



## **Social Work Program**

### **Student Handbook**

(revised March 2009)



**Department of Social Work, Criminal Justice,  
& Gerontology**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **The Social Work Program Student Handbook**

The most current edition of the handbook is binding on all students who have an area major in social work. It is subject to revision at anytime, by vote of the Social Work Program Faculty. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the most recent edition of the handbook, available at the Social Work Program web site.

### **A Brief History of the Social Work Program**

The Murray State University Social Work Program was established in 1970 under the auspices of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, which was located in the College of Humanistic Studies. In 1975, the program was moved to the Department of Professional Studies, which was located in the College of Human Development and Learning. In 1986, the program requested to be moved back to the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work. In 2000, after university reorganization, the program was placed in the Department of Social Work, Criminal Justice, and Gerontology in the College of Health Sciences and Human Services.

The first Social Work Program director, Dr. Wallace Baggett, remained program director until spring 1986. Dr. Julie Lovins joined the faculty in 1971 and served as program director from spring 1986 to spring 1990. Dr. Rose Bogal-Allbritten joined the faculty in 1977 and was the program director from the fall of 1990 through the spring of 2003. Dr. Elise Fullmer was the program director from the fall of 2003 through the spring of 2005. In the fall of 2005, Dr. Peg Pittman

Munke was named acting program director. The program has had a three to six member faculty from its inception to the present time.

The program was initially accredited by the Council on Social Work Education in 1974, and its accredited status was reaffirmed in 1979, 1986, 1994 and 2002.

### **Purpose**

The primary purpose of the Social Work Program is to prepare students as professional entry-level generalist social workers in a variety of social service agencies and organizations. Graduates of the program are employed in a variety of social service agencies throughout the country. Many of the graduates have earned master's degrees in social work.

### **Career Opportunities**

The purpose of social work is to assist others to bring about healthy change within themselves and their communities. Becoming a social worker means working with people in order to develop their capacity and potential for creative and fulfilling human relationships. Social work offers a variety of career opportunities for working with people and helping them meet their needs. These opportunities include:

Child Protection: Social workers work with children who are runaways, abused, neglected, or abandoned. Social workers hold positions in residential care, adoptions, foster care, protective services, and services to unmarried parents in social service agencies across the nation.

Mental Health: Social workers are members of the psychiatric team in mental health centers and hospitals for people with mental illness, emotional disturbance, and chemical dependence.

Medical Social Services: Medical social workers practice in general hospitals, public health departments, and long-term care facilities. They work with people experiencing psychological, social, and economic problems associated with their illness, and are also involved in discharge planning.

Corrections: Social workers are employed in penal and correctional facilities serving both adults and youth. Parole and probation services, juvenile courts, and delinquency prevention programs are examples of practice settings.

Social Services: Various social service agencies employ social workers to work with people who have been victims of domestic violence, senior citizens, people who are homeless, children and adults who are dependent, people who are disabled, and with families experiencing social and economic problems.

Other areas: Social workers also work in macro practice setting. They may work in government as legislative staff; in city, county and district planning offices; in health planning agencies, and in a wide variety of advocacy organizations.

### **Statement of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity**

Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, or marital status in admission to educational programs and activities, or employment practices in accordance with Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, and ADA Act. For more information contact Annazette McCane, Director of Equal Opportunity, Murray State University, 103 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071-3318. Telephone (270) 809-3155 (Voice) and (270) 809-3361 (TDD). Student Life Handbook, (2005) pg. 2.

The Murray State University Social Work Program carries out all aspects of the educational program without discriminating on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, national origin, physical disability, veteran's status, or sexual orientation.

Each Murray State University Social Work Program syllabi contains the following statement:

**STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY:** It is both the policy and philosophy of the Social Work Program to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs an accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester and contact the Office of Equal Opportunity at 809-3155.

## II. OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

The Murray State University Social Work Program reflects the mission of the university as well as the "Characteristics of the Murray State University Graduate" statement.

**A. The Vision and Mission of Murray State University:** (Adopted by the university Board of Regents September 2, 1994, and Revised, September 26, 2003).

Vision Statement:

To build on our reputation as one of the best student-centered, comprehensive universities in the nation

MISSION and Statement of Purpose

Murray State University serves as a nationally recognized residential comprehensive university, offering high-quality baccalaureate and master's degree programs. Academic programs are offered in the core areas of arts and sciences, agriculture, business, health and human services, teacher education, communications, engineering, and applied technologies. Teaching, research, and service excellence are core values and guiding principles that promote economic development and the well-being of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the region.

Murray State University places a high premium on academic outreach, collaborative relationships with alumni, the public schools, business and industry, governmental agencies, and other colleges and universities at home and abroad.

Murray State University prepares graduates to function in a culturally diverse, technologically oriented society and increasingly interdependent world. The university is committed to international education as an integral dimension of the university experience.

Murray State University emphasizes student-centered learning and educational experiences that include first year experience, the honors program, internships, study abroad programs, service learning, research and creative projects, residential colleges, and student organizations.

In sum, Murray State University fosters an exciting and challenging learning environment.

