



**MURRAY STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

**College of Education and Human Services**

Social Work

# Student Handbook

(revised Fall 2015)



**Department of Community Leadership and  
Human Services**  
**College of Education and Human Services**

## 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 any time. 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

(<http://www.murraystate.edu/academics/CollegesDepartments/CollegeOfEducationandHumanServices/coehsacademicunits/CLHS/SocialWork/index.aspx>).

### **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. In 2013, the program was moved to the Department of Community Leadership and Human Services. In 2014, after university reorganization, the department was merged into the renamed College of Education 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.

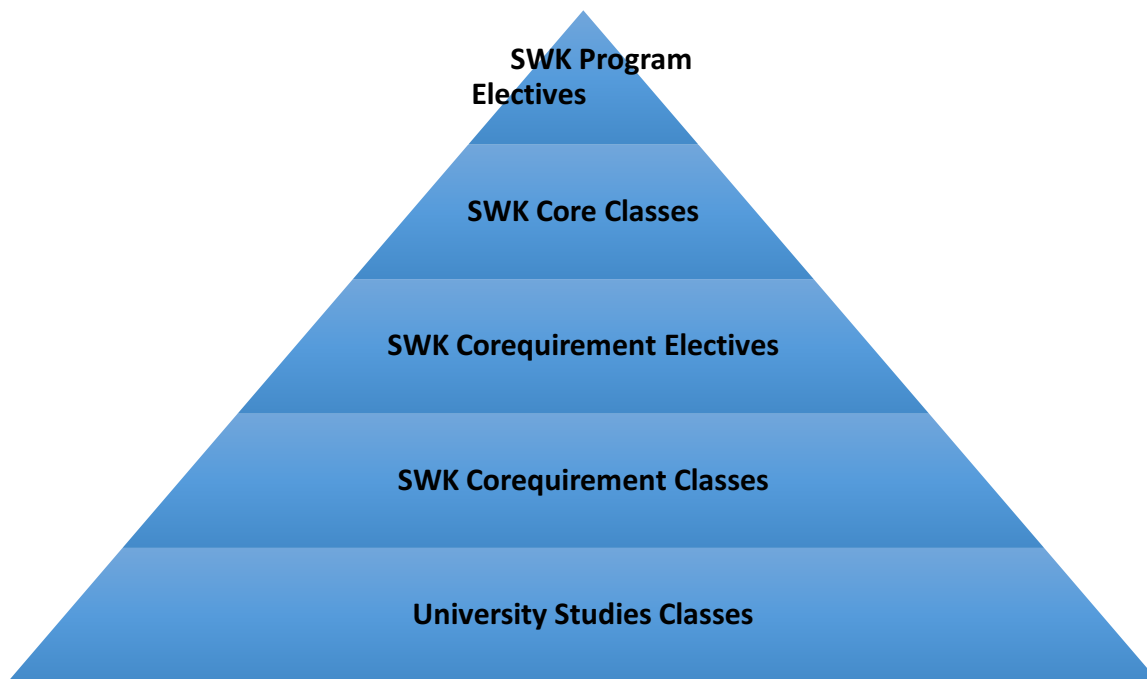
The program was initially accredited by the Council on Social Work Education in 1974, and its accredited status was reaffirmed in 1979, 1986, 1994,

2002 and 2010.

### **Basic Information about the Program**

The social work program is offered through Interactive Television (ITV) at all Murray State University regional campuses, Fort Campbell, Henderson, Hopkinsville, Madisonville, Murray and Paducah. The social work program is an area, not a major, so students may not declare a minor. [Areas require students to take many more courses related to their area of study than do majors.] Students begin in their 3rd or 4<sup>th</sup> semester as a cohort to take the first four required social work classes as a block of classes. The classes are SWK 190, 201, 225 and either SWK 301 or 302 depending on which is offered. Students enter the block of major courses in either spring or fall. The program is a cohort model so generally a student is in classes with the same group of students throughout the program. The program utilizes the cohort model because research demonstrates that a cohort model fosters strong bonds between students and leads to better academic and professional outcomes. The program is designed for full time students although modifications can be made by the program director for part time students. Students are expected to complete all university [general education] studies classes before beginning major classes. Transfer courses are evaluated by the Transfer Center to determine the fit with university studies classes.

The curriculum is made up of the following areas.



