



# UNION UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL *of* SOCIAL WORK

## **The School of Social Work**

### **Master of Social Work Program**

Student Handbook

**2024- 2025**

Union University  
1050 Union University Drive  
Jackson, Tennessee 38305

Phone: 731-661-5554  
FAX: 731-661-5566

Union University  
2745 Hacks Cross Rd  
Germantown, Tennessee 38138

Phone: 901-312-1945  
Fax: 901-759-1197

## Table of Contents

Faculty Welcome .....	4
Faculty and Staff .....	5
Adjunct Faculty .....	6
<b>I. An Overview of the University .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Our Identity .....	8
Our Core Values .....	8
Our Mission .....	8
<b>II. Campus Policies and Procedures .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Cell Phone Usage .....	9
Change of Name and Address .....	9
Communication .....	9
Communication with Faculty .....	10
Confidentiality of Student Records .....	10
Liability and Malpractice Insurance .....	10
Motor Vehicle Parking and Registration .....	10
Non-Discrimination Policy .....	11
Personal Safety on Campus & In Field Placement .....	11
Student Life .....	12
Student Conduct .....	12
Tuition and Fees .....	12
UU Alerts Notification System .....	12
<b>III. Campus Services .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Chapel and Spiritual Life .....	13
Computing Services .....	13
Counseling Services .....	14
Disability Services .....	14
Graduate Housing .....	14
Health Services .....	14
Library Services .....	14
Student Financial Planning .....	14
Union Station .....	15
Vocatio Center for Life Calling and Career .....	15
Wellness Services .....	15
<b>IV. Graduate Social Work Program Overview .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Accreditation .....	16
The Mission of the MSW Social Work Program .....	16
The Relationship of the University Mission to the MSW Program .....	16
MSW Program Goals .....	17
MSW Theoretical Orientations for Social Work Practice .....	18
Generalist Practice Framework .....	20
Generalist Year Competencies .....	20
Generalist Year Curriculum Summary .....	22
Advanced Specialist Practice Framework .....	25
Advanced Specialist Year Competencies .....	26
Specialist and Advanced Standing Curriculum Summary .....	27

<b>V. MSW Program Policies and Procedures .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Academic Integrity .....	30
Plagiarism Rubric .....	32
Attendance Policy .....	32
Core Performance Standards .....	33
Faculty Advising .....	33
Grading Scale.....	33
Grading System .....	33
Licensure.....	34
Requirements for Licensure.....	34
Licensure for School Social Work.....	35
Phi Alpha Honor Society .....	35
<b>VI. Admissions.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Credit for Life Experience and Previous Work Experience .....	35
Non-Degree Seeking Students.....	36
Transfer Credit.....	36
Admission Requirements.....	36
Advanced Standing Criteria.....	36
Admissions Process .....	37
Provisional Status for Admission .....	37
<b>VII. Progression in the MSW Program.....</b>	<b>38</b>
Academic Probation.....	38
Repeating Courses .....	39
Suspension/Termination Process .....	39
Appeal Process for Termination/Suspension.....	40
Withdrawal from Classes.....	41
Re-admission to the MSW Program .....	41
<b>VIII. Grievance Procedures (Academic).....</b>	<b>41</b>
Review of Instruction .....	42
Grade Appeal.....	42
Academic Dishonesty Appeal.....	43
<b>IX. Grievance Procedures (Non-Academic).....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>X. Appendices .....</b>	<b>44</b>
APPENDIX A. Student Rights and Responsibilities.....	44
APPENDIX B. Sexual Harassment .....	45
APPENDIX C. Personal Safety on Campus & Field Placement.....	46
APPENDIX D. Core Performance Standards.....	48
APPENDIX E. NASW Code of Ethics Link .....	50
APPENDIX F. Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards.....	51
APPENDIX G. MSW Prescribed Course Sequence.....	52

## THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK WELCOMES YOU!

Welcome! The faculty and staff of the School of Social Work at Union University are pleased that you have chosen Union University to pursue your MSW degree. Our goal is to prepare you for advanced generalist practice in a wide range of social work jobs. We are committed to providing you with a stimulating and challenging graduate experience.

The MSW Student Handbook provides vital information including policies and procedures for the graduate program. **Please take some time to read this handbook thoroughly.** Policies and procedures that appear here have developed through a collaborative process involving administrators, faculty, students, and staff. The process includes community forums, consultations between faculty and MSW students, program leadership, and interaction of student representatives at faculty meetings. Policies and procedures may often need to be clarified, changed or new policies need to be created. Students will be a part of the process.

**Please remember that you are responsible to read and adhere to the contents of the MSW Student Handbook.** Any concerns or questions you may have should be communicated with the social work faculty.

The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth core values that are foundational to the social work profession. These values are the foundation of the social work profession's unique purpose and are consistent with Christian values and beliefs:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

The School of Social Work at Union honors the Christian heritage and mission of Union University. The example of Jesus is the highest inspiration as He assisted the vulnerable and powerless in all walks of life. We believe that Micah 6:8 speaks to the social work profession, "...and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"

We are honored to walk with you through your graduate school journey!

Katrinna Matthews, DSW, MSSW, M.Ed., LAPSW  
Associate Dean, MSW Director  
School of Social Work  
Union University

## UNION UNIVERSITY FULL-TIME FACULTY AND STAFF

Nita Mehr, Ph.D., MSSW, LCSW Dean, School of Social Work Fellow, Center for Just and Caring Communities (731) 661-5552 <a href="mailto:nmehr@uu.edu">nmehr@uu.edu</a>	Ph.D., Northcentral University MSSW, University of Tennessee- Memphis BSW, Freed-Hardeman University
Katrinna Matthews, DSW, MSSW, LAPSW Associate Dean, MSW Director Fellow, Center for Just and Caring Communities (901) 312-1929 <a href="mailto:kmatthews@uu.edu">kmatthews@uu.edu</a>	DSW, St. Thomas University MSSW, University of Tennessee, Memphis M.Ed., University of Mississippi BSW, University of Mississippi
Jerome Blakemore, Ph.D., MSW Professor 901-312-1955 <a href="mailto:jblakemore@uu.edu">jblakemore@uu.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Illinois at Chicago MSW, Western Michigan University BS, Western Illinois University
Jason Cox, DSW, MSW, LMSW Field Education Coordinator Assistant Professor 901-312-1914 <a href="mailto:jcox@uu.edu">jcox@uu.edu</a>	DSW, University of Kentucky MSW, University of Tennessee, Memphis BSW, Union University
Karen Dotson, MSSW, MBS, LMSW Associate Professor Fellow, Center for Just and Caring Communities (901) 312-1921 <a href="mailto:kdotson@uu.edu">kdotson@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Tennessee MBA, University of Memphis BA, University of Memphis
Meghan Larson, Ph.D., MSSW, LCSW Director, Center for Just & Caring Communities Associate Professor (731) 661-5564 <a href="mailto:mlarson@uu.edu">mlarson@uu.edu</a>	Ph.D., Walden University MSSW, University of Georgia BSW, Union University
Tammy Patton, EdD, MSSW, LCSW Associate Professor (731) 661- 6530 <a href="mailto:tpatton@uu.edu">tpatton@uu.edu</a>	EdD, Union University MSSW, University of Tennessee, Memphis BS, Lambuth University
Virginia Schwindt, MSSW, LCSW Director of Field Education Associate Professor (731) 661-5701 <a href="mailto:vschwindt@uu.edu">vschwindt@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Texas, Austin BBS, Hardin-Simmons University
Todd Stanfield, Ph.D., LCSW Professor, BSW Director (731) 661-5968 <a href="mailto:tstanfie@uu.edu">tstanfie@uu.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Tennessee MSW, University of Alabama BSW, University of Alabama

Jill Wells, MSSW, LAPSW Associate Professor (731) 661-5553	MSW, University of Texas, Arlington BS, Olivet Nazarene University
Elizabeth Wilson, Ph.D., LCSW Professor (731) 661-5933 <a href="mailto:ewilson@uu.edu">ewilson@uu.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Tennessee MSW, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee BS, Philadelphia Biblical University
Cheryl Hall Administrative Assistant Programs Coordinator - Jackson (731) 661-5554 <a href="mailto:kmcneil@uu.edu">kmcneil@uu.edu</a>	
Stephanie Townsend, BSW Director, Marketing and Continuing Ed. (901) 312-1945 <a href="mailto:lroberson@uu.edu">lroberson@uu.edu</a>	BSW, University of Memphis
Andrea Richardson Programs Coordinator (731) 661-5388	BS, Andrews University

### Adjunct Faculty

Brandon Bailey, MSW, LCSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:bbailey@uu.edu">bbailey@uu.edu</a>	MSW, Union University BSW, Union University
Crystal DeBerry, MSSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:cdeberry@uu.edu">cdeberry@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Tennessee, Memphis BA, University of Memphis
Brenda Eckles, MSSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:beckles@uu.edu">beckles@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Tennessee, Knoxville BA, Rust College
Mary Harris, MSSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:mharris@uu.edu">mharris@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Tennessee, Knoxville BSW, University of Tennessee, Martin
Rachel Hill, MSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:rhill@uu.edu">rhill@uu.edu</a>	MSW, Union University BS, Union University
Jocelyn Lee, MSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:jlee@uu.edu">jlee@uu.edu</a>	MSW, University of Maryland BS, Emory University
Barbara Martin, MSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:bmartin@uu.edu">bmartin@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Tennessee, Knoxville BA, Lemoyne-Owen College
Rebecca Tarleton McKay, MSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:rtarleton@uu.edu">rtarleton@uu.edu</a>	MSW, Union University BSW, Union University

Trinity Minter, MSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:tminter@uu.edu">tminter@uu.edu</a>	MSW, Union University BS, Psychology, Lane College
Kay Montgomery, MSSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:kmontgomery@uu.edu">kmontgomery@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Tennessee, Nashville BSW, University of Tennessee
Legon Roberson, MSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:lroberson@uu.edu">lroberson@uu.edu</a>	MSW, Union University BSW, Union University
Cherie Smith, MSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:csmith@uu.edu">csmith@uu.edu</a>	MSW, Union University BS, Psychology, Union University
Pat Taylor, MSSW Adjunct Professor <a href="mailto:ptaylor@uu.edu">ptaylor@uu.edu</a>	MSSW, University of Tennessee, Memphis] BS, Lambuth University

## I. An Overview of the University

### Our Identity:

Union University is an academic community, affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, equipping persons to think Christianly and serve faithfully in ways consistent with its core values of being excellence-driven, Christ-centered, people-focused, and future-directed. These values shape its identity as an institution which prioritizes liberal arts based undergraduate education enhanced by professional and graduate programs. The academic community is composed of quality faculty, staff, and students working together in a caring, grace-filled environment conducive to the development of character, servant leadership, and cultural engagement.

### Our Core Values:

- **Excellence-Driven:** We believe that excellence, not mere compliance, is the goal of our teaching, our research, and our service. We are not motivated to excellence out of pride but out of a desire to do all things for God's glory because He cares about our work and wants to be involved in everything we do. We will not be satisfied with mediocrity but will pursue excellence in all things. This means our truth claims carry with them the challenge of living out that truth in the minutes and hours of our daily life. Thus, we will pursue excellence, without arrogance.
- **Christ-Centered:** A cohering core value of our guiding vision is a call to faith, a call to be Christ centered in all that we are and in all that we do. We will seek to build a Christian liberal arts-based community where men and women can be introduced to an understanding and appreciation of God, His creation and grace, and to humanity's place of privilege and responsibility in this world. We will seek to establish all aspects of life and learning on the Word of God, leading to a firm

commitment to Christ and His Kingdom. To be a Christ-centered institution calls for us to establish the priority of worship and service in the Christian life while seeking to develop a generation of students who can be agents of reconciliation to a factious church in a hurting and broken world. This commitment calls for all faculty and staff to integrate Christian faith in all learning and doing, based on the supposition that all truth is God's truth and that there is no contradiction between God's truth made known to us in Holy Scripture and that which is revealed to us through creation and natural revelation.

- **People-Focused:** A third pillar on which we will build our common commitments is the core value of being people focused. At the heart of our commitment to being people focused is the visible demonstration of valuing one another. We will give honor to one another through our words and actions, and by committing to each person's success. We therefore jointly commit ourselves to the success of Union University.
- **Future-Directed:** We will seek to maximize the windows of opportunity the Lord has presented to us to the greatest degree that resources allow. All our resources and efforts must, by God's grace, be maximized to fulfill our common mission. A commitment to being future directed means we want to have a short-term focus and a long-term view. We want to involve ourselves in efforts that prepare us effectively to impact the world of the 21st Century.

### **Our Mission:**

Union University provides Christ-centered education that promotes excellence and character development in service to Church and society.