**B. Characteristics of the Murray State University Graduate:**

1. Engage in mature, independent and creative thought and express that thought effectively in oral and written communication;
2. Understand and apply the critical and scientific methodologies that academic disciplines employ to discover knowledge and ascertain its validity;
3. Apply sound standards of information gathering, analysis and evaluation to reach logical decisions;
4. Understand the roles and applications of science and technology in the solution of the problems of a changing world;
5. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the world's historical, literary, philosophical and artistic traditions;
6. Understand the dynamics of cultural diversity, of competing economic and political systems, and of complex moral and ethical issues;
7. Understand the importance of and engage in ethical behavior and responsible citizenship;
8. Understand the importance of the behaviors necessary to maintain a healthy lifestyle;
9. Demonstrate mastery of a chosen field of study; and
10. Value intellectual pursuit and continuous learning in a changing world.

(Adopted by Board of Regents September 26, 2003)

**C. The Mission Statement for the Murray State University Social Work Program:**

MSU Social Work Program Mission Statement: The primary purpose of the social work program is to prepare students for entry-level professional social work practice as generalist social workers in a culturally diverse world impacted by globalization. Graduates will be aware of and able to utilize appropriate technology in professional service in a wide variety of social service settings in rural areas and small cities in underserved areas of Western Kentucky and the surrounding region [adopted April 07].

**D. Goals of the Social Work Program:**

1. To advance professional social work practice in human service agencies and organizations by preparing students for employment as generalist social workers.
2. To promote and provide professional social work services to human service agencies and organizations.

3. To assist students in developing the readiness for graduate study in social work.

**E. Objectives of the Social Work Program:** Graduates of the Murray State University BSW Program will be able to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity.
3. Demonstrate the professional use of self.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies of change that advance social and economic justice.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.
6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work to practice with systems of all sizes.
7. Apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, and communities).
8. Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies.
9. Evaluate research studies and apply findings to practice, and, under supervision, to evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.
10. Use communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.
11. Use supervision appropriate to generalist practice.

12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems, and under supervision, seek necessary organizational change.

**F. Course Objectives:**

Specific course objectives are listed at the beginning of the syllabus for each course in the Social Work Program.

### III. CURRICULUM

The primary purpose of the Murray State University Social Work Program is the preparation of students for professional entry-level generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in a variety of social service agencies. This purpose is achieved through a carefully planned and executed professional social work foundation curriculum that builds on a liberal arts base. The program incorporates content on social work values and ethics, theoretical knowledge and skills, as well as content which provide students with knowledge of social mores, including content on ethnic, racial, and sexual discrimination, and the subsequent oppression to which discrimination subjects groups of people. The program provides ample opportunities for “hands-on” experiences. The curriculum is consistent with the current accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education. Additionally, it is consistent with the mission statement of Murray State University and the "Characteristics of a Murray State University Graduate".

Students who complete the entire program receive a B.S.W. (Bachelor of Social Work) degree. The curriculum includes liberal arts courses in the general education areas specified by the university. For courses specific to the Social Work Major see the *Murray State University Bulletin*.

#### **Transfer Students:**

All transfer students will be advised on course of study by the Program Director.

**Transfer of a Murray State Student with a Major other Than Social Work**

A Murray State University student transferring from another major or area must meet with a Social Work Program Director and complete a university Change of Major form. All students will move into the *Murray State University Bulletin* in effect at the time of the transfer. Each social work student will be assigned an advisor. Students must also complete the program's liberal arts requirements as well as the entire social work curriculum.

**Transfer Students from Other Institutions**

A student who wishes to transfer to Murray State University from another accredited college or university is admitted to the University following the standards outlined in the *Murray State University Bulletin*.

In addition to meeting the University requirements for transfer admission, students must apply to the Social Work Program at Murray State University. The student must have at least one semester in residence at Murray State University before applying to the Social Work Program and must meet Murray State University Social Work Program criteria for admission. If a student was enrolled in a social work program at another institution s/he will be expected to provide a letter on institutional letter head stating that s/he is/was in "good standing" in the social work program at that institution.

The evaluation of social work courses transferred from other institutions is the responsibility of the Social Work Program Director. Required social work

courses taken at other CSWE accredited programs are accepted at the Program Director's discretion. The student may be expected to provide comprehensive written materials (e.g. a syllabus, completed assignments etc.) and /or take a proficiency exam over the material covered in the course. Additionally, students "transferring in" coursework must have earned at least a grade of "C" in each of the courses to be transferred for the course to count toward the social work area major.

### **Policy on Course Waivers and Academic Credit**

The program does not waive course requirements of the professional foundation areas or for the field practicum. No credit is given for previous work or life experiences.

### **Social Welfare Minor**

The Social Work Program offers a 21 hour minor, the course requirements are listed in the *Murray State University Bulletin*.

Students other than social work majors are not allowed to take SWK 310, Social Work Practice I; SWK 311, Interviewing; SWK 312, Social Work Practice II; SWK 313, Social Work Practice III; or SWK 498, Senior Seminar, nor are they permitted to enroll in SWK 499, Field Practicum. Additionally, students other than social work majors are not allowed to enroll in electives which have SWK 310 Social Work Practice I or SWK 312, Social Work Practice II, as a prerequisite.