Murray State Social Work Program Undergraduate Curriculum Graphic - 2015

- A. **University Studies [General Education] Classes.** These foundational classes provide basic knowledge on which the social work program is built. A number of social work program prerequisite classes may be included in the university studies classes, including basic sociology, basic psychology, American government, any economics class, and biology, if the student chooses the university studies classes wisely.
- B. **Core/Required Pre-major and Major Classes:** These classes include SWK 190, 201, 225, 301, 302, 303, 310, 311, 312, 313, 385, 350, 498 and 499. See most recent university catalog for prerequisites and course descriptions. [SWK 301 is taught only in fall semester, SWK 302 is taught only in spring semester.] SWK 303 and 313 are taught fall, spring and summer semesters. All other core classes are taught both fall and spring semester. [SWK 190 and SWK 201 may be satisfied by SWK 125 and SWK 222 in the Kentucky Community College system. SWK 385 may be satisfied by any abnormal psychology class.] However, any classes taken at another institution must be transferred at the end of the semester completed to Murray State University.

Social work program electives. Social Work Program electives are classes that are not core classes [see above] but have the SWK prefix. A total of 15 hours of social work program electives are required. Six hours must be at the 300 level or above. The other nine hours can be from the 100 level through the 400 level.

SWK 405 is taught in the fall of each year and SWK 415 is taught in the spring. These courses are taught by Department of Community Based Services [DCBS] [Child Protection]. SWK 405 is a prerequisite for SWK 415. SWK 415 may not be taken unless SWK 405 has been completed successfully. SWK 405 and SWK 415 are required for Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP) participants although open to other students as well. Other program electives are taught randomly; that is the program cannot predict when they will be taught since these courses depend on student interest and faculty availability.

- C. **Social Work Program Co-requirements:** These courses include any statistics class, any economics class, a computer science class and any biology class. These courses may overlap with University Studies classes, but students must check to make sure that the course chosen matches the university studies requirement in order to fulfill a university studies/general education requirement. In addition students need nine hours of classes (Co-requirement electives) in a variety of areas to support the social work program core and program elective classes. See current *University Bulletin* or Racer Audit (degree audit) to see included classes.
- D. **Social Work Program Corequisite Elective Courses:** Nine hours of corequisite electives are required. See current *University Bulletin* or Racer Audit (degree audit) to see included classes.
- E. **Information about Required Classes and Student Progress Toward Degree:** The information about classes and degree requirements is in the current *University Bulletin* and also in the student's myGate on the degree audit page. [The Registrar's Office provides students with updated information about their progress toward their degree on this audit.] Students can also find advising notes in the degree audit.
- F. **Transfer Students:** Transfer students must meet with the program director who will evaluate courses taken at other institutions. Students who intend to take classes at other institutions to transfer back to Murray State must also consult

with the program director to be sure that the classes will apply to the Murray State University social work degree.

- G. **Post Baccalaureate Students:** Students who have an undergraduate degree in a major other than social work may complete the social work degree as a Post Baccalaureate Student. This status is marked on degree status. Students seeking a Baccalaureate Post Degree will not have a Racr Audit available. The student must complete a minimum of 32 semester hours in residence at Murray State University including any specific departmental requirements, prerequisites and co-requirements. Fifteen semester hours of upper-level courses must be earned in the completion of the new area/major. Post Baccalaureate students are required to have a GPA of 2.5 on all work completed for the BSW degree. [The Social Work Program requires 51 hours of required core courses and 15 hours of Social Work Program electives].

### **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.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

### Policy Statement

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. For more information, contact the Executive Director of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access, 103 Wells Hall, (270) 809-3155 (voice), (270) 809-3361 (TDD).

### Students with Disabilities

Students requiring special assistance due to a disability should visit the Office of Student Disability Services immediately for assistance with accommodations. For more information, students should contact the Office of Student Disability Services, 423 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071. 270-809-2018 (voice) 270-809-5889(TDD).

## **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 2007].

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

- a. To advance professional social work practice in human service agencies and organizations by preparing students for employment as generalist social workers.
- b. To promote and provide professional social work services to human service agencies and organizations.
- c. To assist students in developing the readiness for graduate study in social work.

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

- a. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
- b. Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity.
- c. Demonstrate the professional use of self.
- d. Demonstrate an understanding of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies of change that advance social and economic justice.
- e. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.

- f. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work to practice with systems of all sizes.
- g. 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).
- h. Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies.
- i. Evaluate research studies and apply findings to practice, and, under supervision, to evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.
- j. Use communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.
- k. Use supervision appropriate to generalist practice. 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 experiential learning, that is, “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 successfully 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 current *Murray State University Bulletin*.

#### **Post Baccalaureate Students:**

All Post Baccalaureate will be advised on course of study by the Program Director.

#### **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 Faculty Member 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.

#### **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*. Transfer students from other institutions will be advised by the program director.

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 were 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.