## **II. Campus Policies and Procedures**

### **Cell Phone Usage**

The University strives to provide a positive learning environment for all students. Cell phone usage can cause disruptions in classes and quiet places of study. We ask for your cooperation in the following policy:

- turn off or keep your cell phones on silent in the classroom and chapel
- refrain from texting during classes and chapels
- remove phone conversations from quiet places (e.g., library and computer labs)

### **Change of Name and Address**

Students are responsible for reporting any change of name, address, or phone number to the University as soon as possible. Students can update their address or phone number at any time through Self-service by going to "User Options -> User Profile."

Please allow at least 2 business days for the changes to reflect in the student account. Change of name requires proof by a marriage certificate, Social Security Card, or passport and may be done at Union Station. Students living on campus are strongly encouraged to keep their Emergency Contact updated. Students can confirm/update their Emergency Contact information at any time through Self-service by going to "User Options -> Emergency Information."

## **Communication**

Social workers place high value on communication. Successful professionals maintain the profession's core values by prioritizing communication. Such priority includes careful listening, speaking, and writing, as well as appropriate use of body language, such as posture, grooming, and cleanliness. Each student is responsible to communicate with professors, staff, and program administrators. To facilitate healthy communications, please note and make use of the following information:

### **Jackson Campus:**

**School of Social Work telephone number: 731-661-5554**

**School of Social Work fax number: 731-661-5566**

### **Germantown Campus:**

**School of Social Work telephone number: 901-312-1945**

**School of Social Work fax number: 901-759-1197**

### **General information regarding the MSW program:**

[www.uu.edu/academics/graduate/msw](http://www.uu.edu/academics/graduate/msw)

**Mailing address:     Union University  
School of Social Work  
1050 Union University Dr.  
UU Box 1868  
Jackson, Tennessee 38305**

**Union University  
School of Social Work  
2745 Hacks Cross Rd.  
Germantown, Tennessee 38138**

## **Communication with Faculty**

Each faculty member has voice mail and university email. Faculty email address should be first initial communications. Faculty email addresses are faculty members first initial, last [name@uu.edu](mailto:name@uu.edu), e.g. [mpoe@uu.edu](mailto:mpoe@uu.edu) unless faculty indicates otherwise on the syllabus. When communicating with faculty always state the subject of your call or message to efficiently facilitate faculty response. Faculty members also have mailboxes located on the door of their offices for written correspondence.

It is the student's responsibility to promptly communicate with faculty members regarding all absences or lateness, issues related to assignments, or questions regarding the course. It is important not to assume your professor knows what is going on with you.

## **Confidentiality of Student Records**

The privacy and confidentiality of all student records shall be preserved in accordance to the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) of 1974. The objective of the Act is to

provide students greater access to and control over information contained in educational records. The law stipulates that each institution is responsible for making students aware of the law and its various ramifications. More information about FERPA can be obtained from the [Registrar](#). Official student academic records, supporting documents, and other student files shall be maintained, only by members of the University staff employed for that purpose, in separate files:

Directory information (student's name, address—including email address, telephone number, date and place of birth, photograph, academic major, class schedule, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and most recent previous educational institution attended) may be made public by the University unless a student requests to the Academic Center in writing that such information be released only upon his/her consent.

### **Liability and Malpractice Insurance**

Professional liability insurance is required of all students enrolled in courses with field experiences. This expense is the responsibility of the student and is charged to the student's account. The cost is approximately \$25.00 annually.

### **Motor Vehicle Parking & Registration**

Every individual who maintains or operates a motor vehicle on either of the Union University campuses must register each vehicle with the Office of Safety and Security at the beginning of the semester or within 24 hours when brought to the campus. For graduate students, there is no fee for obtaining parking permits. The vehicle's license plate number is required for registration of the vehicle. A student parking permit may be obtained by completing the [Student Parking Permit Registration Form](#). The permit must be affixed directly to the glass on the OUTSIDE OF REAR WINDOW on the driver's side in the bottom corner. Use the adhesive on the permit to attach it to the window. No other method of attaching the permit is acceptable.

For more information regarding parking regulations, fines, towing vehicles, appeals, and inspections, please visit the [Safety and Security](#) website.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy and practice of the School of Social Work at Union University to conduct all aspects of the program without discrimination. In the social work program, this statement of non-discrimination is not simply acquiescence to legal requirements. It reflects a core commitment and value of the program, both as an ethical mandate of social work and of Christian faith and practice. Students are requested to bring to the attention of faculty any concern related to discrimination.

The program operates under the nondiscrimination statement of the university found in the front cover of the university catalog stating:

In compliance with all applicable state and federal law, including provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Union University does not illegally discriminate based on race, sex, color, national origin, age, disability, or military service in admissions; in the administration of its education policies,

programs, or activities; or in employment. Under federal law, the University may discriminate on the basis of religion in order to fulfill its purposes. Persons who believe their rights under this policy have been violated should contact the Title IX Coordinator, as indicated in the appropriate section in the Campus Life Handbook (<https://www.uu.edu/studentlife/handbook/>), or the Office of Human Resources.

### **Personal Safety on Campus & In Field Placement**

Students are encouraged to be aware that social work practice includes some potential for risk to personal safety. It is the responsibility of the student to assess the risk of environmental factors and to take precautions for personal safety. A discussion on safety in the agency is provided as part of the field seminar course. Additionally, students should request in-service training and orientation in the agency regarding the safety information in that setting. The student should review the agency's personnel policies and safety guidelines before any work with the agency begins. Students are expected to follow the practice setting's recommended safety guidelines rigorously, and to use discernment when making home visits or delivering services in the community. Students should always let someone in the agency know where they will be working outside of agency offices. Students have the right and the responsibility to report any unsafe situation to a supervisor and request an alternative assignment. They have the right and responsibility to appeal to the Field Liaison or the Field Directors if they have concerns about the response to their request. Finally, students are expected to follow the agency's infection control guidelines to protect them from contagious diseases.

Please note that Union University faculty, staff, and social work field directors comply with Union's Title IX policies and procedures for reporting sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, and domestic/dating relationship violence. For more information, go to: <https://www.uu.edu/studentlife/accountability/title-IX.cfm> or contact the Title IX Coordinator.

In regard to personal safety, all students, whether participating in activities on the Jackson or Germantown campus, online, or in internship/academic activities off-site, should plan carefully all aspects of their educational experience to maximize the academic experience and minimize any potential safety or health problems.

### **Student Life**

Graduate students are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the many religious, cultural, and educational activities that take place on the University campus. MSW students also have organizational opportunities for student involvement through regularly scheduled Coffee, Conversation, and Community zoom meetings in which students have a voice to share concerns and ideas with peers and faculty.

### **Student Conduct**

The Adult Studies and graduate students are bound by the policies and procedures listed in the current [Campus Life Handbook](#). Please check with your specific program or department for any additional supplements to the Campus Life Handbook. In addition, Union University's [Community Values](#) for our students in graduate and non-traditional programs can be found on the Union University website. Stated differently, the Union campus life handbook serves as the main university handbook. All other handbooks (e.g., handbooks specific to a school, college, academic

discipline) serve as a handbook supplement to the campus life handbook. Where there may be conflicting policies, the policies listed in the main Union handbook will take precedent.

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition per credit hour of MSW graduate credit is \$655.00 for the 2024-2025 academic year. Non-refundable fees include:

Application Fee: \$25

Graduation Fee: \$100 (Student will keep Master's Hood)

Field Instruction Fee: \$100.00 (assessed upon enrollment in each field seminar)

Drop/Add Fee: \$10.00

Student Services Fee: \$27.00 per semester hour enrolled

Insurance Fee (per year): \$25.00

Licensure Prep Fee (SW690 and 691): \$149.00

### **UU Alerts Notification System**

Union University offers an emergency notification system that is available to all students, faculty, staff, spouses, and parents at all campus locations. If the University has been provided with the correct cell phone number, students, faculty, and staff will have an account created for them. Students, faculty and staff will still need to update their account with alternate contact information (e-mail and additional phone numbers) at [RaveGuardian](#).

Understanding that many people pay to receive text messages, the system will be used with discretion and again, only to provide information that would require the notification of the entire campus. This text message program is an added layer of security. E-mail and the campus website will still be the most reliable sources of information about security –related campus events.

This system is voluntary, and you may opt out at any time. With that said, members of the Union community are strongly encouraged to receive text messages on their cell phones in the event of a campus-wide emergency, security and/or severe weather threat.

For additional information on the UU Alerts notification system, please visit [UU Alerts](#).

Test alerts will be sent bi-annually on March 1 and October 1.

## **III. Campus Services**

### **Chapel and Spiritual Life**

Chapel is one of the distinctive features of the Christian college and is for the strengthening of faith in God, for instruction and for the enrichment of the spiritual life of the total university family.

Chapel attendance is not compulsory for graduate students. However, graduate students are invited to attend as well as participate in other spiritual activities including activities sponsored by the Office of University Ministries.

### **Computing Services**

Information specific to new students is available at [SuccessStart](#). Classes, e-mail, grades,

calendars, announcements and more are available in a one-stop environment referred to as the Student Portal. Learn about this at [Portal](#). If you have technology questions or problems, visit [IT Help](#). Your Union-provided email account is considered an official means of university communication. You can learn more about this at [Success Start](#). Students are expected to use technology responsibly. The University's Acceptable Use Policy can be found at [Policies](#).

Computer labs are available exclusively to current Union students, faculty, and staff at no charge. Approximately 300 computers are located on the Jackson campus for student access, of which 78 are housed in three large labs used in varying amounts for classes. Wireless internet access is also available in most campus buildings. Three computer labs are available at the Germantown campus. All labs are scheduled for classes on a day-to-day or entire semester basis. Class reservations for the following week are posted near all Jackson-campus lab doors and in labs on Friday afternoon so that you may plan your work schedule accordingly. All labs are closed for official school holidays, required chapel sessions and inclement weather events. Call (731) 661-HELP to find out about lab availability in Jackson or (901) 312-1948 for Germantown labs. It is university policy that only students registered for the class meeting in the lab are allowed to use the equipment in the lab at that time. Student lab assistants are available at the Jackson Help Desk during open lab hours. They can assist you in solving problems with the hardware or software.

### **Counseling Services**

Union University is committed to the development of the whole person, who under the sovereignty of God is a person of intellectual, spiritual, social, psychological, and physical dimensions. Union endeavors to approach students from these perspectives and to provide the atmosphere, opportunities, and resources for students to know wholeness within the context of a community of learners.

In support of this mission, Union University [Office of Counseling Services](#) is staffed by counselors to assist students with personal counseling. Information shared in the counseling relationship is confidential. In addition to on-campus services, limited off-campus services are available through community service providers by referral of the Director for Counseling Services. Any unanswered questions may be referred to the Director, Tamarin Huelin, at [thuelin@uu.edu](mailto:thuelin@uu.edu) or at 731.661.5923.

### **Disability Services**

Any student with a disability requesting academic accommodations is encouraged to speak with the course instructor immediately at the beginning of the semester. In addition, the student must provide the instructor a letter of accommodations from the [Office of Disability Services](#). For more information about applying for accommodations or to schedule an appointment, you may visit the [website](#) or email Esperanza Gonzalez, Director, at [egonzalez@uu.edu](mailto:egonzalez@uu.edu).

### **Graduate Housing (Jackson campus)**

Union University offers two convenient housing options for graduate students studying in Jackson. Single student housing is available in the Hope Quad for \$560/month and married students housing is available in Warmath Family Housing for \$725/month + utilities. For more information on graduate housing or to apply for housing, please visit the [Graduate Housing](#) website.

## **Health Services (Jackson campus only)**

The mission of Health Services is to provide medical services for minor injuries and illnesses; to promote healthy lifestyles; and to demonstrate care in a Christ-like manner to the students, faculty, and staff of Union University. The Clinic is staffed by a full-time nurse practitioner. There is no office visit charge for the clinic, but there may be fees for certain services. All off-campus referrals and care may render a cost and are the responsibility of the patient. More information may be obtained through the website at [Health Services](#).

## **Library Services**

The Logos Library is located on the Jackson campus with a satellite library on the Germantown campus. Both resources are available for use by all Union students. Students may use the facilities or access resources online through the [Logos Library](#) website.

## **Student Financial Planning**

The Office of Student Financial Planning will assist you in financing your dream of higher education. The investment can be significant; however, by prayer, planning, and perseverance, you can attain this dream. Financial aid for graduate students comes from federal and outside sources which may include grants, student loans, and/or parent loans. Awards based on financial need are determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form.

Information on how to apply for graduate student financial aid can be found on the [Office of Financial Planning](#) website. Here you will find step-by-step instructions on how to apply for financial aid and managing your awards.

## **Union Station**

Union Station is a student service area located conveniently outside the Chapel in the Penick Academic Complex on the Jackson campus or in the front lobby on the Germantown campus. The Union Station team members are available to assist with a wide variety of student needs such as checking student account balances and making payments; cashing checks; picking up and dropping off forms; updating address information; requesting transcripts; and much more. Simply stop by between 7:45 am and 4:45 pm or call (731) 661-5000 (Jackson campus), (901) 759-0029 (Germantown campus), or e-mail ([unionstation@uu.edu](mailto:unionstation@uu.edu)).