#### **IV. FIELD PLACEMENT**

A student is eligible for field placement (SWK 499, Field Practicum) after being formally admitted to the Social Work Program, formally admitted to Field and after completing all required course work, both for the social work major and University Studies requirements. This 12 semester hour (500+ clock hours) course is designed to provide the student with practical experience in the application of the theory and skills acquired in the liberal arts courses as well as the professional foundation areas. The field practicum is designed to create an environment in which the student grows professionally, i.e., becomes a professionally reflective, self-evaluating, knowledgeable, and developing social worker. Students must complete all academic work before enrolling in SWK 499.

No student is guaranteed a field placement. All students must obtain liability insurance prior to beginning the field placement. If a student is unable to obtain liability insurance or a field placement, effort will be made to guide the student into another major.

#### **Applying for Field Placement**

Placements are set up when student is enrolled in SWK 498. Students planning to enroll in SWK 499, Field Practicum must complete a Student Application for Field Placement. All placements are arranged by the field education director. All applications for field placement are reviewed by the social work program Field Admissions Committee. The needs, strengths, and interests of

students, as well as the availability of agency and program placement resources, are discussed. Additionally, each applicant is interviewed by the Field Admissions Committee. Issues of concern that may have been identified during the applicant's program admission process are addressed. Goals for the student and possible agency options are explored.

In the event that a student is denied admission to field placement, the student has the right to utilize the appeals process (see Admissions, Termination, and Appeals Policies and Procedures, Section V of this Handbook).

### **Agency Interview**

The faculty field education director discusses placement with the student and arranges an agency contact. The student meets with the agency supervisor to discuss the placement, mutual expectations, and available learning opportunities. A final decision is reached by the field director after consultation with the student and the agency supervisor. Suggested readings and preplacement contacts are worked out on an individual basis.

### **The Placement**

Prior to the beginning of the semester, a field seminar class meeting is held for all social work interns to discuss common concerns, i.e., course requirements, required papers and reports, agency hours and regulation, confidentiality, dress codes, illness, snow days, etc. Outlines for papers, information concerning course requirements, and dates for the field seminars are disseminated.

A student will spend a minimum of 500 hours in the agency setting. The con-current field seminar is a required part of the field placement.

### **Field Seminar**

In conjunction with field placement, all students meet regularly for field seminar. Students share case presentations, discuss concerns and problems, and learn about the different agencies and programs presented. Assignments and professional issues are also discussed. Confidentiality is stressed; agency regulations concerning case materials are respected.

### **Field Instructors**

All field instructors who supervise Murray State University interns have at least a baccalaureate degree in social work and 2 years post BSW practice experience. Because of the extreme importance of the field instructor in providing a meaningful field education, all field instructors are expected to have the following additional qualifications:

- (1) Sufficient time to devote to a student
- (2) A positive attitude towards students and social work education
- (3) A strong desire to learn and grow both personally and professionally
- (4) A minimum of two years experience in the social work field
- (5) Satisfactory job performance
- (6) Physical presence during time of student placement
- (7) A willingness to deal with average as well as outstanding students

### **Field Placement Monitoring and Grading**

The faculty field liaison visits the student and field instructor periodically during the placement period. Contacts are based on individual needs. When problem situations arise, these are handled individually; in many instances the student will be helped to deal with the situations directly.

Two evaluations of the student's performance are made by the field instructor, at mid-term and at the end of the semester. The final grade is assigned by the field education director or the faculty field liaison upon review of the field instructor's evaluations and the student's completed assignments.

Students participate in the formal course evaluation at the end of the placement period. They also evaluate their Field Placement site and Field Instructor.

### **Additional Policies and Procedures**

Details of the field placement process, policies and procedures can be found in the *Field Placement Manual*. The manual is available on the Social Work Program/Field Education web site. Each student must read the *Field Placement Manual* before beginning the field placement.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

Each student is required to purchase a professional liability insurance policy to cover the term of the field placement. This process will be facilitated when the student is enrolled in SWK 498. No student may participate in field placement without liability insurance.

## **Social Work Field Placement Areas**

The following list is representative of areas in which social work field placements are available:

### Aging

Long term and nursing care facilities  
Senior Citizen Centers

### Corrections

Department of Juvenile Justice  
Correctional facilities

### Services to persons with disabilities

Independent Living Program  
Community Mental Health Center; Case management for Persons with Cognitive Disabilities

### Education

Schools  
Family Resource Centers

### Family and Children's Services:

Department of Community Based Services, Protection and Permanency  
Department of Community Based Services, Recruitment and Certification (foster care and adoption)  
Head Start Program

### Health:

Hospitals  
Home Health  
Hospice

### Mental Health

Community Mental Health Center; Adult Case Management  
Community Mental Health Center; Children's Case Management

Special arrangements can be made for agencies outside the Murray State service region, at the discretion of the field director, subject to the approval of the program director.

## V. ADMISSION, TERMINATION, AND APPEALS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Murray State University Social Work Program is a professional social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. As such, it is interested in promoting professionalism in the social work field and providing quality services to future clients. The admission, termination, and appeals processes of the Murray State University Social Work Program are designed to ensure that those individuals who graduate from the program meet the requirements of an entry-level professional social worker.

