the purpose of academic advising and support, but formal program admission will not occur until the end of the sophomore year and/or completion of a minimum of forty-five credit hours in liberal arts and social work core courses.

### Social Work Program Admissions Criteria

(Freshmen and Internal Transfers)

The following criteria are used in determining formal admission into the Social Work major:

1. Personal interview with a member of the full-time social work faculty;
2. Completion of a minimum of 45 credit hours, including all freshmen and sophomore social work core courses listed in the University catalog;
3. Attainment of a minimum grade of 2.00 in SOC 101: Comparative Sociology; SWK 251: Introduction to Social Welfare or SWK 101: Introduction to Social Work.

4. Attainment of an overall G.P.A. of 2.50 and a minimum of 2.50 in SWK core courses.
5. Acceptance of and sensitivity toward diversities among people.
6. Emotional and mental maturity and stability for effective social work practice.
7. Values, ethics, and behaviors consistent with those of social work.
8. A personal statement and narrative response.

Any student not fulfilling the criteria above will be duly notified by the department chair of program probation or dismissal. Students placed on probation will be allowed one semester for grade replacements and /or other corrective actions. Students dismissed from the program will not be readmitted. Specific procedures for admissions can also be requested from the admission's office.

### Admission Procedures

Admissions decisions are made on an ongoing basis. Deadline dates for submission of personal statement and narrative response are minimally due before preparation for junior field education with field education placement requirements.

Upon initial confirmed enrollment into the social work major by the program director, students admitted into both program options are assigned a faculty advisor. The social work program utilizes faculty advisors to provide ongoing academic student support and monitoring in all program options.

Students must make an appointment with their faculty advisor to review their program status prior to submitting the personal statement and narrative response. The faculty advisor will review the student's progress to ensure compliance with academic eligibility criteria and sign the student's advisement form indicating that all criteria have been met. The signed advisement form and student personal statement and narrative must be in the student's file before junior field placement can begin.

Failure to correctly follow application procedures will result in delayed entry into the Social Work Program. This delay will minimally result in the student spending an additional semester to complete all requirements for the BSW degree.

### Social Work Program Admissions Criteria (External Transfer Students)

In addition to meeting all criteria for freshmen and internal transfers, external transfers must:

1. Provide two personal references defining their suitability for the Social Work Profession.
2. Complete a minimum of 15 academic credits at Misericordia University including SWK 101, Introduction to Social Work, SWK 251, Introduction to Social Welfare or SWK 252, Social Welfare Policies and Services.

### Program Actions on Admissions

The Program has three options with each program applicant:

1. Unconditional admission to the Social Work Program.
2. Continue conditional admission status in the Social Work Program for the following reasons:
  - a. Requirements have not been met;
  - b. Documents have not been filed;
  - c. An identified problem or potential problem needs to be resolved by student and faculty advisor. (Students admitted under conditional status are responsible for the following up on any concerns and reporting to the faculty advisor prior to the next convening meeting.)
3. Deny Admission.

### Personal Statement and Narrative Response

The personal statement and narrative response must be reflective and must demonstrate satisfactory written communication skills. The statement is viewed as a self-assessment tool, a vehicle to assist students in clarifying both short and long-term goals. The statement may also be shared with potential junior and senior agency field instructors (with the student's permission) as an additional means of personalizing the student prior to the field placement interview.

*\* NOTE: All social work majors must apply for formal admission into the Social Work Program before entering SWK 371, Field Instruction I.*

### Admission Committee

Students will be admitted or denied admission to the BSW program by decision of a committee composed of all full-time members of the Social Work Program, currently three. The Committee's decision will be communicated in writing by the Program Chair to all students within three weeks after receipt of final grades for the semester in which they apply for formal admission.

### Program Gatekeeping Standards

Students should be cognizant that one of the primary roles of a social worker is to function as "gatekeeper" for the profession. It is, therefore, the responsibility of all social work faculty to ensure that students involved in the Social Work Program meet strict standards of academic and nonacademic eligibility deemed necessary for effective social work practice.

### Academic and Nonacademic Criteria for Admission and Retention

Academic criteria for admission and retention "Admissions Criteria for Freshmen and Internal Transfers."