## **Vocatio Center for Life Calling and Career**

*The Vocatio Center mission is to help students understand more clearly who God has uniquely created them to be and to assist them in discovering opportunities to live out their life calling in service to others.*

The Vocatio Center professional staff encourages career planning. The resources housed in the Vocatio Center Resource Center include a variety of materials (books, resource packets, catalogs, career magazines and programs files on graduate school and international experiential learning) to assist students in relating academic pursuits, personal interests, personality preferences, skills, and values to their major/minor courses of study and their chosen vocation as ministry. The department

also maintains a web site for full-time and part time off-campus employment and internships as well as a full-service calendar of events designed to meet discipline-specific needs of the undergraduate and graduate student populations.

As an added service, the department provides an online résumé database whereby students can upload their credentials for review by employers seeking to fill professional and internship positions. To complement this service, the Vocatio Center also offers résumé development and cover letter design, personality and interests assessments, college to career professional development, interview skills training, networking and job search strategies, career counseling/coaching, and portfolio development, as well as graduate school preparation and advising.

Capstone recruiting opportunities include the annual Career “U”niversity: Business and Professionals Expo, the Teacher Expo, and the Engineering & Technology Expo. As a holistic approach to student development and success, all services are tailored for individual students and cohort groups. For more information, please visit the website at [Vocatio Center](#).

### **Wellness Services (Jackson campus)**

The Wellness Center consists of a 3,600 square feet facility which provides for a full body workout no matter what your physical goals are. Numerous instructional and motivational opportunities are available to reward students, faculty, staff and community members for reaching their physical goals. The Wellness Center also offers one-on-one fitness training with a Certified Personal Trainer. To learn more about the services offered at the Wellness Center, please visit the [Wellness Center](#) website.

## **IV. Graduate Social Work Program Overview**

### **Accreditation**

The MSW program at Union University is accredited by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE), which is the only accrediting agency approved by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit programs of social work education.

### **The Mission of the MSW Social Work Program**

The mission of the MSW Program is compatible with the overall mission of the University and is supported by the overall university administrative organization that enables its implementation.

*The mission of the MSW Program is to prepare competent and effective professionals for leadership in advanced generalist practice. In a context of Christian higher education, the program fosters compassionate service, promotes social and economic justice, and equips students for excellence in social work practice.*

The Master of Social Work Program is committed to preparing students for advanced generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students are engaged in learning cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally throughout the MSW curriculum. As they gain this preparedness for advanced generalist social work practice through graduate social work courses and fieldwork, they are in sync with the environment, mission, and goals of the university

to prepare MSW students for leadership in the profession. The university's mission is to provide “higher education that promotes excellence and character development in service to Church and society.” It is guided by principles of academic excellence, Christian values, and developing the whole person.

The Master of Social Work Program embraces this mission and these guiding principles through offering a high-quality academic curriculum, assisting students through the curriculum and in personal relationships to understand a Christian worldview that promotes justice and values, life, and its diversity. Further the program aims to create a community of learners who explore and strive for wholeness as persons, and by conducting a program that is attentive to the unique personal needs of each student, including fostering proficient use of technology in our hybrid classes (evenings, online and weekends) for working adult learners. Both the university as a whole and the School of Social Work envision the task of graduate social work education as preparing competent professionals willing and ready to serve in the world as leaders to make a positive difference.

### **The Relationship of the University Mission to the MSW Program**

The university's Christian identity and mission undergird the Master of Social Work (MSW) Program's unique effort to emphasize the compatibility and congruence of Christian and Social Work values that promote social and economic justice and value human diversity. The MSW Program connects with the university mission, advancing both the purpose for which the university exists and the purpose for the MSW Program. The university's mission and the MSW Program inform each other and interact in such a way that establishes congruence in the environment of study offered to the student.

### **MSW Program Goals**

Union’s Master of Social Work program set goals for its program by using the CSWE educational standards as a guide, especially Section 1.1 of the Educational Policy.

These goals are:

1. To equip students with knowledge, values, and skills for excellence in social work practice within the context of Christian higher education;
2. To foster compassionate service and promote social and economic justice;
3. To prepare social workers to be leaders in communities at state, national and international levels;
4. To increase the availability of competent master-level prepared social work professional leadership in the surrounding region; and
5. To prepare students to pursue advanced scholarship in post-MSW education.

The **first goal** is to equip students with knowledge, values, and skills for excellence in social work practice within the context of Christian higher education. This goal coincides with the overarching mission of the university. The curriculum carefully covers all of the elements of advanced

generalist social work knowledge found in the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. The curriculum challenges students to master the competencies, contribute to the knowledge base of the profession, and to provide leadership in the development of services and policies. Throughout Union's curriculum, students are introduced to the diverse client systems and population groups that they may serve and are introduced to the dynamics of oppression and discrimination. Students learn to use critical thinking and judgment in making practice-oriented assessments and decisions in the realization of the ever-changing global context for social work practice.

Thus, the ***second goal*** is to foster compassionate service and promote social and economic justice. Each course in Union's social work curriculum, in concert with continuing education events, is geared toward educating professional, master's level social workers, with special sensitivity to the vulnerable and oppressed populations of this area, to advocate for effective social services in the rural and increasingly complex and diverse communities of West Tennessee and surrounding areas, and to inspire students to commit to a vision of social work practice based on human rights, social justice, and the dignity and worth of all persons.

The ***third goal*** is to prepare social workers to be leaders in communities at state, national and international levels. Faculty will develop graduate social workers who understand an advanced generalist social work practice through the use and development of evidence-based research knowledge and skills and will prepare students for leadership roles in the development, implementation, and evaluation of services for families in various environments. Faculty will maintain the high expectations that graduation from Union's program is only a beginning. It is anticipated that graduate alumni will continue their professional growth serving as field instructors and in leadership roles in the region, state, national, and international arena.

Because Jackson, Tennessee and the surrounding area have such a paucity of graduate-trained social workers, the ***fourth goal*** asserts the importance of increasing the availability of competent master-level prepared social work professional leadership in the surrounding region. The Jackson area continues to grow and become more and more diverse in ethnicities. Faculty will train students to maintain and enhance social services for people in rural environments by providing students with the knowledge and skills to develop and implement policy and programs and to practice from a strengths-based and person-in-environment perspective.

The ***fifth goal*** of the social work program highlights another dimension of effective professional life and practice. This is the responsibility of professionals to pursue advanced scholarship in post-MSW education. Union University understands that effective professionals in any field have to have specialized knowledge, values that promote wholeness, skills for practice, and that learning never ceases. The faculty will encourage graduates to publish practice-based research, pursue advanced specialization, clinical licensure, and/or doctoral credentials.

### **MSW Theoretical Orientations for Social Work Practice**

Four concepts unify the Master of Social Work curriculum. These concepts, from which flow theory and practice in the profession of social work, are central to graduate social work education at Union University and undergird the unique context for advanced generalist practice. The four concepts are:

1. Social Justice

2. Strengths-Base Perspective
3. Evidence-Based
4. Ecological Perspective

## **1. Social Justice**

Persons representing ethnic and racial minorities, experiencing impoverishment, disability, difficulties of aging, and the vulnerabilities of being young, are at-risk for the complications arising out of society's economic realities, whether times are steady or full of change. In its most basic meaning, pursuing social justice means restoring right relationships. Restoration involves advocacy for equal rights, opportunities, protection and fair treatment for all people. Additionally, social workers who pursue social justice identify and work to change unfair laws and policies that affect clients. Pursuing social justice means recognizing the dignity and worth of all individuals and striving to "end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice" (NASW Code of Ethics, preamble).

The focus on social justice as one of four conceptual constructs ties the MSW program with the university's mission to be Christ-centered. Social justice is a fundamental value of Christian faith, and followers of Christ are challenged to do justice, love kindness, and live with humility (Holy Bible, Micah 6:8). Students learn that social justice is part of every social work intervention. The MSW curriculum develops skills related to assessing for and intervening with social justice considerations in both direct and indirect practice settings.

## **2. Strengths-Based**

The MSW program emphasizes social work practice that is consistent with the values and ethical standards of the profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of human experience. These emphases are evident through the program's commitment to the strength's perspective. A strengths-based approach represents a commitment to the view that all clients have strengths, strengths help clients claim and validate those capacities causing them to prevail over life's obstacles, and strengths portend potentially limitless capacity for growth (Saleebey, 2006). Opposite to the approach used by human services systems operating from a deficit-oriented perspective, the strengths-based approach is a collaborative effort between the client (individual, family, group, community, etc.) and the social worker that avoids hierarchy with the intent to help clients achieve full empowerment. The social worker aids the client(s) to act in their own best interest, without limiting the upper limits to which the client aspires (Saleebey, 2006). The role of the social worker is to facilitate the client's utilization of his or her strengths and resilience, enabling the client to mobilize his or her solutions to identified problems.

## **3. Evidence-Based**

An evidence-base for social work inquiry is defined as "treatment based on the best available science" (McNeece & Thyer, 2004, p. 8). Evidence-based inquiry is distinguished by an emphasis on theoretically grounded analysis of personal and social needs and problems and testing and elaborating theory through the evaluation of social interventions, and the recognition of the interdependency among levels of analysis and intervention in planning and implementing social interventions. Utilizing evidence-based inquiry in the designing of social interventions is in accord with the mission and values of the social work profession. An important aspect of evidence-based inquiry is strengthening the level-of-fit between human needs and environmental and social

resources and supports through empowerment and enablement within a value framework that respects the dignity and worth of all people. The program's conceptualization of evidence-based practice is based upon the theoretical work done by scholars from many different disciplines.

#### **4. Ecological Perspective**

The ecological perspective requires social workers to maintain a holistic view of client systems and focuses on goodness of fit between clients - individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations - and their environments. "The ecological perspective functions as a metaphor that provides an understanding about the reciprocal transactions that take place between people and the social environment in which they function" (Ashford, LeCroy, & Lortie, 2013, p. 116). From this perspective, the person-in-environment framework has emerged, providing a basis for analyzing and intervening with the complex social, economic, and political realities facing diverse populations. The MSW program utilizes the ecological perspective to prepare professionals to assess complex social environments and clients' interactions with them. Furthermore, students are encouraged to develop interventions leading to healthy social functioning. An advanced generalist program will prepare social workers to recognize complexity and chaos in the clients' circumstances while functioning to effectively reduce stress between systems and advance goodness of fit, whether individuals or communities, and by demonstrating versatility in building resources at micro and macro levels.

#### **Generalist Practice Framework**

The generalist year competencies are directly derived from the CSWE Educational Policy. The SSW added one competency to reflect the context of the program in a faith-based university. While recognizing and respecting diverse belief systems of all students, the program strives to help students understand a Christian perspective that values life, appreciates and respects diversity, and promotes social and economic justice. These identified practice behaviors provide specific, measurable means to assess competencies. Individual course competencies, assignments, field practicum experiences, and non-curricular programming, such as continuing education workshops and events, are built on an understanding and commitment to the development of these competencies.

#### **Generalist Year Competencies**

##### **EP 2.1.1 Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior**

- Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the profession (e.g., NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws & regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, & additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context)
- Use reflection & self-regulation to manage personal values & maintain professionalism in practice situations (e.g., self-care, safety needs, professional roles & boundaries)
- Demonstrate professional demeanor behavior; appearance; & oral, written & electronic communication
- Use technology ethically & appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
- Use supervision & consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior
- Know the history & philosophy of the social work profession

##### **EP 2.1.2 Engage diversity and difference in practice**

- Communicate understanding of the importance of diversity & difference in shaping life experiences at the micro, mezzo, & macro levels

- Present as learners & engage clients & constituencies as experts of their own experiences
- Apply self-awareness & self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases & values in working with diverse clients & constituencies

**EP 2.1.3 Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice**

- Apply understanding of social, economic, & environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual & system levels
- Engage in practices that advance social, economic, & environmental justice
- Understand how Christian thought & practice values human life & advances social and economic justice

**EP 2.1.4 Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice**

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

**EP 2.1.5 Engage in policy practice**

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

**EP 2.1.6 Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

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

**EP 2.1.7 Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

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

**EP 2.1.8 Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

- Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance

capacities of clients and constituencies (e.g., prevention, treatment, etc.)

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

**EP 2.1.9 Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, & communities**

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

**EP 2.1.10 Appreciate the context of Christian higher education for social work education**

- Understand how Christian thought and practice supports the core values of the social work profession
- Understand how personal religious/spiritual beliefs and practices can be a resource for both the practitioner and the client
- Understand how personal religious/spiritual beliefs and practices can impede one's practice or well-being

**Generalist Year Curriculum Summary**

***SW 500: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I: Theoretical Foundations:*** This first course in the 2-semester HBSE sequence will focus on major theories of human behavior from infancy through adulthood in the context of the interaction between and among the range of social systems (individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities) and with consideration of the impact of social and economic forces on all aspects of human development. The aim of this course is to provide a framework for creating, organizing, and understanding of theory, research, and practice issues of human behavior and the social environment as a foundation to practice advanced generalist social work, and on which to build advanced generalist practice skills. The focus of this course is on behavior and the continuous, reciprocal interchange and influence in, between, and among different systems of the larger environment. A strengths-based and person-in-environment theory approach leads to an understanding of how the biological, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual systems are interrelated and affect human development throughout the life span. Special attention is given to the impact of human diversity, discrimination, social injustices and oppression on the ability to reach or maintain optimal health and well-being. Values and ethical issues related to the theories presented will also be considered. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to consider the crucial relationship between evidence-based theory and social work practice.