### **Students applying to and continuing in the Social Work Program at Murray State University are expected to have the following qualities:**

- (1) Self-awareness. The aspiring social worker must know him/herself reasonably well and, on the whole, should value him/herself. The knowledge of his/her own personal strengths and weaknesses should allow the helping person to focus on working effectively with others.
- (2) Professional commitment and behavior. The aspiring social worker should have a strong commitment to the goals of social welfare and to the ethical standards of the social work profession. He/she should work collaboratively with others to use professional knowledge, values, and skills to bring about the changes necessary for people to achieve their life goals more easily.
- (3) Knowledge as a base for practice skills. The activities of the aspiring social worker must be grounded in relevant social, behavioral, and biological theoretical knowledge. The social worker has to understand why people act as they do and the ways that behavior can be changed when that is desired.
- (4) Objectivity. The aspiring social worker must be able to recognize the worth and dignity of every human being. Objectivity involves being able to systematically evaluate people and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. The social worker must, at the same, time, be warm and caring toward those with whom he/she is working. Rejecting people because of their situations or creating barriers for those seeking help will destroy the helping process.
- (5) Empathy. Empathy is the ability to comprehend another's subjective reality and feelings. Empathy and support are necessary to enable the client to use both personal and outside resources, to develop and implement a solution to his/her problem, and to respond appropriately to clients' needs.
- (6) Energy. Helping is an exhausting activity; not only does it require the careful use of knowledge and skill, but it is also a constant drain on feelings and emotions. The professional helper must work on avoiding burnout by developing cooperative and

facilitating interactions with colleagues and users of services (Federico, 1984, pp. 158-160).

(7) Acceptance of diversity. The helping professional must appreciate the value of human diversity. He/she must be willing to serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance regardless of the person's race, ethnicity, country of origin, age, religious affiliation (or lack of), gender, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, and/or value system. Helpers must not impose their own personal, religious, sexual, political, and/or cultural values on their clients.

(8) Ability to apply knowledge learned in the academic setting to a practice situation. Since social workers must be able to function as practitioners, it is essential that they be able to demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge gained in coursework (e.g., ability to relate to others, assess problem situations, develop intervention plans and implement appropriate intervention strategies).

(9) Freedom from chemical dependency or unresolved emotional issues. Since social workers must serve as healthy role models, they must be mentally healthy and free from chemical dependency problems. Admission to the program is based on a minimum of two years of sobriety. If a student is currently in treatment for emotional problems, an independent psychological evaluation and assessment by a recognized agency may be required.

### **Admission to the Social Work Program**

Students wishing to study social work may either declare a social work area when they enter Murray State University, or later indicate their intention by completing an official university Change of Major Form. The student will then be assigned a social work advisor and will be permitted to enroll in the first four social work courses: SWK 101--Introduction to Social Work, SWK 201--Social Work and Social Welfare, SWK 225 Human Diversity, and SWK 301, Human Behavior in the Social Environment I or SWK 302—Human Behavior in the Social Environment II.

However, in order to be formally admitted to the Social Work Program, a student must:

- (1) Have completed 60 hours of coursework with a minimum G.P.A. of 2.5.
- (2) Have completed SWK 101, 201, 225, and 301 or 302 with a social work course G.P.A. of 2.5 and no social work course grades below "C".
- (3) Have completed 40 hours of volunteer hours of volunteer or paid work at a social services agency approved by the admissions committee (some examples of acceptable agencies include. Head start, BB/BS, Boy's and Girl's Clubs, Senior Centers, and Nursing Homes. Church mission trips,

Vacation Bible Schools are not acceptable for this requirement). [This requirement begins in Fall 2009].

(4) Demonstrate competency in written and oral communication (students may be required to complete a writing competency exam).

(5) Complete a criminal background check as instructed by the Program Admissions committee.

(6) Complete an application for admission to the program, available from the Social Work Program Website. This application includes: basic biographical data; information on employment and volunteer experiences; and a 4-to-5 page self-evaluation of the student's interest, readiness, and suitability for a career in social work. The purposes of the self-evaluation are two-fold: to demonstrate competency in written expression of the English language and to reflect the applicant's commitment to the goals and purposes of social work. Students are also asked for full disclosure of the following: conviction of any felony and/or conviction of any misdemeanor that involved bodily harm to another

(7) Be successfully reviewed by the Social Work Program Admissions Committee. This committee may conduct an interview with the applicant. All information obtained through this process will be held in confidence. Knowingly making a false oral or written statement during the admission process could result in denial of admission to the program.

(8) Sign a statement indicating that he/she has read and will follow the code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.

(9) Sign a statement indicating that he/she has read and understands this document (The Social Work Program Student Handbook).

(10) Transfer students must be enrolled at Murray State University for at least one semester and have been enrolled in at least one social work course prior to application for admission to the program

(11) Students transferring coursework from another accredited social work program will be expected to provide the Social Work Program Admissions Committee with the names of two references from the program as well as written permission to contact these references.