Additional criteria for admission and retention in the BSW Program include:

1. The ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, and the capacity to establish helping relationships;
2. Personal behavior and values which demonstrate compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics (NASWDC.org).
3. Personal Characteristics;
  - a. Ethics – In addition to the academic expectations, social work students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior which reflects a commitment to the ethics of the social work profession. Behavior contrary to these ethics will be cause for review of the student’s admission to the program or continued future as a social work major. Examples of behavior which would warrant such a review include derogatory oral and written statements towards or other actions that deny social justice for, students, faculty, and/or persons from populations reflecting racial, ethnic, handicapped status, religious, socioeconomic, gender, and sexual orientation differences.
  - b. Behavior – Since the role of social worker involves helping people from a variety of backgrounds and with a wide range of problems, it is important that the social work student not permit personal issues to interfere with this role and that students have the emotional and psychological resources to render effective assistance to those in need. In instances where students demonstrate behavior which suggest that their own difficulties are not sufficiently resolved to be able to help and support others at this time, students may be denied admission to the program or once admitted may be asked to withdraw from the program until personal issues have been resolved. (students must consult with their faculty advisor for referral and advisement.)

In the infrequent case of “denial” or “admission with conditions”, the Committee will provide a justification for their decision. The student may petition for a second review and appear before the Committee. He or she would present additional information in support of the request for a review of all information. If the student is again not satisfied with the recommendation of the Committee, he or she can appeal it through the University at-large appeal process.

Students who receive a grade of C-, D or F must see their advisor immediately to discuss their plan for grade improvement. **Students must receive a C or better in all Social Work courses in order to graduate with a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work.** Students are only allowed to repeat a social work course (SWK) once. Students who fail to earn a C or better after two attempts will automatically be suspended from the Social Work Program for one semester. Readmission to the program and permission to once again enroll in the failed course will be considered after the Program Chair receives a letter from the student detailing his/her plan to improve academic performance.

Students have the right to appeal any and all decisions affecting their status through the Social Work Program and the University’s at-large grievance process

## **TRANSFER CREDIT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### Transfer Credit

The Social Work Program attempts to ensure that all students graduating from the University with a BSW degree have had similar academic experiences across all program options. It will accept academic coursework from other Council on Social Work Education accredited institutions if the course content of their social work courses reflect learning outcomes of similar courses at Misericordia University. It will, likewise, accept transfer credits from accredited two- and four-year institutions for coursework other than those designated “SWK”.

The following policies apply to all transfer students:

1. Transfer credits must carry a “C” grade or better. University policy does not permit acceptance of any coursework with less than “C” level achievement.
2. Transfer courses are judged to be equivalent to a Misericordia University course if content parallels content areas of a similar course offering. The course syllabus must first be reviewed by the Registrar and then approved by the Social Work Program Director before it can be awarded academic credit.
3. Students seeking transfer credit in a social work course with a grade of “C” must demonstrate C+ (2.5) level attainment in “SWK” courses during their initial semester at Misericordia University. Failure to achieve a 2.5 G.P.A. will result in Program Probation.
4. **The Social Work Program does not allow credit for life experience or previous work experience, in whole or in part, to satisfy requirements for core field work within the Social Work Program.** In keeping with University policy, Prior Learning Assessment Credits and CLEP credits can be awarded for general education and non-major elective courses.

### Transfer Credit Procedures

The following procedures are employed in determining the validity of all transfer credits into the Social Work Program across all program options:

1. The Registrar and Social Work Program Chair will validate all transfer coursework from CSWE accredited institutions to ensure that the course content and the theoretical base is similar to that offered at Misericordia University. If the course is judged to be equivalent, the student is then exempted from taking this course. The same process is used for transfer credit from accredited two and four year institutions for coursework other than those in the Social Work Core Curriculum.
2. If the Registrar and Program Chair find that the course is not comparable, it will be awarded elective credit and the student will be required to take the course at Misericordia University.

3. Content validation of transfer courses can be accomplished in a number of ways including syllabi, college catalogs, field practicum evaluations, student interviews, and other supporting documentation.
4. Experiential Learning Credit may be awarded to students for general education and elective coursework, providing they have followed the procedures and directives found in the University Catalog.