***SW 501: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II: Assessment through the Lifespan*** builds on HBSE I, which provided knowledge and understanding of theory, research, and practice issues of human development within the context of biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors. Emphasis is placed on understanding of the relevance of evidence-based theory for practice and how race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and socioeconomic variables influence and contribute to

human development and behavior within social systems. This second course in the 2-semester HBSE sequence further examines theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social-cultural-spiritual development from childhood to later adulthood in the context of the range of social systems (individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities), and with consideration of the impact of social and economic forces on all aspects of human development. The aim of this course is to use a strengths-based and person-in-environment theoretical framework to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for understanding human behavior as a function of biological, social, psychological, spiritual, and cultural systems across the life span. The focus of this course is on behavior and the impact of the larger environment on the individual. Special attention is given to the impact of social injustice, discrimination and oppression on the ability to reach or maintain human well-being.

***SW 510: Social Justice and Social Welfare*** is the first of two foundational graduate courses focusing on social welfare policy. This course introduces social work students to social welfare problems and policies through the lens of social justice, examining the impact of welfare policies on individuals, families, groups, and communities within their unique environments. A historical overview of social welfare, social work, and service delivery will be discussed along with a review of current welfare structures and evidence-based research. The role of policy in service delivery, social work practice, and the attainment of individual and social well-being will be examined within the strengths-based construct. Content will provide students with beginning knowledge and skills to understand major policies that form the foundation of the social welfare system at the local, state, federal, and international levels. Policies and programs affecting those living in poverty and other marginalized populations will be emphasized.

***SW 520: Social Work Practice I: Communities and Organizations*** is the first in a sequence of three required social work practice courses offered in the foundation year of the MSW program. Students will gain professional knowledge, values, and skills in social work practice with communities and organizations. This course will provide an overview of the role of macro practice in the historical evolution of social work as a profession, and the interrelationship between micro and macro practice models. Students will learn how to analyze the concepts of community and social justice through various worldview or philosophical perspectives and the ethics and values of the profession. The importance of using direct practice skills in building relationships with key community and organizational stakeholders will be stressed. Students will learn to assess communities and organizations from an ecological perspective, craft culturally-relevant interventions that are based on existing strengths and evidence-based best practices, and to continually evaluate practice outcomes. This course will also provide the student with an appreciation for the limited resources that are available to many vulnerable populations. Students will be able to formulate community development plans and advocate for social and economic justice to address resource inequalities. This course also provides an initial overview into best leadership practices when managing a social service organization. Students will also develop the skills to critically analyze ethical dilemmas and select the best course of action.

***SW 521: Foundations for Research*** is the first of two required research courses which provides graduate social work students with the necessary values, knowledge, and skills for utilizing methods of evidence-based research and evaluation in their professional employment. This course presents the conceptual foundations and methods of evidence-based research in order to help students integrate research knowledge with professional social work practice. The basic processes of research are covered, including the development of research questions, formulating hypotheses, choosing research designs, measurement decision making, sampling processes, and data collection,

management, and analysis. Some content areas will be familiar to those course participants who took a social research course as part of their undergraduate curriculum. For those course participants, this course will expand that familiarity by providing examples and application of social research methods relevant to social work practice and adhere to social work principles as stated in the NASW Code of Ethics and under the standards of the Council on Social Work Education. Special attention is given to issues of ethics, social justice as related to the use and misuse of research, the inclusion or omission of diverse populations in research studies, the implications of research for addressing social injustices of oppressed groups and the encouragement of a critical perspective when reading research on interventions as they apply to populations at risk.

***SW 530: Social Work Practice II: Individuals and Families*** is the second in a required sequence of three social work practice courses taken during the foundation year of the MSW program. This course gives students a general overview of the history, philosophy, process, and efficacy of direct social work practice with individuals and families. Students are provided an overview of the various roles that social workers play, the client groups with which they work, and the organizational contexts in which they practice. The values and ethics of social work practice are discussed within a historical context, and a framework is presented for critiquing those values and ethics within a Christian worldview that seeks to promote social justice. Students learn the basic interpersonal skills needed to establish rapport with individuals and families in a professional social work setting and practice those skills in an effort to build and refine their ability to engage individuals and families in the helping process. The processes of assessing the client's problem within an ecological context, formulating measurable outcome goals that build on existing client strengths, implementing evidence-based interventions to meet those goals, and constantly evaluating progress towards those goals are examined in detail.

***SW 535: Policy Analysis and Advocacy*** is the second of two required courses in social welfare policy in the foundation year of Union University's MSW program of study. Building on material learned in *Social Justice and Social Welfare*, this course will focus on major social welfare policies and will underscore professional skills in social policy advocacy and practice. This course will equip students with knowledge and skill to analyze organizational, local, state, national, and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery. Students will acquire skills in conducting evidence-based policy analysis and will learn to advocate for socially just policies and conditions that take into account vulnerable individuals, groups, and communities within their unique environments. Ethical issues involved in policy advocacy and practice will be examined in deference to the assumption that all persons, groups, and communities hold inherent dignity and strengths. The course will further provide an overview of the structure, funding, dynamics, and related aspects of social welfare delivery systems in a variety of arenas.

***SW 540: Social Work Practice III: Social Work with Groups*** is the third course in the sequence of the three required social work practice courses offered in the foundation year of the MSW curriculum. This course introduces students to social work practice with groups. Students will study a basic typology of group purposes, composition, and methodologies utilized in social work practice. Group practice will be distinguished from micro and macro practice formats with a particular emphasis on how the three areas of practice are interdependent. The basics of assessing the need for a group will be presented, along with guidelines for establishing the logistical parameters of the group. An overview of research on best practices in group work will be provided, and methods for evaluating group work will be introduced. Students will also gain an understanding of how to use interpersonal helping skills in leading group members toward established goals by building on existing strengths. A framework for critically analyzing ethical

dilemmas will be presented, along with discussions on how to promote social and economic justice through group work.

***SW 590: Field Seminar I*** is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated on the basis of criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program competencies. This course is intended to help students apply foundation knowledge of social work skills, values, and ethics to practice and to assist students in integrating classroom learning with the direct experience of the Field I practicum. Students will be expected to develop and discuss knowledge, understanding and skills concerning relationships with clients, supervisors, coworkers and external constituencies. In addition, students will be expected to develop a foundational understanding of the context of social work practice as it relates to evidence- and strengths-based research and practice, and social justice. In the Foundation Field Seminar students will share learning experiences across a variety of field sites. Students will participate in and learn group process as well as practice group leadership skills. Students should end the course with an increased understanding of the needs/problems of populations-at-risk as informed social workers. Lastly, students will discuss and understand the professional use of self in the social work role.

***SW 591: Field Seminar II*** is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated on the basis of criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program competencies. This graduate field seminar is the second in a series of four seminars designed to assist the MSW student in the integration of theory and practice in the practice setting. Building on Field Seminar I, this seminar and field experience allows the student to enhance his/her skills in the knowledge, value, and skills of competent social work, as well as to gain experience with new models of evidence-based practice, working with a variety of client systems, including individuals, families, couples, groups, and organizations. Working from a strengths-based perspective, students will have the opportunity to refine their assessment skills using a person-in environment approach. Under the guidance of a field supervisor, each student will also have opportunity to expand the use of self in client relationships to afford greater understanding of human behavior, individual competencies and strengths within the client and self, and the values and ethics of social work practice. Students will begin to evaluate their own practice, assume increasing levels of autonomy in practice, and evaluate policy within the agency and its application for social justice and diversity. Students should end the course with an increased understanding of the needs/problems of populations-at-risk as informed social workers.

### **Specialist Practice Framework – Advanced Generalist**

The advanced generalist competencies broaden the generalist foundation in preparation of students for competent and effective social work practice. The program conceptualizes professional development and education as a continuum beginning with the BSW, or generalist year in the MSW program, progressing to advanced practice in the second year of the MSW program, and beyond the MSW to include continuing education.

Building on the generalist year competencies and curriculum, the MSW program prepares students for advanced generalist practice in social work. The advanced generalist practitioner is a leader in direct service delivery with individuals, families, groups, and communities, and has indirect practice management capabilities in the areas of supervision, administration, program development, and evaluation. The advanced generalist model at Union University builds on the four concepts adopted by the faculty - social justice, strengths-based perspective, evidence-based practice, and ecological perspective – for its framework. In the generalist year, students are grounded in these

concepts and in direct and indirect practice skills so that in the advanced generalist year, they may prepare to effectively maximize opportunities to “encompass the full spectrum of direct and indirect services” (GlenMaye, Lewandowski, & Bolin, 2004, p.127), regardless of the practice setting or client.

The complexities of ever-changing practice environments require direct practitioners who are also skilled in supervision and administration while fully committed to respecting and prioritizing client needs. Agency services struggle with limited resources while facing increased human needs requiring complex intervention modalities. The advanced generalist model assumes that human events represent multi-layered and multi-dimensional realities best addressed by social workers utilizing theoretically sound, empirically driven, culturally competent approaches to practice. These social workers recognize the characteristics of change at individual, community, and organizational levels and the elements of chaos that often accompany change. The advanced generalist practitioner tolerates and manages change amid the chaos of complex systems, valuing the process and envisioning the transformative potential. “The goal of advanced generalist practice is not to understand the complexity of the client system, but rather to understand the natural movement of systems through stable, bifurcated, and chaotic states and to help promote self-organization” (GlenMaye, et al, 2004, p.128). As such the social work leader will bring together important roles of advocate, broker, counselor, presenter, listener, presence, supervisor, researcher, policy maker, fund raiser, problem-solver, and evaluator while conscious of process and its impact on outcomes.

## **Specialist Year Competencies – Advanced Generalist**

### **2.1.1 Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior**

- Demonstrate leadership in the integration of personal and professional values.
- Apply models of ethical decision making for leadership in social work practice using consultation appropriately.
- Promote self-directed, career-long learning by evaluating one’s own learning and self-care needs and those they might supervise in selection of CEU offerings.
- Engage in supervision with initiative, independence, responsibility for agenda and appropriate use of consultation within the agency structure and lines of authority.
- Recognize and manage safety needs in social work practice settings.
- Demonstrate professionally appropriate communication: In writing (clinical records, reports, group curricula); Verbally (team meetings, case conferences, communications with collaterals)

### **2.1.2 Engage diversity and difference in practice**

- Demonstrate culturally sensitive practice skills that integrate self-awareness with knowledge from clients and related sources
- Analyze sociocultural structures and values which may oppress, marginalize, alienate or create or enhance privilege and power

### **2.1.3 Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice**

- Articulate how Christian thought and practice values human life and advances social and economic justice
- Analyze the potentially challenging and/or oppressive effects of economic, social, cultural, and global factors on client systems

- Advocate for the inclusion, participation, and voice of diverse people, communities and organizations affected by oppressive conditions

#### **2.1.4 Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice**

- Use evidence-based research to identify effective social work practice for specific populations, problems, and settings
- Develop and implement a research project
- Demonstrate critical thinking for leadership in critical thinking in social work practice (e.g. logic models for agency processes, organizational audits, stakeholder analysis, decisions about treatment with individual cases, peer evaluation)
- Analyze and apply bio-psychosocial, cultural, and spiritual context (e.g. strengths, ecological, cognitive-behavioral, interpersonal, family systems, life-span development, psychodynamic) to guide assessment, intervention, and evaluation

#### **2.1.5 Engage in policy practice**

- Analyze the reciprocal relationships of clients and practice with both public and organizational policy
- Demonstrate leadership in collaboration with colleagues and clients for effective policy action that promotes social and economic justice

#### **2.1.6 Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

- Foster relationships with clients that are professional, purposeful, culturally appropriate, and characterized by clear boundaries
- Encourage and empower clients to be equal partners in the establishment of treatment goals and methods
- Assess interpersonal dynamics and contextual factors that both strengthen and potentially threaten the alliances in organizational and community contexts

#### **2.1.7 Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

- Collaborate with the client system to define goals and target behaviors
- Assess client system readiness for change, the client's coping strategies and strengths, and safety needs
- Utilize clinical models/theoretical approaches and techniques to assess client systems (e.g. crisis theory, clinical theories, management theories, and community development theories)

#### **2.1.8 Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

- Craft and implement intervention plans with a client system(s) to meet goals, based on appropriate theory and research evidence
- Collaborate with other professionals/constituents to coordinate interventions
- Coordinate with client systems to develop and implement interventions
- Provide leadership in promoting sustainable change in service delivery and practice with client systems

#### **2.1.9 Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

- Evaluate client system(s) progress and intervention effectiveness (e.g., client self-assessment, surveys, needs assessments, collateral reports, behavioral outcome measures, single-subject design)

- Use evaluation outcomes to provide leadership in promoting sustainable change in service delivery
- Demonstrate flexibility and creativity in the context of change in advanced practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

#### **2.1.10 Appreciate the context of Christian higher education for social work education**

- Articulate how the Christian mandate that comports with the NASW Code of Ethics to treat all persons with unconditional dignity and respect, to do justice, and practice compassion
- Articulate historical spiritual and religious influences on the profession of social work
- Formulate responses to social needs that follow ethical principles for spiritually sensitive social work practice (e.g., appreciate how personal religious and spiritual beliefs and practices can be a resource or impediment)

### **Advanced Generalist Curriculum Summary**

***SW 605: Psychopathology: Assessment, Diagnostics, and Treatment*** will prepare students for clinical social work practice by establishing a working knowledge of psychopathology and use of the DSM-5 for assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental health and mental disorders. From strengths-based perspective that also considers person-in-environment and bio-psychosocial and ethno-cultural factors. Students will examine human behaviors and ways of relating that may be considered outside societal norms. The major mental disorders will be examined along with current empirically-supported best-treatment standards. Services for persons who are severely and persistently mentally ill (SPMI) will be explored as well as the impact of persistent societal stigma against this vulnerable population group. Social and economic injustice for all persons impacted by mental illness will be studied. Case vignettes descriptive of how specific mental disorders impact the person in his or her environment will aid in integrating a working knowledge of mental health assessment, diagnostics, and treatment into social work practice paradigms.