Other requirements:

No student may apply for the major until all the prerequisites for the social work program courses [any biology, any economics, soc 133, psych 180, pol 140 and CSC 199] have been met or will be met at the end of the semester in which the student is

applying. Further, no student may apply for the major until all university studies requirements have been met by the end of the semester in which the student is applying. Students may only apply to major if 60 hours of classes, for which college credit has been received, will be completed by end of the semester [in which the student is applying junior standing]. If the student's map report does not reflect that the courses have been completed it is assumed that the student lacks the necessary prerequisites to apply to the major. The required GPA for application to the major is 2.5 by the end of the semester in which the student is applying. Students must fulfill the statistics requirement within one semester after acceptance into the major.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision of the Social Work Program Admissions Committee. There are four possible outcomes of this admission process:

- (1) Unconditional acceptance to the program.
- (2) Conditional acceptance to the program. In this case, the applicant will be notified of specific areas which, in the professional judgement of the Social Work Program Admissions Committee, need improvement and/or correction.
- (3) Deferred decision. The applicant will be notified of specific conditions which must be met before admission will be reconsidered.
- (4) Denial. The applicant will be notified of specific reasons for rejection of his/her application for admission.

Generally speaking, areas of deficit are addressed at the time of application to the program; however, if the faculty becomes aware of problem areas or areas of deficit in learning or experience at a later time, remediation can be requested at that time as well.

**Students who are conditionally accepted for reasons related to GPA will have one semester after acceptance to bring the GPA into compliance.**

**Students who leave Murray State University for a period of time and who must reapply to the university must also reapply to the social work program.**

**Students who, change their major after admission to the social work program and subsequently, wish to return to a social work major, must reapply to the program. A student who reapplies to the program and is reaccepted will be**

**considered to be under the Murray State University catalogue in effect at the time of readmission to the program.**

### **Admission to Field Placement**

A student is eligible for admission to field placement after being formally admitted into the Social Work Program and after completing or when concurrently completing all required course work, both those courses for the social work major and University Studies requirements, and when enrolled in SWK 498. Each student wishing to be admitted to field placement completes an application that is reviewed by the Social Work Field Admissions Committee.

Additionally, each applicant is interviewed by the Social Work Field Admissions Committee. Issues of concern that may have been identified during the applicant's program admission interview are to be addressed by the applicant; GPA requirements are reviewed as is progress toward completion of academic course work. Goals for the student and possible agency options are explored. A particular setting will be recommended on the basis of these variables.

The student is informed verbally of admission to Field Placement. Written notification of non-admission to Field Placement is provided. Admission to Field Placement is not guaranteed, nor is a Field Placement.

### **Termination from the Social Work Program**

Students may be terminated from the Murray State University Social Work Program if, in the professional judgment of the social work faculty, violations of professional and/or ethical codes have occurred. These violations may include but are not limited to:

- (1) Failure to meet or maintain academic grade point requirements as established by the university and the Social Work Program.
- (2) Failure to meet the guidelines outlined in the contract received with the admissions letter.
- (3) Behavior judged to be in violation of the NASW code of ethics.
- (4) Academic cheating, lying, or plagiarism.
- (5) Unresolved personal issues that are documented as occurring during the course of study and in the professional judgment of the social work faculty, could impair effective quality provision of services to future clients.

- (6) Psychiatric disturbances that are documented as occurring during the course of study and in the professional judgment of the social work faculty, could impair effective quality provision of services to future clients.
- (7) Evidence of chemical dependency documented as occurring during the course of study.
- (8) Inappropriate behavior and/or an inability to develop the appropriate interpersonal skills necessary for effective social work practice.
- (9) Documented evidence of conviction of criminal activity occurring during the course of study or which occurred prior to admission to the program and became known after admission.
- (10) Failure to follow program policies as outlined in this handbook.

The Social Work Program Admissions Committee may require outside evaluations and/or opinions of professionals as is deemed necessary. The selection such professional will be the responsibility of the Social Work Program Admissions Committee and that selection will be binding on the student. Any cost for such evaluation will be borne by the student.

### **Termination Process**

Prior to termination, the student will be provided with verbal and written notification of impending probation and/or termination. A personal interview will be scheduled with the student by the director of the Social Work Program to discuss alternate options to probation and/or termination. If another option is viable, a contract will be negotiated between the director and the student which will specify steps to be taken toward resolution and will establish a time limit for the accomplishment of this plan. A final interview with the director of the Social Work Program will be scheduled to determine if the steps in the contract have been successfully accomplished. The director of the Social Work Program may negotiate the contract as needed.

### **Appeals Process**

Conditional acceptance to the program, denial of admission with delayed disposition, denial of admission, and/or termination from the program may be appealed in the following manner:

(1) A written statement of appeal may be submitted to the director of the Social Work Program within 10 days of notification of conditional acceptance, denial, or termination. The student may present any information regarding areas that he/she feels need clarification or re-evaluation.

(2) Within 30 days of receipt of the written appeal, a hearing will be scheduled with the student, the director of the Social Work Program, a departmental faculty member designated by the chair of the department, and a faculty member chosen by the student.

(3) The student will be notified, in writing, by the director of the Social Work Program of the decision of the departmental hearing not later than 10 days following the hearing.