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 for the professional foundation areas or for the field practicum. **No credit is given for previous work or life experience (CSWE Accreditation requirement).**

### **Application for Degree**

Degrees are awarded in December, May, and August. Students must apply for graduation and pay a degree fee through myGate. Students planning to graduate in December must apply in the preceding April; May graduates must apply in the preceding November; and August graduates must apply in the preceding March.

### **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; SWK 385, Mental Health 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. This includes SWK 365, Crisis Intervention and SWK 424, Case Management.

#### 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. **Students enrolled in SWK 499 may not be enrolled in any other course or courses for academic credit at Murray State University or at any other academic institution while enrolled in SWK 499 regardless of the reason.** 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 (verified on their degree audit) before beginning SWK 499.** This means that students may not have incomplete grades on their racr audit and all coursework taken at other institutions must be transferred to Murray State University and recorded on the racr audit prior to beginning SWK 499.

**No student is guaranteed a field placement.** All students must obtain liability insurance and a criminal background check 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 the 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. Issues of concern that may have been identified during the applicant's program admission process and while in the program must be addressed before a student is allowed a field placement. These issues may included but are not limited

to behaviors that in a work setting would be considered unprofessional: unaddressed addiction issues, unaddressed mental or physical health issues, inappropriate relationships with classmates or faculty, boundary issues, collegiality issues with classmates or faculty as well as dishonesty in academic work or presentation of self.

In the event that a student is denied admission to field placement by the Social Work Program, the student has the right to utilize the appeals process (see Admissions, Termination, and Appeals Policies and Procedures, Section V of this Handbook). However, if the student is denied a field placement by an agency, the decision of the agency is final and is not subject to appeal since Murray State University has no authority over any agency or practicum site.

### **Agency Interview**

The faculty field education director discusses placement with the student and arranges an agency contact. **The student may not make contact with any potential field agency without the permission of the Field Director. If this policy is violated the student will not be allowed an internship at the agency at which the student violated the policy.** 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.

### **The Placement**

At 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. Directions for assessment, information concerning course requirements, and dates for the field seminars are disseminated.

The 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. However, if a BSW practitioner is not available a task supervisor will be assigned for the daily work of the internship and a social work supervisor will be provided by the field director or designee to provide social work input into the field experience on a weekly basis. Because of the extreme importance of the field instructor in providing a meaningful field education, all field instructors must have the followings 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 of 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 field education director or designee contacts the student and field instructor at least three times during the placement period. Additional 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 designee 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

#### **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  
Drug Court  
Substance abuse facilities

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. **[Generally, field placements are limited to no more than 350 miles from Murray.]**

## **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, the program is focused on 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 available online from the Registrar's office. The student will then be assigned a social work advisor and will be permitted to enroll in the first four social work courses: SWK 190--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 190, 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".  
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. Headstart, BB/BS, Boy's and Girl's Clubs, Senior Centers, and Nursing Homes. [ Church mission trips, Vacation Bible Schools and similar church related activities are not acceptable for this requirement].
- (3) Demonstrate competency in written and oral communication demonstrated by a grade of C or better in ENG 105 and in COM 161 [public speaking].
- (4) Complete a criminal background check as instructed by the Program Admissions committee.
- (5) Complete an application for admission to the program, available from the Social Work Program Canvas Site. This application includes: basic biographical data; information on employment and volunteer experiences; and a four to five 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.
- (6) 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 WILL result in denial of admission to the program.
- (7) Sign a statement indicating that he/she has read and will follow the *National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics*
- (8) Sign a statement indicating that he/she has read and understands this document (*The Social Work Program Student Handbook*).
- (9) 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
- (10) 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 as well as a letter that the student left the previous program in good standing.

**Additional Admissions Requirements for the Social Work Program:**

All university/general education classes must be completed prior to enrolling in SWK 312 and 313. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the program director.

- A. All students must for the program the semester in which they have completed swk 190, 201, 225, and 301 or 302. Students who have not applied to the program will be allowed to continue into SWK 310 [resulting in at a delay of graduation by at least one semester]. The expectation is that all prerequisites for the social work program courses [any biology, any economics, SOC 133, PSY 180, POL 140 and CSC 199] have been met or will be met at the end of the semester after which the student has applied. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the program director.
- B. The required GPA for application to the major is 2.5 by the end of the semester in which the student is applying. However, if the student has not achieved the required GPA, the faculty admissions committee may grant conditional acceptance and give a time frame for achieving the required GPA.

Applicants will be notified electronically 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 judgment 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 required at that time as well if the student wishes to remain in the program.

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 more than a year may be asked to 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, may be asked to 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.

### **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 notification.
- (3) Behavior judged to be in violation of the *NASW Code of Ethics*.