***SW 623: Theory and Ethics in Advanced Practice (The Capstone Seminar)*** integrates professional knowledge, values, and skills under a rubric of theoretical and ethical practice. Social work strategies, informed by theoretical processes and ethical standards, will be qualified as advanced social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities. This course will feature a review of empirically sound practice theories useful to the social work professional in advanced generalist practice. Students will be challenged to examine concurrent practicum experiences through various conceptual lenses, including the strengths perspective, ecological perspective, and social justice, and will be able to articulate stages of social work practice specific to theory. Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively choose and make application of appropriate theoretical strategies through class debriefings and documentations of their work with practicum-based clients. Ethics and values of the profession will be examined in depth, with particular attention focused on ethical dilemmas and risks commonly encountered in social work practice with special attention to vulnerable and diverse populations (age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation). A model for resolving such dilemmas will be utilized to teach students how to skillfully process and safely mediate ethical challenges in a variety of social work settings.

***SW 631: Practice and Program Evaluation*** is an advanced research course that requires students at the concentration level to use research knowledge, values, and skills to evaluate social work

practice as advanced generalist practitioners. Critical review of empirical and evidence-based best practice models for social work is emphasized. Students plan, develop, and evaluate social service programs in public and private settings, demonstrating advanced theoretical and practical approaches to individual practice and program effectiveness. Research skills taught in this course can be generalized to any setting. The focus is on the acquisition and demonstration of applied techniques with particular emphasis given to issues of ethics, social justice as related to the use and misuse of research, the inclusion or omission of diverse populations in research studies, the implications of research for addressing social injustices of oppressed groups, and the encouragement of a critical perspective when reading research on interventions as they apply to populations at risk.

***SW 650: Advanced Practice with Individuals and Families*** builds upon the foundation practice courses and focuses on advanced social work practice with individuals and families. Students will refine their interpersonal helping skill by learning ways to intervene in particularly challenging situations. The importance of assessing individual and family needs within an ecological context is stressed. Students are taught how to formulate culturally-sensitive interventions that build on client strengths and have evidence of effectiveness through research. Methods for continually evaluating practice outcomes are presented, along with analysis of common ethical dilemmas faced in social work practice with individuals and families. Students gain an understanding of how direct practice can be a vehicle for promotion social and economic justice, particularly by addressing the needs of vulnerable populations.

***SW 660: Advanced Practice in Community Development and Administration*** builds upon the foundation macro practice content by specifically focusing on methods utilized in community development and on the knowledge and skills needed to lead and manage social service organizations. Students will learn how to assess community and organizational needs from an ecological perspective that takes into account the specific needs of members of diverse and vulnerable populations. Facilitating the empowerment of communities and their members is examined. Students will become familiar with intervention strategies shown by research to be effective and that enhance existing community strengths. Students will also examine how social work practice with communities and organizations can be a vehicle for examining ethical dilemmas and promoting social and economic justice.

***SW 690: Field Seminar III***: This advanced field seminar is the first in a series of two seminars designed to assist the MSW student in the integration of theory and practice in the practice setting. This seminar and field experience allows the student to enhance his/her skills in the knowledge, value and skills of competent social work, as well as to gain experience with new models of evidence-based practice, working with a variety of client systems, including individuals, families, couples, groups, and organizations. Working from a strengths based perspective, students will have the opportunity to refine their assessment skills using a person-in environment approach. Under the guidance of a field supervisor, each student will also have opportunity to expand the use of self in client relationships to afford greater understanding of human behavior, individual competencies and strengths within the client and self, and the values and ethics of social work practice. Students will evaluate their own practice, assume increasing levels of autonomy in advanced generalist practice, and evaluate policy within the agency and its application for social justice and diversity. Students should complete the course with an increased understanding of the strengths/needs/problems of populations-at-risk as informed social workers.

**SW 691: Field Seminar IV:** This advanced field seminar is the second in a series of two seminars designed to assist the MSW student in the integration of theory and practice in the agency setting. Building on Field Seminar III, this seminar and field experience allows the student to further enhance his/her skills in the knowledge, value and skills of competent social work, as well as to gain experience with new models of evidence-based practice, working with a variety of client systems, including individuals, families, couples, groups, and organizations. Working from a strengths-based perspective, students will further refine their assessment skills using an ecological perspective. Under the guidance of a field supervisor, each student will also expand the use of self in client relationships to afford greater understanding of human behavior, individual competencies and strengths within the client and self, and the values and ethics of social work practice. Students will give particular attention to issues of burnout and self-care required as social work professionals.

## **V. MSW Program Policies and Procedures**

The School of Social Work administers the BSW and MSW programs. Developing policies and procedures is an inclusive process involving MSW administration, faculty, staff, and students. Policies may change during an academic year. Policy changes will be published in the next edition of the Student Handbook and students will be notified of any policy changes to be enacted immediately.

### **Academic Integrity**

Integrity and trustworthiness are not only fundamental principles of the Judeo-Christian tradition and basic to good citizenship but are also essential practices within academe. Furthermore, the *Code of Ethics* of the profession of social work holds integrity as one of its ethical principles (NASW, 2017). Specifically, the professions Code of Ethics says the following:

Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception (Ethical Standard 4.04).

Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed. Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others (Ethical Standard 4.08).

Additional considerations appear in Section 2.11, which mandates social workers seek resolution when a colleague is believed to have acted unethically and in 5.01 to participate in upholding the integrity of the profession.

Finally, the Core Performance Standards of the School of Social Work support the Code of Ethics and expect that “the student will conduct him or herself in full accordance with the values and ethics of the social work profession....” Faculty and administration assume that students do act with integrity in their academic endeavors and pledges to responsibly discourage cheating by providing physical conditions which deter cheating, always including awareness of all activity in a testing area. As a culture of academic dishonesty undermines and weakens the academic environment and the educational process, the following behaviors are unacceptable:

1. Cheating in its various forms:
  - Copying another student’s work.

- Allowing work to be copied.
- Using unauthorized aids on an examination (including but not limited to technology devices such as digital cameras, cell phone cameras, pen-based scanners, translation programs, and text-messaging devices).
- Obtaining any part of an examination prior to its administration.
- Fabricating research data.
- Submitting another person's work as one's own.
- Receiving credit falsely for attendance at a required class or activity.
- Signing another student into a required class or activity.

2. Plagiarizing (i.e., presenting someone else's words or specific ideas as one's own, including inadequate documentation of sources and excessive dependence on the language of sources, even when documented). All quoted material and ideas taken from published material, electronic media, and formal interviews must be cited; direct quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks. Therefore, whether quoting or paraphrasing, include an appropriate reference to the source (e.g., in-text citation, footnote, endnote) and a reference page. The APA Publication Manual 7<sup>th</sup> Edition provides the standard in all social work courses.

3. Violating copyright laws and license agreements, including but not limited to:

- Making illegal single copies of music or other print materials.
- Making and/or distributing multiple copies of printed, copyrighted materials.
- Making and/or distributing unauthorized copies of computer software and/or digital information.

4. Denying others appropriate access to information in the classroom, library or laboratory, including but not limited to:

- Removing books from the library without checking them out.
- Removing pages from books or journals.
- Hiding or intentionally damaging materials or electronic information.
- Destroying, altering, or tampering with someone else's work.
- Submitting the same or similar work for more than one course or assignment without prior approval from the professor(s).
- Destroying, altering, or tampering with academic or institutional records.

The following steps will be taken to address an incident wherein a social work faculty member suspects plagiarism or academic dishonesty on the part of a graduate student:

1. The faculty member will inform the MSW Director of the suspected incident of academic dishonesty.
2. The faculty member will meet with the student or students involved on a one-to-one basis, providing the student with a photocopy of the assignment in question and when known, the source of the plagiarized material. The faculty member may assign the grade of F or zero to the assignment or to the entire course, depending on the circumstances.

3. The faculty member will illustrate with the evidence above the suspicion of plagiarism and the potential consequences for such behavior utilizing the School's Plagiarism Rubric and will inform the student of perceived severity of the incident and specific consequences (see below).

4. The faculty member will keep the MSW Director apprised about the case. When appropriate, the entire faculty may be informed about the incident of plagiarism or academic dishonesty and in some cases, the faculty member in consultation with colleagues may determine consequences.

### Plagiarism Rubric

(Source adopted by SSW faculty 11/09: Collins, M. E. & Amodeo, M. (2005). Responding to plagiarism in schools of social work: Considerations and recommendations. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 41(3), 527-543.)

Seriousness	Examples of Plagiarism	Examples of Potential Consequences
<b>Mild</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genuine mistake or omission</li> <li>Misunderstanding of how to cite sources or utilize quotations.</li> </ul>	Individual faculty member determines consequences which might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request rewrite of the assignment</li> <li>Additional assignment concerning proper use of citations, or a similar topic related to the offense.</li> <li>Copy of students plagiarized work will be kept on file in the SSW</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some awareness of mistake, but lack of clarity as to proper procedure</li> <li>Paraphrase of an idea not an exact quotation, but too close to be acceptable as original work</li> <li>Inappropriate use of sources without proper citation</li> </ul>	Individual faculty member determines consequences with option to SSW program leadership for further exploration. Consequences leveled by the instructor might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failing grade on the assignment</li> <li>Additional assignment concerning proper use of citations, or a similar topic related to the offense</li> <li>Personal essay reflecting on offense and lessons learned</li> <li>Monitoring of future assignments by an additional faculty member</li> <li>Failing grade in the course</li> </ul>
<b>Severe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full awareness of actions at the time of the incident (intentional offense – which includes copying material cut and paste into assigned document)</li> <li>The whole or part of the assignment or paper displays large blocks of word-for-word plagiarism</li> <li>The whole or part of assignment or paper appears to have been purchased or stolen from another student or an outside source</li> <li>The whole or part of the assignment or paper appears to have been copied from another student or source</li> <li>Other similar incidents of academic dishonesty that appear intentional</li> </ul>	Individual faculty member determines consequences with mandatory referral of case to SSW program leadership. Consequences initiated by the instructor might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failing grade in the course</li> <li>Suspension from the social work program for a specific period of time after consultation with the MSW Program Director</li> <li>Counseling out of the social work program</li> <li>Suspension from the University</li> <li>Expulsion from the University</li> </ul>

### Attendance Policy

All students are expected to attend class. Because classes in the MSW program are rigorous, even one absence will jeopardize a student's ability to successfully complete courses (whether the class

is on-site, on-line, or a scheduled meeting on a Saturday). If it is necessary to be absent, the student is required to contact the course instructor, preferably prior to class. The student is responsible for gathering all content and material missed during class. Faculty has discretion whether to assign make-up work.

In cases of inclement weather, students are encouraged to put personal safety first when confronted with unsafe travel to class from out of town. Please communicate with your professors if you cannot attend classes due to inclement weather in your region. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize the Union University alert system, [UU Alerts](#), to monitor school closings, cancellations, and delayed schedules.

### **Core Performance Standards**

To ensure that social work students will be competent and professional social workers, all students must meet essential standards of behavior for generalist social work practice. [Appendix D](#) identifies the core values on which the mission of Union University's School of Social Work is based. It summarizes the ethical principles that reflect our profession's core values; it establishes a set of specific ethical standards that guide generalist social work practice; and it provides the principles on which the public can hold a social work professional accountable. These principles will define the responsibility to which each student obligates him/herself from entrance into the social work program. Each student will be required to adhere to the NASW's Code of Ethics, which states that professionals "...must not allow their own personal problems, psychological distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interest of people for whom they have a professional responsibility" (NASW Code of Ethics, Section 4.05a).