(4) If the student is dissatisfied with the results of the departmental hearing, a formal grievance may be made in writing to the dean of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services. This grievance shall be submitted for consideration "not later than the established mid-term of the semester immediately following the semester in which the incident of grievance occurred." The dean will refer the grievance to the Grievance Committee of the college. This committee consists of six members of the faculty of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services (one from each of the four departments in the college, elected by colleagues in each of the departments) and two student members, selected by the dean, preferably one graduate student and one undergraduate student, neither of whom shall be employed by the university in a teaching capacity. The dean of the college shall inform the chair of the Grievance Committee of any formal grievance so submitted, and request that the committee take formal action in the matter by forwarding the grievant's completed grievance form to the committee for consideration and by making a copy of the grievant's completed form available to the respondent.

Upon receipt of the completed grievance form, the chair of the Grievance Committee, or his/her appointed representative from the committee, shall meet with the grievant and respondent (in this case, the director of the Social Work Program), separated and/or jointly, and attempt to seek an informal resolution of the existing conflict, which may involve a detailed analysis of the basis for the respondent's (program director's) action. In the event that a resolution of the disagreement does not occur through informal efforts, the chair of the Grievance Committee shall convene the committee to examine all data submitted by the grievant to determine whether or not a formal hearing is warranted. If, in the committee's opinion, a hearing is warranted, the committee will conduct a hearing within 20 days of the committee's receipt of the written grievance. If, in the committee's opinion, a formal hearing is not warranted, the committee will so inform the dean, setting forth in writing its reason(s) for not granting a hearing.

In the event that the dean should deem a hearing judicious, he/she may request that a hearing be conducted; and the committee will then hold a hearing of the grievance not later than 15 days from the date of the dean's request for a hearing.

After a grievance hearing, the committee will meet to consider all relevant information and to formulate a recommendation, which shall be submitted in writing to the dean of the college, who will provide copies of the committee's recommendation(s) to both the complainant and respondent. Unless an extension of time is sought by the committee, the recommendation(s) of the committee will be rendered within 10 days of the hearing. An extension of time may be granted by the dean at his/her discretion. The dean shall, if he/she grants an extension of time, inform both the complainant and the respondent of the extension. In the event that the grievance is not resolved by the recommendation(s) of the committee, the action of the dean, or both, the dean shall inform the complainant of the next step in the grievance procedure.

**Students are hereby notified that any information obtained in this process is subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act 20 USC Sec 1232g.**

(Board of Regents 11-16-91)

## **VI. Other Important Information**

### **Advising**

All students declaring a major in social work are assigned an advisor by the program director. The responsibilities for the advisor include:

- (1) Assisting the student with academic program planning
- (2) Assisting the student with career advising;
- (3) Referring the student to appropriate university and community resources.

While the advisor is available to assist the student in interpreting the *Murray State University Bulletin* and the Murray Academic Progress (MAP) Report, planning course schedules, and completing degree applications, the student is expected to assume ultimate responsibility for these tasks. The student-advisor relationship is meant to be facilitative one, rather than one that limits the student's choices, or assumes total responsibility for these choices. Either the student or the advisor may request appointments. Each student is required to meet with his/her advisor at least once during the semester prior to registration for the following semester.

### **Policy on Academic Honesty**

Cheating, plagiarism (submitting another person's material as one's own), or doing work for another person which will receive academic credit are all impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copying of examinations, assignments, reports, or term papers, or the presentation of unacknowledged material as if it were the student's own work. Disciplinary action

may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the faculty member who teaches the course in which the cheating took place. (*University Student Handbook, Student Life Policies as amended by the Board of Regents, 11/19/93*)

For social work majors, cheating/academic dishonesty includes the attempt to obtain, whether or not successful, or to attempt to use another person's/student's work as one's own as well as the material contained in the MSU Academic Honesty Policy above. This includes all assignments. For social work majors, the consequences are more serious because academic dishonesty is a serious ethical issue and reflects on the student's professional integrity. A student in violation of the academic honesty policy may fail the class or may be asked to leave the social work program. Other sanctions may also be involved. Any student who is aware of cheating in a class and does not make this known to the instructor and the program director will be considered to have given tacit approval to academic dishonesty and will be subject to the sanctions stated above.

*Note: Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any examination or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the examination has been compromised.*

### **Policy on Racial Harassment**

It is the policy of Murray State University to conduct and provide programs, activities and services to students, faculty and staff in an atmosphere free from racial harassment. Racial harassment is any behavior that would verbally or physically threaten, torment, badger, heckle or persecute an individual because of his/her race.

Isolated instances of misconduct, although never condoned, do not necessarily constitute racial harassment, nor a hostile environment.

Racial harassment of university faculty, staff, students or visitors is prohibited and shall subject the offender to appropriate disciplinary action ranging from disciplinary warning to expulsion.

The administration has an open-door policy for any student who feels he or she has been subjected to racial harassment or discrimination. Students are urged to contact the Office of Student Affairs, Ordway Hall, in the event that racial harassment arises outside of the employment setting. All others should contact the Office of Equal Opportunity, Wells Hall. (*University Student Handbook, Student Life Policies as amended by the Board of Regents, 11/19/93*)

### **Policy on Combating Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of Murray State University to maintain the university community as a place of work and study for faculty, staff and students, free from sexual harassment and all forms of sexual intimidation and exploitation. All faculty, staff and students should be aware that the university is concerned and prepared to take action to prevent and correct such behavior and those individuals who engage in such behavior are subject to discipline.