## **BSW PORTFOLIO**

The student portfolio will address the expected *Competencies (Objectives)* and *Practice Behaviors (Learning Outcomes)*. Each student will be required to gather and assemble demonstrable evidence of fulfilling each specified Objective/Outcome by the end of their senior year as part of the requirement for the Capstone Course. It can be anticipated that most, if not all, evidence will be completed in required social work coursework and fieldwork in the form of tests, papers, projects, syllabi, field logs or any other means of documenting outcome fulfillment. It will be the *student's responsibility* to periodically meet with their academic adviser to ensure portfolio progress.

### Purpose:

The purpose of the portfolio is to afford each senior social work student the opportunity to demonstrate an understanding and application of the knowledge, values and skills necessary for generalist professional baccalaureate social work practice and to document achievement of those program competencies and practice behaviors.

### Procedure:

Students can begin the process of documentation as early as their initial freshman semester. However, since most program outcomes evolve from material mastered in social work core courses beginning in the sophomore year, portfolio development will accelerate at this time. Internal transfer students, and especially those students who transfer into the BSW Program with Associate degrees from two-year institutions, will immediately begin documentation.

As noted in the objectives, the program views the field component as the primary means by which students can demonstrate achievement of program competencies and practice behaviors. Through assigned papers in both junior and senior field internships completion of most of the anticipated outcomes can be substantiated.

### Assembly and Evaluation

Portfolio submission occurs near the midpoint of the student's final semester. The portfolio must be submitted to the Capstone Course Instructor. All current full-time program faculty and the student's agency field supervisor will independently review each portfolio and assign a score.

An average of the three scores will be used to determine the student's final grade. The portfolio is a culmination of the learning through growth, education, and hands-on experiences as exhibited within folder. A guide to assembling this folder can be found on the Social Work web pages (under the academic tab).

## **STUDENT ADVISEMENT**

The Social Work Program views the advising process as an integral component of each student's educational experience at Misericordia University. Entering students from both program options are assigned a faculty advisor who continues in that position until the student graduates. The faculty advisor aids the student in educational planning; facilitates the student's university and program resources, and monitors the student's progress through the program. University policy requires that students from both programs meet in person or by a prearranged method of communication with their academic advisor once each semester to plan coursework for the following semester. Within the Social Work Program, students in both program options are encouraged to meet with his/her advisor more as needed. The nature of Social Work Education is such that a close and open relationship between students and faculty enhances the student's learning experience and aids in the student's acculturation into the profession of Social Work. There is a sharing of responsibility in the advisory process as both the student and his/her advisor have a mutual interest in planning and monitoring the student's progress through the program.

### Faculty Offices/Office Hours

All Social Work Program Full-time Faculty offices are located on the second floor of the Trocaire building.

Faculty office hours will be clearly posted on each faculty member's office door. If students cannot meet with faculty during regularly scheduled office hours, other times can be arranged at the faculty member's convenience.

### Faculty/Student Communication

Because of the relatively small size of the Social Work Program, informal channels of communication are usually effective in relaying messages from faculty to students and vice-versa. Students, however, should make a habit of checking their email regularly. All email communication should be through students' Misericordia University email accounts and not personal email accounts. Students from both program options should also frequent Misericordia website which contains special dates for social work programming. In addition, graduate school information and job postings can be found the Social Work Facebook page.

## FEES

A fee of \$154 will be attached to students enrolled in SWK 366, SWK 367 , SWK 460 & SWK 490, which covers professional liability insurance, professional membership in the PA National Association of Social Workers and clinical records management, as well as the CHSE Administrative fee.

## FIELD

Field instruction is a requirement for Junior and Senior Social Work majors. Students entering the field must have a 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA) in social work core courses and a G.P.A. of 2.5 overall. Transfer students entering the Junior year at Misericordia generally take their first field course during the spring Semester. Social work majors only may apply for junior and senior field assignments.