### **Faculty Advising**

Faculty advising is administered through several avenues. Each student is assigned a Faculty Advisor upon admission to the MSW program. Students have access to the name of their faculty advisor through SelfService. Faculty advisors are available for registration and throughout the semester should students have questions related to academic, career, professional, or other needs. Advising is usually a more informal process as students interact with professors through classes, assignments, and work experience and with professionals as guest speakers in classes. Students may request an appointment with their faculty advisor via their Union email or office phone.

The MSW Field Director works personally and individually with each student entering field and will make decisions about appropriate agency placements based on the student's career interests and strengths for practice.

The faculty and staff may communicate with other faculty, staff, and administrators information regarding student situations in connections with professional development and academic concerns.

### **Grading Scale**

A 100 - 94	B 93 - 80	C 79 - 70	F < 69
------------	-----------	-----------	--------

### **Grading System**

Grades for graduate courses at Union University shall be interpreted as follows:

A - Superior academic performance

B - Strong academic performance

C - Below average

P - Pass (P and F apply to pass-fail courses)

F - Fail (P or F apply to pass-fail courses)

I - Incomplete An incomplete must be removed within the first five weeks of the term following issuance of the incomplete; otherwise, the incomplete becomes an F

IP - In progress, issued for a course which by design extends into the following term or semester.

W - Withdrawal during the period officially allowed. A grade of W may be granted by the MSW Director because of circumstances beyond the student's control.

N - Audit

## **Licensure**

The purpose of licensing and certification in social work is to assist the public through identification of standards for the safe professional practice of social work. Each jurisdiction, or state, defines by law what is required for each level of social work licensure. Typically, there are four categories of practice that jurisdictions may legally regulate.

*Licensed Master Social Worker (LBSW):*

Baccalaureate social work degree upon graduation;

*Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW):*

Master's degree in social work (MSW) with no post-degree experience;

*Licensed Advanced Practice Social Worker (LAPSW):*

MSW with two years post-master's supervised experience; and

*Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW):*

MSW with two years post-Master's direct clinical social work experience.

## **Requirements for Licensure**

Social work regulatory boards generally require that social work degrees must be obtained from programs of social work that are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), or other nationally recognized accrediting agencies. Degrees earned outside the U.S. and Canada must be determined to be equivalent.

Non-social work degrees are accepted in some instances at the bachelor's level. Some jurisdictions regulate only one of these practice levels, while most regulate two or more levels of social work practice. A summary table containing the licensing requirements may be accessed through the Social Work Laws & Regulations Comparison Guide. Also, a student can explore the state licensing agent in which they will live for specific requirements.

### Licensure in School Social Work

The School of Social Work in collaboration with the Teacher Education Program offers a licensure program in School Social Worker, PreK-12 that is approved by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Applying for licensure: At the end of the program of study, the applicant must complete the application for licensure found at [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/forms/ed2331\\_lic\\_ad.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/forms/ed2331_lic_ad.pdf). Complete all parts of application. In Section 4, check Initial License and write School Social Worker next to it. Scan and email the application to Dr. Teresa Tritt ([ttritt@uu.edu](mailto:ttritt@uu.edu)), licensing officer, or fax it to 731-661-5063. If you completed your degree at Union, let Dr. Tritt know that in the email. **Graduate students must also submit official transcripts from every college and university attended (except Union) directly to the TN Department of Education.** Transcripts that are mailed should be mailed to :

OFFICE OF EDUCATOR LICENSING  
TENNESSEE DEPT OF EDUCATION  
12<sup>th</sup> FLOOR, ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER  
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY  
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0377

Transcripts that are submitted electronically should be emailed to [Educator.licensure@tn.gov](mailto:Educator.licensure@tn.gov).

Union's licensing officer will submit the application with the student's official Union transcript to the TN Dept. of Education and will email the applicant when that step is completed.

Candidates for School Social Worker licensure do **not** qualify for additional teaching endorsements Under the additional endorsement guidelines outlined by the Tennessee Department of Education.

### Phi Alpha Honor Society

Phi Alpha, Eta Phi Chapter, is the National Honor Society for Social Work students which fosters high standards of education for social workers and welcomes membership to those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work.

MSW students whose overall GPA is in the top 35% of the program may be considered for membership in Phi Alpha by the faculty. Students become eligible for membership **after** successful completion of SW 690 Field Seminar III.

## VI. Admissions

### Credit for Life Experience and Previous Work Experience

Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the graduate curriculum.

### Non-Degree Seeking Students

Some students may be admitted in this category if they desire to take courses primarily for special interest or on a “visiting student” basis. Non-degree seeking students are not enrolled in an academic program, and courses are not covered by financial aid. Enrollment does not guarantee admission to the MSW program. Students must meet all requirements for admission to change from Non-Degree Seeking status to Degree Seeking status. A maximum of 6 hours may be taken as a non-Degree student.

### Transfer Credit

Graduate credit for courses earned at a regionally accredited university and in a CSWE-accredited MSW program may be transferred to Union University if the courses are essentially the same as those required in the SW program. Evidence of similarity may be required by presenting course descriptions or a syllabus from the institution where the course was taken. Such transfer credit will not be allowed for courses used to satisfy another degree at another institution.

The maximum number of semester hours that may be transferred to Union University and applied to the MSW degree is nine hours, unless extenuating circumstances are presented such as to require special faculty approval otherwise.

No course with a grade less than “B” may be transferred. Courses taken more than five years before beginning the MSW program will be considered on an individual basis.

### Advanced Standing Criteria

To avoid redundancy for BSW graduates, Union University offers an advanced standing option. In order to be considered for admission to the advanced standing program, applicants must have completed their undergraduate degree from BSW program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and have earned an **overall GPA of 3.0**. Advanced standing students may begin taking electives in the spring or summer prior to the Bridge Course but must successfully complete courses with a grade of “B” or higher.

Admission to the MSW program is based on academic performance in all work from regionally accredited or internationally listed colleges and universities. Successful completion of the required 33 hours of coursework and 600 hours in an approved social service agency field setting are required for graduation.

## **Admission Requirements**

Admission to the MSW program is based on the following:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- A cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.65 or higher on a 4.0 scale for the two year and three-year program and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for the Advanced Standing program

After being admitted to the MSW program, applicants are required to submit a non-refundable \$100.00 tuition deposit to accept their offer of admission and reserve their place in the program. The fee will be applied to the student's tuition at the start of the incoming semester.

When an applicant is admitted to graduate study prior to having received the baccalaureate degree, the undergraduate degree must be conferred before the first day of the MSW entrance semester and a official copy of their transcript showing degree conferred and date must be received by the MSW program coordinator prior to the end of the first semester.

## **Admissions Process**

Application to the MSW program is submitted online by using the [MSW Online Application](#).

Application requirements include:

- Completed MSW application
- Non-refundable \$25.00 application fee
- Official transcript from undergraduate showing degree conferred and date and graduate work, and any other transcripts
- Admissions essay
- Three recommendation forms, preferably from a previous professor or instructor, current supervisor, or professional, and personal recommendation from someone other than a relative.

The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is not required for admission to the program.

Applications should be submitted as early as possible. The priority deadline for completed applications for the Advanced Standing program is March 31 of the year in which admission is desired. The priority deadline for completed applications for the two and three-year program is March 31 of the year in which admission is desired. The last day to submit an application for admission into the upcoming academic year is June 1. Applications will be reviewed for admissions only after receiving all required documents and application fee.

The MSW Admissions Review Committee will review completed applications and make recommendations for either admissions or denial into the program. The committee may schedule interviews with applicants as needed before final admission decisions are made.

## **Provisional Status for Admission**

Applicants who do not meet the regular admission requirements for the MSW program may be admitted provisionally at the discretion of the MSW Admissions Committee. Provisional admission is offered only in situations where deemed appropriate by the admissions committee

and will require contractual agreement between the applicant and the School of Social Work to specify the conditions that must be met to successfully matriculate into the MSW program without the designation of provisional status.

## VII. Progression in the MSW Program

Upon acceptance into the MSW program, the following graduation requirements must be met:

- a. Complete required MSW online orientation.
- b. Follow the courses according to the prescribed sequence (Appendix F).
- c. Achieve a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale with no grade less than “B” in any required course. Students will be required to repeat a course in which they earn a grade of “C” or lower. **Students whose GPA falls below the overall minimum of 3.0 or who have a “C” in a required course will be placed on academic probation.** Elective courses with a grade lower than a “B” need not be repeated, but no credit will be given toward graduation requirements. A student may repeat a graduate course one time only.
- d. Successful completion of the required 60 hours of coursework, 900 hours in an approved social service agency (300 in generalist year and 600 in specialist year), and Field Seminar classes concurrent with field placements are required for graduation. All field practicums must be passed with a grade of at least “B” earned to be eligible for graduation.
- e. All students must enter the concentration year with an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0, having completed all generalist year courses with a grade of “B” or greater, and not on probation or provisional status.
- f. Continuation in the MSW program is contingent upon compliance with ethical and professional standards of conduct in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics. Reasons for dismissal can include inadequate interpersonal skills, ethical violations such as plagiarism, and an inability to conform to the Core Performance Standards of the School of Social Work.
- g. Graduation requirements follow the guidelines of Union University.

### Academic Probation

student whose overall cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 **or** who has earned a grade of “C” or below in a required course will be placed on academic probation and will be notified of probationary status by the MSW Director. While on probation, the student may, in an effort to improve their overall GPA, repeat courses in which a grade of “C” or below has been earned. Students who are on academic probation for two consecutive semesters (excluding winter and summer terms) without achieving an overall cumulative 3.0 GPA or achieving a grade of “B” in a repeated course **must** step out of the program.

If the student's is successful in reaching an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher or earning a grade of "B" or better in a repeated course, the student will be released from probationary status through notification from the MSW Director.

After being placed on probationary status, the student is advised to make an appointment with the MSW Director to develop a plan for progression in the program. Students may not enter the specialist year while on probationary or provisional status.

### **Repeating Courses**

A student may repeat a graduate course only once. Credit for the course is given only once. Computation of the overall GPA is derived from the grade earned on the second attempt.

### **Suspension/Termination Policy and Process**

A student may be placed on probation or terminated from Union University's MSW 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. Behavior judged to be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics or the Core Performance Standards of the Social Work program.
3. Academic cheating, lying, or plagiarism.
4. Behavioral disturbances that, in the professional judgment of the Social Work faculty, could impair quality provision of services to clients while enrolled and functioning in Union University's Social Work program (an example is an inability to show insight to one's own behavior and receive feedback).
5. Evidence of current illegal drug or alcohol dependency documented as occurring during the course of study.
6. Documented evidence of criminal activity occurring while enrolled and functioning in Union University's Social Work program that could impair quality provision to clients.
7. Submitting false or misleading information as a part of the application process.
8. Student is terminated from field placement by the agency for cause related to ethical violations or practice competence.

Termination/suspension from the MSW program may be at the recommendation of the MSW Director or faculty. A student's right to due process is a priority. The process for suspension or termination due to academic or professional behavior follows:

#### **Academic:**

1. Each semester the SSW Programs Coordinator reviews the overall cumulative GPAs of all social work students and notifies the MSW Director of those students who did not meet academic standards.
2. When a student fails to meet academic standards, the MSW Director will send a letter of notification to the student that they have been placed on academic probation or terminated/suspended from the program. Academic probation allows a student up to one year's time to meet academic standards.
3. If the student does not meet the standards at the end of the probationary period, a letter of notification is sent by the MSW Director advising them of their termination/suspension from the program and their right to appeal the decision and/or to apply for readmission.

### **Professional Behavior:**

1. Any student, faculty, or staff person may make a report to the MSW Director of facts as they know them regarding an ethical, professional, or behavioral concern related to an MSW student (e.g., DUI charge). If there is substantial evidence to support the concern, the MSW Director will arrange a meeting with the student.
2. The MSW Director will send written and/or verbal notification that there is an alleged concern and scheduled meeting with the student to discuss the concern. Failure of the student to appear for the scheduled meeting of which he/she has been officially notified will necessitate a decision be made by the MSW Director without student input. A summons to a meeting such as this takes precedence over any class.
3. The MSW Director will send written notification reporting the findings of the meeting and any assigned sanctions. Possible outcomes include the student being cleared of any alleged concerns following a review of the situation; probationary status in which the student may be required to demonstrate an effort to correct the concern (e.g., counseling); or suspension/termination from the program. Registration for subsequent terms or conferral of academic degrees may be withheld. Termination/suspension means a student will no longer be enrolled in the MSW program. A student may apply for re-admission as outlined in the re-admission policy.

### **Appeal Process for Termination/Suspension**

A student has the right to appeal a termination/suspension decision if the student believes the treatment received was unjust, all the facts were not taken into consideration, or the outcome was too severe for the act. The levels of appeal are noted below.