Behaviors which constitute sexual harassment can be classified in three categories: (1) repeated and unwanted sexual behavior involving physical contact; (2) verbal comments or suggestions of a sexual nature which adversely affect the working or learning environment; (3) coercive behavior, including suggestions that

academic or employment reprisals or rewards will follow the refusal or granting of sexual favors. These constitute gross misconduct and will not be tolerated. In such cases, a single incident would establish grounds for action.

Misconduct involving students in a non-employment setting is governed by the University Codes of Conduct, and complaints about such behavior should be referred to the Office of Student Affairs. Anyone who is subject to offensive sexual behavior in the employment setting is encouraged to pursue the matter through the Office of Equal Opportunity. (*University Student Handbook, Student Life Policies as amended by the Board of Regents, 11/19/93*)

### **Policy on Hazing**

Murray State University recognizes that student organizations exist for the purpose of extending opportunities for education, social interaction, leadership and skill development, and personal growth beyond the classroom. Therefore, the practice of hazing pledges, associate members, initiates or members is antithetical to the purposes of registered student organizations at Murray State University and is strictly prohibited by the university. Furthermore, as of July 1986, hazing is a violation of Chapter 164 of Kentucky Revised Statutes. In pertinent part, the statute reads as follows:

“(This statute) prohibits any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers mental or physical health or involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs for the purpose of initiation or affiliation with any organization. . . . In the case of a student or faculty violator, (violation of this statute shall result in) his

suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate disciplinary action and, in the case of an organization which authorizes such conduct, (violation shall result in) rescission of permission for that organization to operate on campus property. Such penalties shall be in addition to any penalty pursuant to the penal law or any other chapter (of Kentucky Revised Statute) to which a violator or organization may be subject.”

Specifically, on the campus of Murray State University, hazing is defined as any on-campus or off-campus activity which results in mental or physical harassment, humiliation, degradation, ridicule, shock, endangerment, physical disfigurement, excessive fatigue, danger to health, or the involuntary consumption of alcohol or drugs. This prohibition against hazing applies equally to student organizations, individual students, faculty, and staff members, visitors to the campus, and licensees and invitees on the campus.

Any student who participates in hazing as defined above has violated the Murray State University Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action as described in the Standards in Disciplinary Proceedings of the Student Life Policies. Any organization which authorizes or permits hazing to occur has violated the policy statement on Regulation of Student Groups and will be subject to group disciplinary action as outlined in that policy. (*University Student Handbook, Student Life Policies as amended by the Board of Regents, 11/19/93*)

### **Policy on Intolerance**

The university is committed to creating an educational environment, which is free from intolerance directed toward individuals or groups, and strives to create and

maintain an environment that fosters respect for others. As an educational institution, the university has a mandate to address problems of a society deeply ingrained with bias and prejudice. Toward that end, the university provides educational programs and activities to create an environment in which diversity and understanding of other cultures are valued.

A. Intolerance refers to an attitude, feeling or belief wherein an individual shows contempt for other individuals or groups based on characteristics such as race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or political or religious belief.

B. Actions motivated by intolerance violate the principles upon which American society is built and serve to destroy the fabric of the society we share. Such actions do untold and unjust harm to those who experience this kind of discrimination and threaten the reputation of the university.

C. The expression of diverse views and opinions is encouraged in the university community. Further, the First Amendment of the United States Constitution assures the right of free expression. In a community which recognizes the rights of its members to hold divergent views and to express those views, sometimes ideas are expressed which are contrary to university values and objectives. Nevertheless, the university cannot impose disciplinary sanctions upon such expression when it is otherwise in compliance with university regulations.

D. When any violation of a university policy, rule or regulation is motivated by intolerance toward an individual or group based on characteristics such as race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or political or religious beliefs, the sanction will be increased in severity and may include separation from the

university. (*University Student Handbook, Student Life Policies as amended by the Board of Regents, 11/19/93*)

### **Adjudicating Student Grievances**

In instances where student rights have been allegedly denied or violated, students are requested to first speak with the faculty member with whom the student has a grievance. If the student feels that this meeting does not provide a satisfactory resolution, the student should speak with the program director. If the student has a grievance with the program director or the prior stated issue remains unresolved, he or she may speak with the chair of the Social Work, Criminal Justice and Gerontology Department. If after discussing the issue with the student as well as the faculty member or staff member involved, resolution is not reached, the student has the option of following the grievance procedure as outlined in the *Murray State University Student Handbook, Student Life Policies*.

Students are expected to follow this grievance policy. Failure to do so will reflect on the student's ability to remain in the Social Work Program.

### **Teacher, Course, and Text Evaluation**

Students are asked to submit an evaluation of each instructor, course, and the text at the end of the semester. A formal written evaluation is administered in the fall semester in courses taught by tenured faculty, and in both the fall and spring

semester in courses taught by non-tenured faculty. These evaluations are used in assessment of the curriculum as well as personnel.