During their Junior year, students spend two days per week, a total of 200 hours for one semester, in an assigned agency. Senior concurrent placement entails two (2) full days per week for two (2) consecutive semesters (400 hours) in a social service agency. Block field assignment requires four and one-half (4 ½) days per week for one (1) semester (400 hours). All students enrolled in field attend a weekly field seminar on campus. The seminar involves one (1) hour for junior and senior concurrent students and two (2) hours for block students per week. All field work courses carry a course fee to pay for clearances, special training (HIPPA) and liability insurances.

### Field Instruction Prerequisites/Concurrents

Course prerequisites/corequisites for field are as follows:

1. Juniors must have completed **Introduction to Social Work, Introduction to Social Welfare, and Social Work Methods and Processes I.**
2. Seniors must have completed, in addition to the three (3) courses above, **Research Methods and Social Work Methods and Processes II.**
3. Students must produce documentation on all clearances including FBI, criminal background check, Child Abuse and HIPPA. Some field sites may require additional testing or immunizations as per their regulations and policies.
4. All students entering field must have a:
  - a. G.P.A. of 2.5 in social work core courses
  - b. G.P.A. of 2.5 overall
5. If students do not meet the 2.5 G.P.A. in social work core courses and 2.5 G.P.A. overall by the fall prior to entering the field, they will be placed on academic probation and notified via certified letter.
6. A student concern meeting will be scheduled when G.P.A. or prerequisite requirements are not met, and a remediation plan will be developed. Students must meet the established requirements above to remove themselves from probation prior to entering the field.



7. If students do not meet the criteria to remove themselves from probation by the spring semester before being scheduled to enter junior field, they will have one additional semester to get off probation by the end of the fall semester before junior field is scheduled. If they fail to meet the requirements by this time they will be dismissed from the program.

### Transportation

Students must provide their own transportation to field agencies. Public transportation (bus service) is available from campus to various locations in the Wyoming Valley.

### Insurance

Students are required to have liability insurance before they enter field assignment. Liability insurance coverage will be provided by the University and assessed to the student's bill during their junior and senior years.

### Admission to Field Assignment

The Application Process for field assignment is as follows:

1. Students first submit a letter of intent to the Social Work Field Coordinator. (found on the MU website under Social Work/Forms)
2. All students then complete a Student Application and Profile which is also submitted to the Field Coordinator. (found on the MU website under Social Work/Forms)
3. After the application is reviewed by the Field Coordinator, the student schedules an interview the week following Advisement with the Field Coordinator to assess student interests, motivations, goals and type of agencies and population that would be most appropriate for each student.
4. The Field Coordinator then contacts agencies to determine if they are interested in and can accommodate a social work intern.
5. If the agency agrees to interview a student for possible placement, the Field Coordinator will send the student's Application and Profile to the potential student supervisor.
6. The Field Coordinator then gives the agency's address, potential supervisor's name and telephone number to the student. Within three days, the **STUDENT** then contacts the agency to arrange a pre placement interview. The interview will determine if the agency feels the student is appropriate for placement.
7. The Agency Supervisor will then notify the Field Coordinator of their decision to accept or reject the student for placement.
8. Students are advised that it is the agency's prerogative to accept or reject a potential student intern. Although most placements are reciprocally beneficial to the University, agency and student, it is the agency supervisor who gives of their

time, energy, knowledge and skills to benefit the student and, therefore, must be comfortable with the student they choose for a supervised internship.

### Changing Field Assignments

Only under the most unusual and extenuating circumstances will a student be allowed to change field assignments once the semester has begun. Reasons such as, “I’m not busy enough,” or “I don’t like my placement,” or “I’ve changed my mind about working with this population” are not extenuating circumstances. Any request to change agencies must be submitted in writing to the Field Seminar Leader. Students will then discuss the request with the Field Coordinator. The Field Coordinator will then assess the circumstances surrounding the request and determine options available to the student.

The following are examples of typical field placements:

### Community Mental Health and Mental Retardation Agencies

Community Counseling Services of Northeastern PA

Step-by-step, Inc.

Northeast Counseling Services

Luzerne County MH/MR

### Children’s Agencies:

Children and Youth Services of Luzerne, Lackawanna, Wyoming Co.