- (4) Academic cheating, lying, or plagiarism as outlined in the current *MSU Bulletin*.
- (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) Mental Health issues/disturbances that are documented as occurring during the course of study and that, 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 (as outlined in **The Placement** of the *Handbook* section above) 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. Students may be suspended from the program if criminal proceedings are pending against them while enrolled in the program until the issue is resolved.
- (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 other professionals as is deemed necessary. The selection of such professionals 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 (electronic) 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 [electronic] 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 [electronic] 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 [electronically and by US mail] 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 Education 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. 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 griever's completed grievance form to the committee for consideration and by making a copy of the griever'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)



## V. 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 Racer Audit and planning course schedules, the student is expected to assume ultimate responsibility for these tasks. The application for the degree is the responsibility of the student. The information is available to the student on the student's myGate under the Academics tab. 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

Murray State University takes seriously its moral and educational obligation to maintain high standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior. Instructors are expected to evaluate students' academic achievements accurately, as well as ascertain that work submitted by students is authentic and the result of their own efforts, and consistent with established academic standards. Students are obligated to respect and abide by the basic standards of personal and professional integrity.

#### Violations of Academic Honesty include:

**Cheating** - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized information such as books, notes, study aids, or other electronic, online, or digital devices in any academic exercise; as well as unauthorized communication of information by any means to or from others during any academic exercise.

**Fabrication and Falsification** - Intentional alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves changing information whereas fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information.

**Multiple Submission** - The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work, including oral reports, for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor.

**Plagiarism** - Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, creative work, or data of someone else as one's own in any academic exercise, without due and proper acknowledgement.

Instructors should outline their expectations that may go beyond the scope of this policy at the beginning of each course and identify such expectations and restrictions in the course syllabus. When an instructor receives evidence, either directly or indirectly, of academic dishonesty, he or she should investigate the instance. The faculty member should then take appropriate disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to the following:

- 1) Requiring the student(s) to repeat the exercise or do additional related exercise(s).
- 2) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) on the particular exercise(s) involved.
- 3) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) in the course.

**If the disciplinary action results in the awarding of a grade of E in the course, the student(s) may not drop the course.**

Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any exercise or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the exercise has been compromised. Faculty also reserve the right to document in the course syllabi further academic honesty policy elements related to the individual disciplines.

A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member with the department chair in writing within five working days. Note: If, at any point in this process, the student alleges that actions have taken place that may be in violation of the Murray State University Non-Discrimination Statement, this process must be suspended and the matter be directed to the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access. Any appeal will be forwarded to the appropriate university committee as determined by the Provost.

**Expectations Specific to Social Work:** 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**

See current University Student Handbook:

[http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student\\_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf](http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf)

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

See current University Student Handbook:

[http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student\\_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf](http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf)

### **Policy on Hazing**

See current University Student Handbook:

[http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student\\_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf](http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf)

### **Policy on Intolerance**

See current University Student Handbook:

[http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student\\_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf](http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf)

### **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 Community Leadership and Human Services 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*. **See current university Student Handbook:** [http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student\\_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf](http://www.murraystate.edu/Libraries/Student_Affairs/StuLife2015-16.pdf)

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.

### **Course Evaluation**

Students are asked to submit an evaluation of each instructor, course, at the end of each semester.

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.

### **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 community practitioners on a professional as well as a social basis. Meetings are held monthly. Elected officers with the help of a faculty sponsor determine meeting content. Each extended campus site at which there is a social work program has its own Student Association of Social Workers.

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

The National Association of Social Workers is a professional social work organization with over 165,000 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 on-line at <http://www.socialworkers.org/>

## **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 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. These notifications are posted on the Social Work Program Alumni Facebook page. Students are eligible to join this page when they are enrolled in SWK 499.

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 or through contacts made during the field practicum.

## **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 is made available to students when in field seminar. Information is also available on line at <http://bsw.ky.gov/>

### **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. This program is a pre-employment contract administered by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

To be eligible for this program, students must be either a junior or senior BSW student. The student must be in either the first or second semester of social work classes and must have a minimum of three and a four semesters left in the program (junior standing). The student must have an overall GPA of 2.5 and a 3.0 GPA in social work courses. A statewide competitive selection process is used and the number of students accepted into the program each year varies.

Recipients will have their tuition paid in full for up to four semesters and will receive a 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 as soon as offered and remain employed there for two (2) years. Failure to meet these obligations or to successfully complete this program once tuition has been paid or stipends granted will

result in Payback Status [the forfeiture and reimbursement of all funds received with the Department of Community Based Services, Protection and Permanency].

*Revised 9/2015*