All faculty are open to informal, on-going feedback from students. This information is important and can be used for course modification. Social work faculty are also open to input on their teaching methodology.

### **Social Work Student Participation in Hiring Social Work Faculty**

When faculty positions become available, students are encouraged to participate in the hiring process. The Student Association of Social Workers president is asked to serve as the coordinator for identifying students willing to engage in the interview process. Following the interviews, students and faculty meet to offer feedback and impressions of the candidate. Program faculty conveys this information to the central administration involved in the hiring process.

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

The Murray State University Student Association of Social Workers was organized in 1971. This organization provides students with an opportunity to interact with other social work students and social work practitioners on a professional as well as a social basis. Meetings are held monthly giving students the opportunity to hear presentations by professional social workers, graduate social work program representatives, and other area professionals. Members have also held fundraisers to support local social service agencies, as well as the Pam and Havana Rutledge Scholarship

### **Pam and Havana Rutledge Memorial Scholarship**

This scholarship was established in 1974 to honor Pam Rutledge, a May 1973 social work graduate who was killed in a plane crash two months after graduation. Each year one or more scholarships are awarded to junior or senior social work students. Award determination is based on financial need and commitment to the profession of social work. Scholarship applications for this scholarship, as well as all other university scholarships, are available from the University Scholarship Office located in Ordway Hall. The scholarship application deadline is February 1<sup>st</sup>.

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

The National Association of Social Workers is a professional social work organization with over 155,000 members and chapters through the United States whose primary purpose is to help all social workers to advance their practice in the field of human service. The student membership fee includes an online subscription to the journal *Social Work*, the monthly newspaper *NASW News*, and the *Kentucky NASW Chapter Newsletter* and member level access to the web sites of both NASW and NASW-KY. Membership is available to students at a reduced cost. Membership applications are available from any of the social work faculty and on-line at <http://www.socialworkers.org/>

### **Social Work Intern Support Fund**

This fund was established in 1991 through an initiative of social work field supervisors.

It is available for students enrolled in SWK 499, Field Practicum, whose agencies do not provide for student field-related travel. Students requesting support will submit a request in writing to the director of field. They will outline need and efforts made to access resources at their placement. Decision is made by the faculty, based on need and availability of resources.

### **Job Placement**

Social work students have several avenues available to them when looking at employment opportunities after graduation. The Murray State University Career Services Office compiles placement folders for graduating seniors and sends them to agencies for students who are looking for jobs. This office also receives notification of job opportunities on a local, regional, and national basis, and informs graduating students of these opportunities. Career Services also offers assistance in resume preparation, interviewing tips, etc.

The Social Work Program director and faculty also receive notifications of position vacancies. Job notices are posted on the Social Work Program bulletin board located near the social work classrooms and student lounge/study room (4<sup>th</sup> floor north, Oakley Applied Science Building).

Another excellent source of notification of employment opportunities is through field placement agencies. Each year a number of students are hired by agencies where they did their field placement.

**Graduate Social Work Education**

The chief goal of master's level social work education is to prepare students for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. A traditional Master of Social Work (MSW) program requires 2 years of full-time study. However, advanced standing (up to one academic year of credit) typically is given to graduates of accredited BSW programs. Information on specific MSW programs is available when in field seminar through guest speaker and handouts. Information is also readily available on line.

**Kentucky Social Work Licensure**

Graduates of accredited baccalaureate social work programs are eligible to take the Kentucky Social Work Licensure examination. This examination is important especially for those students planning to work in private (non-state or non-religious) agencies. Information can be obtained in the Social Work Program office and is made available to students when in field seminar. Information is also available on line at <http://finance.ky.gov/ourcabinet/caboff/OAS/op/socwkbd/>

**Kentucky Merit Examination**

Students wishing to work as social workers in any Commonwealth of Kentucky (state) agency may first have to take a merit exam. This examination can

be taken during the student's last semester in school. Information is available at

<http://personnel.ky.gov/employment/>

### **Public Child Welfare Certification Program**

The Public Child Welfare Certification Program has been implemented by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services in order to better serve the children and families in crisis across the state. The purpose of this program is to give BSW students the opportunity to receive the same training information as a state Child Protection Worker while completing their BSW degree in order to start work as a CPS worker following graduation.

To be eligible for this program, students must be either a junior or senior BSW student. They must have an overall GPA of 2.5 and a 3.0 GPA in social work courses. A competitive selection process will be used and a maximum of 20 full time students from each of the participating universities will be chosen each year. Recipients will have their tuition paid in full for up to four semesters. They will be given \$1300 per semester stipend for books, living expenses and travel related to this program. Finally, once they have completed this program and have graduated with at least a 3.0 GPA in their social work courses, they will be certified as having successfully completed the PCWC Program and given priority for employment with the Cabinet For Health and Family Services. As a participant in this program they will be obligated, by contract, to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. They will be expected to accept a position with the Department of Community Based Services, Protection and Permanency, within two months of certification and remain employed there for two (2) years. Attempts will be made to place graduates in the

area of their choice within the state, however, they may be asked to relocate in order to fill an available position. Failure to meet these obligations or to successfully complete this program could result in the forfeiture of all funds received and recipients may be responsible for reimbursing the program for its cost.

REVISED 10/08