Children’s Service Center

Wyoming Valley Children’s Association

Institute for Human Resources

Children’s Behavioral Health

### Volunteer Agencies:

Family Service Association of Wyoming Valley

Catholic Social Services

Victims Resource Center

Jewish Family Services

Domestic Violence Service Center

Residential Facilities:

Clark Summit State Hospital

Clem-Mar House (male and female facilities)

Clearbrook Manor/Lodge

St. Michael's

Hospitals:

Geisinger

First Hospital Wyoming Valley

Community Medical Center

Aging Services:

Luzerne/Wyoming Counties Bureau of Aging

Highland Manor

Wesley Village

Mercy Center

Special Services:

United Cerebral Palsy

United Rehabilitation Services

The John Heinz Institute for Rehabilitation Medicine

American Red Cross

Wyoming Valley AIDS Council

Additional information regarding field placements will be found in the Student Field Handbook.

## STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

### Social Work Club

The Social Work Program sponsors a student organization open to all majors in all program options. The purpose of the organization is to allow students an opportunity to plan and implement academic, professional and social programs on campus. Club activities are designed to enhance the student's awareness of the profession and the field of Social Work. The club offers field trips, as well as professional programs several times during each semester. In many instances, the organization acts in an advisory capacity to the faculty with regard to issues of importance to students. Social Work majors are encouraged to join and be active within the organization. Please join this "group" under group emails for regular bulletins.

### Alpha Delta Mu, Social Work Honor Society

The Social Work Program is a charter member of Alpha Delta Mu, a National Social Work Honor Society. Criteria for membership is as follows:

1. A student must be a Social Work major in an accredited Social Work program.
2. The student must have achieved at least junior standing and completed a minimum of 30 credits at Misericordia University.
3. The student must have a G.P.A. of 3.25 or better.
4. The student must make application by March 30 of any given year and have recommendations from full-time social work faculty members at Misericordia University

Induction into Alpha Delta Mu occurs during a formal ceremony in the spring semester.

## CIVILITY & PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Students' appropriate efforts to gain knowledge is a fundamental right. Students will not be prohibited from exercising their constitutional rights or from other lawful activity guaranteed by the United States. These activities expressly include freedom of speech and dissent.

Misericordia University's Social Work Program subscribes to strict standards of ethical conduct for aspiring social work practitioners and adheres to those standards defined by the Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). To this end, irresponsible and unethical acts such as cheating on exams, plagiarism and falsification of field logs or research materials will not be tolerated.

The program views students' behavior in the classroom and field settings as reflective of their future behavior as social work practitioners. As professionals, these students will be intervening in the most private and sensitive areas of clients' lives, where ethical and responsible thoughts, words and actions will be paramount to their interventive efforts. Due to the professional and human service function of the social work profession, these expected behaviors are part of academic requirements and standards. Student misconduct that involves clients on or off campus or student conduct that is potentially dangerous to current or future clients constitutes a violation of social work academic standards. The faculty or college administrators shall follow these academic standards and initiate procedures for dismissal or restriction of offending students. To this end, students are expected to conduct themselves civilly and professionally when interacting with faculty, staff, students and community members in all affiliated university settings; whether a classroom, on-line or a field affiliation site.

Students who have impaired capacity to function as a social work practitioner will be recommended for termination if at least two social work faculty believe this course of action is necessary.

Documentation of reasons for dismissal include, but are not limited to, behaviors that violate the NASW Code of Ethics and/or universally acknowledged student conduct. Examples of such behavior include:

1. Cheating in whatever manner, during tests or examinations.
2. Proof of plagiarism in papers and other reports.
3. Falsification of research findings, methodologies or unethical activity connected with academic or professional research.
4. Falsification of field logs.
5. Blatant disrespect and/or disregard for issues of diversity with clients, students, faculty, staff or others.
6. Attending classes or field assignments under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
7. Sexual activity with clients including but not limited to kissing, fondling, or sexual intercourse.
8. Physical actions directed at clients, students, faculty or staff, such as hitting, spanking, or slapping.
9. Physical or emotional threats directed toward clients, students, faculty, or staff.
10. The acceptance of gifts of money from clients that are not considered standard payments for services received on behalf of the student's agency or field setting. Students shall not ask for nor expect gifts from clients.
11. Illegal or unethical behavior that limits or takes away client's rights or results in financial, material, or emotional loss for clients or gain for social work students.
12. Repeated breaches of confidentiality;
13. Intentional violation of agency policy and procedures;
14. Inappropriate conduct;
15. Threatening or engaging in physical abuse;