Following a decision from the MSW Director, the student may continue the appeal process as follows:

*Associate Dean Level:* The student may continue the appeal process by emailing a request for a review of the decision to the Associate Dean. This request should be sent the Associate Dean's Union email address within 10 working days of the sent date of the MSW Director's response. The Dean will provide an email response to the student within 10 working days. If the Associate Dean and MSW Director are the same person, the next appeal level would be to the Dean.

*Dean's Level:* An email request should be sent to the dean's Union email address within 10 working days of the sent date of the Dean's response. The dean will attempt to provide an email response to the student with copies sent to the student and MSW Director within 10 working days of the request.

*Faculty Affairs/Graduate Appeal Committee Level:* Within 10 working days of the sent date of the dean's response, the student may email a written request to the Associate Provost/Dean of Instruction calling for a review of the situation by the Graduate Appeals Committee. The Associate Provost will request a meeting of the committee for the purpose of reviewing all documentation related to the appeal. The committee will provide an email response to the student with copies sent to the Dean and MSW Director.

*Administrative Level:* Within 10 working days of the sent date of the committee's response, the student may submit an email request for a hearing before the Associate Provost. Requests for subsequent hearings before the provost must be received within 10 working days of the previous hearing. The decision rendered by the provost, in consultation with the President, is final. All documents relating to the above procedure will be retained in the student's file, kept in the academic center.

### **Withdrawal from Classes**

Students seeking to withdraw from all classes should consult the academic calendar and/or their program coordinator for withdrawal deadlines. To withdraw, the student must submit the "Withdraw from All Classes" form via the student [portal](#). Students discontinuing class attendance without permission will receive an "F" in those courses. In exceptional cases, such as extreme illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control, the Registrar may assign a grade of "W" for a withdrawal after the allowable time.

### **Re-admission to the MSW Program**

Students who have not been enrolled for at least one semester (not including winter or summer terms, either voluntarily or involuntary termination/suspension) will be required to be readmitted by completing a new [online application](#). No additional application fee will be required. In a brief essay, the student will explain the reason for leaving the program, for re-applying, and what conditions have taken place that make success in the program more viable. After receiving the application, the MSW Admissions Committee will review and may request additional documentation or evidence if the student has taken courses elsewhere in the interval. Prior to review by the committee, the applicant's status with the university's Student Accounts office must be reviewed and verified that the student does not have a tuition balance due the university.

## **VIII. Grievance Procedures (Academic)**

An academic grievance involving dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction or with the performance of an instructor is referred to as a Review of Instruction. A grievance involving dissatisfaction with a grade is considered a Grade Appeal. A grievance regarding a charge of academic dishonesty, which includes, but is not limited to plagiarism, is referred to as an Academic Dishonesty Appeal. Procedures for addressing each type of grievance are outlined below. Working days are defined as days when the University offices are open. All email

communication will be sent to the students' Union email account.

## **Review of Instruction**

Before initiating a formal Review of Instruction, a student who is dissatisfied with the quality of instruction or with the performance of an instructor should discuss his or her concerns with the instructor. If the issue is not resolved in consultation with the instructor, the student may initiate a formal Review of Instruction. A formal Review of Instruction must be filed within 60 working days of the posting of the final grade for the course and must follow the sequence noted below.

A formal Review begins with the student emailing a detailed written report of his or her concerns to the instructor's department chair or to the dean if the chair is the student's instructor. Within this report the student must identify his or her concerns and provide appropriate documentation to support each concern. After receiving an email response from the chair (or dean), the student may elect to email the written report to additional administrators, as needed, in the following sequence: the dean of the college or school, the associate provost/dean of instruction, and the provost. The student may not advance the report to the next level until he or she has received an email response from the administrator being addressed. Each administrator will attempt to provide the student with a written response within 10 working days from the sent date of the student's email. The student has 10 working days from the sent date of one administrator's email to submit the report to the next level. Written responses will be kept in a file other than the faculty member's personnel file.

## **Grade Appeal**

A student may initiate a grade appeal when there is legitimate reason to believe that the grade does not accurately reflect the quality of his or her academic work in the course or that the grade was determined in a manner inconsistent with the course syllabus. Before initiating a formal appeal, the student should confer with the instructor regarding how the grade was determined. In the event that the issue is not resolved in consultation with the instructor, the student may initiate a formal appeal of the grade beginning at the instructor level. The levels of appeal are noted below. Except as noted, levels cannot be bypassed.

Instructor Level: The student must email a request to the instructor within 60 working days of the posting of the final grade for the course. In addition to requesting a review of how the grade was determined, the student should include specific reasons for his or her dissatisfaction. The request should be sent to the instructor's Union email address and copied to the instructor's department chair. The instructor will attempt to provide an email response co-pied to the department chair within 10 working days of the sent date of the student's email.

Chair/Advisor Level: The student may continue the appeal process by emailing a request for a review of the grade to the instructor's department chair and to the student's faculty advisor, who together will serve as the review committee. This request should be sent to the Union email address of the chair and faculty advisor within 10 working days of the sent date of the instructor's response. The chair and the faculty advisor, serving as the review committee, will provide an email response to the student with copies sent to the instructor and the instructor's dean. In the event that either the chair or the faculty advisor is also the course instructor, the other person on the review committee will select the second member. The second member should be a faculty

member within the course instructor's academic department. In the event that one of the faculty members holds all three roles, the student should begin the process at the Dean's level.

Dean's Level: Either the student or the instructor may appeal the review committee's decision to the instructor's dean. This email request should be sent to the dean's Union email address within 10 working days of the sent date of the review committee's response. The dean will attempt to provide an email response to the instructor and/or student with copies sent to the instructor's chair, and the Associate Provost (Jackson campus) or the Vice President (Germantown campus) within 10 working days of the sent date of the instructor/student's request.

Faculty Affairs/Graduate Appeal Committee Level: Within 10 working days of the sent date of the dean's response, the student or the instructor may email a written request to the Associate Provost (Jackson) or to the Vice President (Germantown) calling for a review of the grade by the Faculty Affairs Committee (undergraduate ) or the Graduate Appeals Committee. The Associate Provost or the Vice President will request a meeting of the appropriate committee for the purpose of reviewing all documentation related to the appeal. The committee will provide an email response to the instructor and the student with copies sent to the instructor's chair and dean to the Associate Provost or the Vice President.

Administrative Level: Within 10 working days of the sent date of the committee's response, either the student or the instructor may submit an email request for a hearing before the Associate Provost (Jackson) or the Vice President (Germantown). Requests for subsequent hearings before the provost must be received within 10 working days of the previous hearing. The decision of the President will be final.

Copies of all correspondence related to the formal petitions and appeals will be kept for future reference in the student's file in the School of Social Work, MSW program.

### **Academic Dishonesty Appeal**

Any student found guilty by their instructor of cheating/plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary action by the instructor. Incidents involving graduate students will be filed with the School of Social Work Dean. If the student deems this action unfair, he or she may request a hearing before the administrator with whom the report was filed. The administrator will convey the results to the student and to the instructor by email (copied to the Office of the Dean of Students).

If either the student or the instructor involved deems the administrator's action unsatisfactory, within 10 working days of the sent date of the email conveying the results he or she may email the office of the Provost to request a hearing before the Graduate Appeals Committee. The committee will convey its decision to the student and to the instructor by email. The decision of this committee will be final upon approval by the Provost in consultation with the President.

## **IX. Grievance Procedures (Non-Academic)**

Union University and the School of Social Work are committed to providing an atmosphere in which conflicts are addressed in a constructive manner through open and honest communication. The specific process for a general student grievance may be found at <http://www.uu.edu/studentlife/accountability/general-grievance-policy.cfm>. Students who are unsure of which policies or procedures should be followed may discuss the matter with the Dean

of the School of Social Work, Director of Human Resources, Title IX Coordinator, or the Provost. Specific policies and a procedural guideline can be found at <http://www.uu.edu/studentlife/accountability/complaint-grievance-procedure-guidelines.cfm>.

## **APPENDIX A. Student Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Students have a right to:**

- expect a quality education preparing them for advanced generalist social work practice
- expect reasonable access to faculty for advisement and assistance they need in their educational program and with plans for after graduation
- appeal decisions made regarding admission and continuation in the program, grades, and assignments
- give input to the formulation and revision of policies affecting academic and student affairs. This is accomplished both formally and informally as students serve on the Advisory Council to the program, but also have access through the student organization and directly with faculty and administrators
- expect from each instructor a course syllabus which outlines the course of study, textbooks to be used, course requirements and objectives, a bibliography, and a description of how they will be evaluated
- expect faculty to be prepared and knowledgeable in order to teach effectively

### **Students are responsible for:**

- becoming familiar with the Social Work Program policies and procedures by reading the Social Work Student Handbook and Field Manual
- attending and participating in classes except when hindered by illness or other emergency situations. Student should attend class mentally and emotionally prepared to learn and engage in classroom activities
- communicating with faculty when a problem arises in a class or with their progress in the program
- behaving in a manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics in all relationships in the program

## APPENDIX B: Sexual Harassment

### Sexual Harassment

Union University is committed to providing its faculty, staff, and students with an environment free from explicit and implicit coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the well-being of any member of the university community.

**Sexual Harassment Defined:** The definition of sexual harassment varies greatly. Therefore, we will use the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's guidelines. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions guidelines prohibiting sexual harassment, there are two types of sexual harassment: (1) *Quid pro quo*—“submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual that is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual” and (2) Hostile environment—“unwelcome sexual conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.” Sexual harassment in the college community may include, but may not be limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where: (1) submission to such conduct is a term or condition of an individual's employment or education; (2) submission to or rejection of said conduct is used as a basis for academic or employment decisions affecting the individual; or (3) such conduct results in a hostile environment, which has the effect of interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance.

**Policy Statement:** Sexual harassment of any type will not be tolerated and is expressly prohibited. Sexual harassment is grounds for disciplinary action which may include reprimand, demotion, discharge, or other appropriate action, dependent upon the nature of the harassment. Faculty are asked to be especially sensitive to the fact that they are in a position of authority over students and that authority carries with it responsibility to be mindful of situations in which they are dealing with students in private, one-on-one associations both on and off campus.

**Complaint Procedure:** A student with a complaint against a faculty member, a member of the administration, or another student may contact the Dean of Students. Alternate contacts include the Director of Human Resources, the Executive Vice President, and the President. The contact person will initiate an Incident Report form and forward to the Director of Human Resources. The University will handle the matter with as much confidentiality as possible. There will be no retaliation against any staff, faculty, or student who reports a claim of sexual harassment or against any staff, faculty, or student who is a witness to the harassment. The University will conduct an immediate investigation to determine all of the facts concerning the alleged harassment. The investigation will be directed by the Director of Human Resources unless the Director of Human Resources or someone in the director's office is the subject of the investigation. In that event, the office of the provost (faculty) or Executive Vice President (staff or student) will direct the investigation. As a part of the investigation of the claim of sexual harassment, the contact person, the complainant, and the respondent will be asked to provide statements regarding the incident. Once the report is reviewed and investigation is concluded, a finding may be found that sexual harassment did not occur, or a finding may be found that sexual harassment did occur, and corrective action (reprimand, demotion, discharge, or other appropriate action) will be communicated in writing to the complainant and the respondent. Appeals to this process may be conducted in accordance with the most recent revision of the handbook under the section(s) entitled “Violations of Standards of Conduct” or “Grievance Procedures.” All documents, except disciplinary action documents, related to an incident will remain in a file other than the employee's personnel file. Although filed separately, all personnel related files are kept in the Human Resources office.

## APPENDIX C: Personal Safety on Campus & In Field Placement

Students are encouraged to be aware that social work practice includes some potential for risk to personal safety. It is the responsibility of the student to assess the risk of environmental factors and to take precautions for personal safety. A discussion on safety in the agency is provided as part of the field seminar course. Additionally, students should request in-service training and orientation in the agency regarding the particular safety information in that setting. The student should review the personnel policies and safety guidelines before any work with the agency begins. Students are expected to follow the recommended safety guidelines rigorously, and to use discernment when making home visits or delivering services in the community. Students should always let someone in the agency know where s/he will be when working outside of the agency offices. Students have the right and the responsibility to report any unsafe situation to a supervisor and request an alternate assignment. They have the right and responsibility to appeal to the Field Liaison or the Field Directors if they have concerns about the response to their request. Finally, students are expected to follow the infection control guidelines to protect from contagious diseases.

Please note that Union University faculty, staff, and social work field directors are in compliance with Union's Title IX policies and procedures for reporting sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking and domestic/dating relationship violence. For more information go to <https://www.uu.edu/studentlife/accountability/title-IX.cfm> or contact the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Ann Singleton ([asingleton@uu.edu](mailto:asingleton@uu.edu)).

In regard to personal safety, all students, whether participating in activities on the Jackson or Germantown campus or in internship/academic activities off-site, should plan carefully all aspects of their educational experience to maximize the academic experience and minimize any potential safety or health problems.

The following guidelines emphasize student responsibility for planning and for communicating during the program and in the event of any emergency.