16. Consistent tardiness or absence;
17. Reporting to placement under the influence of drugs or alcohol
18. Carrying weapons to field placements;
19. Theft of agency property;
20. Falsification of client records;
21. Blatant disregard for agency philosophy;
22. See also Student Conduct in this handbook.
23. Students are expected to display behaviors such as, but not limited to:
  - Arrive at class and field sites on time
  - Make proper notification of inability to attend scheduled classes and/or field practice.
  - Conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner whether on or off-campus.
  - Turn off all cell phones and electronic devices, or put into silent/vibrate mode, during class and when in client care environments. **Cell phone conversation or text messaging during class or field experiences (unless directly related to field practice) are not permitted.**
  - Address faculty, peers and community partner representatives respectfully and by appropriate titles, i.e. “Dr.” or “Professor”. Addressing faculty or professional community partner individuals by first names is only appropriate when individuals request one does not use their professional title when addressing them.
  - Avoid disruptive behaviors such as, but not limited to, social conversation with peers during classroom or field learning activities; speaking out of turn during directed discussions; monopolizing discussions; and using aggressive or offensive language.
  - For any field or practicum experience disruptive behavior also includes when a student, under their own directive, calls a community partner seeking field placement, despite instructions by university personnel such as faculties or field placement coordinators not to call. Other examples include, clear violations of agency policy/procedures. The Agency Field Instructor may perceive a student’s behavior in the field to contraindicate adequate functioning as a professional social work practitioner. Should problems arise that cannot be resolved between the student and agency field instructor, the instructor can recommend either termination of placement or termination of the student’s status as a social work major.
  - Be properly attired in the Misericordia University dress code for all field experiences.
  - To not defame others or conduct one-self negatively while representing the University, its programs, or its faculties on-campus or in the community. Use appropriate Netiquette in any electronic correspondences.

**Any student who fails to abide by the Civility & Professional Behavior policy will be subject to the following disciplinary actions:**

**1. First offense** –The student is given a written warning from the faculty member involved which will be documented in the student’s advising notes and signed by the student. Should the gravity of the first offense be severe, the student may have additional sanctions imposed, including those normally invoked for a second offense. If the student does not comply with this

process, the second offense will be imposed and the student will be placed on probation or dismissed from the Social Work program. Students have the right to appeal through the grievance policies detailed below.

**2. Second offense** – The student will be dismissed from the class, field setting, activity, office, area, or environment in which the offensive behavior takes place, and will be required to meet with the Social Work Department Chairperson and/or a Social Work Department faculty member within 2 business days. The Chairperson, in consultation with the University Grievance Committee, will determine the appropriate sanction to be imposed. This may include, but is not limited to, probation or dismissal from the Social Work program.

***At any time, if a student's behavior is egregious and deemed by the Social Work Chairperson to be deleterious to the Social Work Department or the University, the student will be dismissed from the social work program and/or the university with no opportunity for readmission.***

#### Due Process/Appeal

The Student has the right of appeal to the Chair of the Social Work Program, and/or the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Education, and then the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

#### Grievance

A grievance process has been developed for the student who believes that he or she has been treated unfairly within the program. The process is as follows:

1. The student first confers with the individual teacher, field supervisor or administrator involved in the incident or situation within five (5) days. If the issue is satisfactorily settled – the process ends, if not...
2. The student seeks an interview with the Chair of the Social Work Program. This must be done within five (5) days of the conference as stated above. It is the Chair's responsibility to investigate the matter and try to effect a reconciliation.
3. If the student does not feel that an equitable judgment has been made, students may then appeal to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Education. The Dean's responsibility is to investigate the issue and try to effect a reconciliation. The appeal to the Dean must be made within five (5) days of the outcome of the Program Chair's intercession.
4. If the issue has not been settled, the student may appeal to the University Grievance Committee through the Vice President of Academic Affairs.