- Know how to obtain emergency health and law enforcement services on campus and off-site (e.g. field practicum site).
- Obtain, read, and carefully consider materials related to any off-site location, particularly those materials relating to safety and health issues in the off-site program and locale.
- Consider your health and personal circumstances when applying for or accepting field placements.
- Make available to the field practicum site and Union University accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary to plan a safe and healthy field education program experience.
- Assume responsibility for the elements necessary for personal preparation for the campus and field practicum site.
- Participate fully in any orientations by the field practicum site and the School of Social Work at Union University.
- Obtain or maintain appropriate insurance coverage, particularly health insurance in the event of sickness or injury during the program. Students are provided with liability insurance while completing their field placement (See Director of Field Education for a copy of the liability insurance coverage form).
- Inform next of kin and others with a need to know about participation in the field practicum site.
- Provide next of kin and the School of Social Work Field Director with emergency contact information and keep them informed on an ongoing basis.

- Understand and comply with the field practicum site's terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures, as well as Union's terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures (Union's codes of conduct apply off site).
- Be aware of local conditions that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the field practicum site and the School of Social Work at Union University.

In case of an emergency or threat to your safety while on the Union University campus, inform Safety and Security (731) 394-2922. In case of emergency or threat to your safety while at your field practicum site, follow the safety procedures of your field placement agency and promptly notify the Director of Social Work Field Education.

## APPENDIX D: Core Performance Standards for Admission, Progression, and Graduation Union University School of Social Work

To ensure that social work students will be competent and professional social workers, all students must meet essential standards of behavior for social work practice. The following chart begins with the NASW Code of Ethics, which identifies the core values on which Union University's School of Social Work is based. This summary of ethical principles reflects the social work profession's core values; it establishes a set of specific ethical standards that guide social work practice; and it provides the principles on which the public can hold a social work professional accountable. These principles will set forth the orb of responsibility to which each student obligates him or herself from entrance into the social work program. Each student will be required to adhere to the NASW's Code of Ethics, which states that professionals "...must not allow their own personal problems, psychological distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interest of people for whom they have a professional responsibility" (NASW Code of Ethics, Section 4.05a).

Standard	Required Skills	Examples of Satisfactory Behavior
<b>Professional Ethics:</b> The student will conduct him/herself in full accordance with the values and ethics of the social work profession, as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics, and the mission and goals of Union University's School of Social Work.	The student will: recognize legal and ethical dilemmas, and seek appropriate consultation when necessary; demonstrate practice strategies that respect the positive value of diversity; challenge social injustice; maintain professional boundaries; be honest with clients and colleagues; protect client confidentiality in the classroom, in assignments, and in the field agency; be open, honest, and without judgment; make commitments that will be kept; and identify and maintain appropriate personal conduct and professional boundaries in keeping with all professional standards.	The student will: work with all vulnerable populations with dignity and respect; refrain from cheating and plagiarism as defined in the student handbook; seek professional consultation when needed.
<b>Critical Thinking:</b> The student will formulate opinions and conclusions based on analysis that distinguishes fact from inference, and combines an understanding of personal, cultural, and contextual factors with balanced dignity and respect for those that are the same or different than student.	The student is able: to critically assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in the context of environmental factors, including socioeconomic, cultural, biological, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions; refrain from judging others based on difference; utilize an understanding of how ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, age and other cultural characteristics affect the helping process; demonstrate an ability to evaluate and differentially apply practice approaches with individuals, groups, families, and organizations; employ a scientific analytic approach to practice that integrates the critical appraisal of social research and the evaluation of social policies, program and practice outcomes; demonstrate knowledge of social, political, and economic justice for clients and an ability to identify and promote resources for clients.	The student will: develop intervention plans with various client systems; collaborate effectively with community resources and connect clients with community resources; integrate classroom assignments with knowledge from various curricular areas; prepare psychosocial assessments of clients and design generalist intervention plans.

<b>Time Management:</b> The student completes classroom, field education, and agency assignments and requirements in a consistently timely manner.	The students will: complete assignments with timeliness and quality; come to class and/or field regularly and on time; assume responsibility for communicating an interruption of planned attendance or task completion; and assume responsibility for identifying appropriate alternatives when a change is necessary.	The students will: complete assignments on time; attend class and field regularly and on time; contact instructors and field educators regarding absences or the late submission of assignments; submit required class and field assignments without being prompted.
<b>Self-Awareness:</b> The student possesses a balanced view of his/her performance in intellectual, social, behavioral, and interpersonal skills, and acknowledges barriers to his/her performance. The student assumes full responsibility to protect clients and others from potential adverse consequences of those barriers to performance.	The student will: solicit, accept, and incorporate feedback into classroom and field agency; identify barriers to performance; design and implement specific goals and strategies for professional growth; evaluate his/her own practice by using objective assessment methods, such as process recordings and single subject designs.	The student will: actively participate in class and in field experience; participate in activities aimed at increasing self-awareness; seek professional help when needed; adjust workload and/or seek consultation with an instructor in the face of personal difficulties that may adversely impact interaction with clients.
<b>Communication:</b> The student receives and responds to verbal, non-verbal, and written exchanges between self, faculty, agency personnel, and colleagues in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics and the mission and goals of Union University's School of Social Work.	The student will: develop cooperative and collegial relationships with colleagues and clients with organizations, agencies and communities; demonstrate knowledge about the effects of oppression and discrimination on individuals, families, groups and communities; contribute as a constructive participant in academic and agency affairs; honor verbal and written agreements made with others.	The students will: follow through on verbal and written commitments to others
<b>Professional Relationships:</b> The student engages, maintains, and terminates relationships appropriately with diverse client groups, instructors, agency staff, colleagues, organizations and communities in a professional, responsible and respectful manner.	The student will: communicate effectively with a wide range of client systems, demonstrating a knowledge of, and sensitivity to differences due to gender, race, class, age, culture, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and physical or mental abilities without judgment; follow agency guidelines for record keeping, and demonstrate the ability to document communications as a basis for professional accountability; possess appropriate verbal, non-verbal and written skills; and conduct all communication in a respectful manner.	The student will: speak with dignity; respect, and sensitivity to clients, colleagues and instructors; prepare written documents that are clear, concise, accurate and complete; communicate with sensitivity to cultural and contextual differences; use correct grammar in written and oral communication.
<b>Supervision:</b> The student readily accepts and adheres to directives from faculty, agency personnel, and colleagues in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics and the mission and goals of Union University's School of Social Work.	The students will: solicit, accept, and incorporate supervision, and be able to effectively follow directions in classroom and field agency; and possess the ability to effectively utilize supervision in a respectful manner in classroom and agency for the furtherance of professional growth.	The students will: actively and effectively incorporate directives and supervision in classroom and agency placements.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (Revised 2021)**

[Highlighted Revisions to the Code of Ethics \(socialworkers.org\)](#)

[Code of Ethics \(socialworkers.org\)](#)

## **APPENDIX F**

### **CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards**

See following link for access to the CSWE Education Policy and Accreditation Standards:

<https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS>

## APPENDIX G: MSW Prescribed Course Sequence

COMPARISON OF COURSE SEQUENCE IN THE MSW FULL-TIME, PART-TIME 3 YEAR, AND ADVANCED STANDING PROGRAM OPTIONS				
Semester	FULL-TIME	3-YR PART-TIME	ADVANCED STANDING	ADVANCED STANDING - part time
Fall, 1st semester	SW 510 Social Welfare and Social Justice	SW 510 Social Welfare and Social Justice	SW 631 Practice and Program Evaluation	SW 599 Bridge Course
	SW 500 HBSE I - Theoretical Foundations	SW 500 HBSE I - Theoretical foundations	SW 605 Psychopathology: A.D & T	SW 605 Psychopathology: A.D & T
	SW 520 Practice I-Communities & Organizations	SW 521 Foundations for Research	SW 650 Advanced Practice with Ind/Fam	SW 650 Advanced Practice with Ind/Fam
	SW 521 Foundations for Research		SW 599 Bridge Course	
	SW 590 Field I		Elective SW 690 Field III	
Spring, 2nd semester	SW 535 Policy Analysis & Advocacy	SW 535 Policy Analysis & Advocacy	SW 660 Advanced Practice in Com Dev & Ad	SW 660 Advanced Practice in Com Dev & Ad
	SW 501 HBSE II - Assessment Through the Lifespan	SW 501 HBSE II - Assessment Through the Lifespan	SW 623 Theory & Ethics for Advanced Practice	SW 660 Advanced Practice in Com Dev & Ad
	SW 530 Practice II-Individuals & Families	SW 530 Practice II-Individuals & Families	Elective	Elective
	SW 540 Practice III-Social Work with Groups		Elective	
	SW 591 Field II		SW 691 Field IV	
Fall, 3rd semester	SW 631 Practice and Program Evaluation	SW 605 Psychopathology A.D & T		SW 631 Practice and Program Evaluation
	SW 605 Psychopathology: A.D & T	SW 520 Practice I-Communities & Organizations		Elective
	SW 650 Advanced Practice with Ind/Fam	Elective		SW 690 Field III
	Elective	SW 590 Field I		
	SW 690 Field III			
Spring, 4th semester	SW 660 Advanced Practice in Com Dev & Ad	SW 540 Practice III: Social Work with Groups		SW 623 Theory & Ethics for Advanced Practice
	SW 623 Capstone Seminar	Elective		Elective
	Elective	SW 590 Field II		SW 691 Field IV
	Elective			
	SW 691 Field IV			
Fall, 5th semester		SW 631 Practice & Program Evaluation	This schedule also applies to the online option	
		SW 650 Advanced Practice with Ind/Fam		
		Elective		
		SW 690 Field III		
Spring, 6th semester		SW 660 Advanced Practice in Com Dev & Ad		
		SW 623 Capstone Seminar		
		SW 690 Field IV		

### Advanced Standing MSW Program

33 required credit hours (21 hours of core course work + 12 hours of electives)

Students have two time-frames in which to complete the program: 1 year or 2 years (see course schedules below)

600 field placement hours (begins in August and continues through May)

1 Year Course Plan	2 Year Course Plan
<p>Fall:  SW605: Psychopathology  SW631: Practice &amp; Program Evaluation  SW650: Advanced Practice with Individuals and Families  SW690: Field III</p> <p>Spring:  SW623: Theory &amp; Ethics for Advanced Practice  SW660: Advanced Practice in Community Development  SW691: Field IV</p>	<p>Fall I:  SW605: Psychopathology  SW650: Advanced Practice with Individuals and Families</p> <p>Spring I:  SW660: Advanced Practice in Community Development  Elective</p> <p>Fall II:  SW631: Practice &amp; Program Evaluation  SW690: Field III</p> <p>Spring II:  SW623: Theory &amp; Ethics for Advanced Practice  SW691: Field IV</p>

12 hours of electives can be taken in the summer or during traditional Fall/Spring semesters

### Traditional Standing MSW Program

60 required credit hours – 51 hours of core course work + 9 hours of electives

Students have two time-frames in which to complete the program: 2 years or 3 years (see course schedules below)

900 field placement hours (two separate placements):

- First placement: 300 hours (spring of the first year in the program)
- Second placement: 600 hours (begins in August of year 2 and continues through May)

2 Year Course Plan	3 Year Course Plan
<p><b>Fall I:</b>  SW500: HBSE I: Theoretical Foundations  SW510: Social Justice &amp; Social Welfare  SW520: Practice I: Communities/Organizations  SW521: Foundations for SW Practice  Sw590: Field I</p> <p><b>Spring I:</b>  SW501: HBSE II: Assessment through the Lifespan  SW530: Practice II: Individuals &amp; Families  SW535: Policy Analysis  SW540: Practice III: SW with Groups  SW591: Field II</p> <p><b>Fall II:</b>  SW605: Psychopathology  SW631: Practice &amp; Program Evaluation  SW650: Advanced Practice with Individuals and Families  SW690: Field III</p> <p><b>Spring II:</b>  SW623: Theory &amp; Ethics for Advanced Practice  SW660: Advanced Practice in Community Development  SW691: Field IV</p>	<p><b>Fall I:</b>  SW500: HBSE I: Theoretical Foundations  SW510: Social Justice and Social Welfare  SW521: Foundations for SW Practice</p> <p><b>Spring I:</b>  SW501: HBSE II: Assessment through the Lifespan  SW535: Policy Analysis  SW530: Practice II: Individuals &amp; Families</p> <p><b>Fall II:</b>  SW605: Psychopathology  SW520: Practice I: Communities/Organizations  Sw690: Field I</p> <p><b>Spring II:</b>  SW540: SW with Groups  SW591: Field II</p> <p><b>Fall III:</b>  SW631: Practice &amp; Program Evaluation  SW650: Advanced Practice with Individuals and Families  SW690: Field III</p> <p><b>Spring III:</b>  SW660: Advanced Practice in Community Dev.  SW623: Theory &amp; Ethics for Advanced Practice  SW691: Field IV</p>

9 hours of electives can be taken in the summer, J-term (only through 2022), or during traditional Fall/Spring semesters