



Master of Social Work

Student Handbook

AY 2023-2024

1301 East Main Street, Box 139
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Academic Classroom Building (ACB), Suite 130
615.898.2868

Visit us at <https://mtsu.edu/socialwork/index.php>

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Draft Revision 09-2022

Welcome

Dear Students:

We are delighted to welcome you to the Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) Department of Social Work! Whether you are beginning or continuing your educational journey with us, we look forward to learning, exploring, and growing together. We prepare students to address the complex social problems of our time to achieve social, racial, and economic justice for all people. We believe that justice can be more than an ideal. Now more than ever, social workers are needed to meet societal challenges. Whether pursuing a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) or Master of Social Work (MSW), we offer a unique and innovative curriculum to reflect current and future social service needs.

The MTSU Department of Social Work faculty is comprised of an outstanding group of scholars who are actively engaged in innovative research to address complex challenges facing our community and worldwide. Their practice experience and research expertise reinforce our commitment to social and economic justice. Our goal is to promote intellectual curiosity and embrace academic debate. In addition to an array of stimulating courses, we offer various field education sites and numerous community engagement opportunities.

We are dedicated to educating future contributors and leaders, and learning from each other. Therefore, we encourage one another to foster a community free of anti-racism, discrimination, and intolerance. We promote a respectful, civil, supportive, and safe climate. These core values allow us to provide a learning environment where we can all pursue our dreams and reach our highest potential.

Earning a degree in social work is not a solo experience. We hope you make personal and professional connections that last throughout your program of study and beyond. To enhance your learning experience, reach out to faculty, staff, and classmates for information, resources, and support. Do not hesitate to engage with others or ask questions. Even if answers are not readily available, you can enjoy the experience of discovering them together.

We are grateful to have you and look forward to working with you and getting to know you.

Faculty and Staff
Department of Social Work

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Section I. Department of Social Work

Accreditation and Certification

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) was granted professional accreditation through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 2021. Prior to accreditation as a program of MTSU, the MSW program was part of a three-university collaborative and held CSWE accreditation for 11 years. Professional social work accreditation enables graduates of the program to belong to professional social work organizations such as the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), to be eligible for licensure, and to apply for advanced standing in Master of Social Work (MSW) programs. MTSU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Accreditation is an important part of our profession and most social work professional positions require that the social worker graduate from an accredited program.

Mission

The Department of Social Work at MTSU prepares students to serve as social work practitioners, scholars, and leaders who assist individuals, families, groups, and communities at the local, national, and international levels. Our faculty seeks to develop culturally informed, community-engaged students who promote social justice and respect for diversity and human rights through research, coursework, fieldwork, and public service.

Vision

Our vision is to create a world where social workers are leaders in promoting a society that values equity, diversity, inclusiveness, and concern for the well-being of all humanity.

Goals

The goals of the program are developed directly from the defined mission, purposes of social work education, and the body of social work literature on the efficacy of the advanced generalist model for professional social work practice. To fulfill the mission, the goals of the MSW program are:

1. To prepare a competent, diverse student population for advanced generalist social work practice based on professional values and ethics to serve client systems within each level of practice.
2. To provide the knowledge and skills necessary to promote the development of and advocacy for of social policies and services that reduce the impact of poverty, oppression, and discrimination, and ensure social, environment, and economic justice across systems.
3. To provide a teaching environment that ensures the development of analytical skills and critical thinking as part of social work practice.
4. Support knowledge acquisition through active participation in the development, evaluation, and improvement of social work knowledge and skills via research aimed at

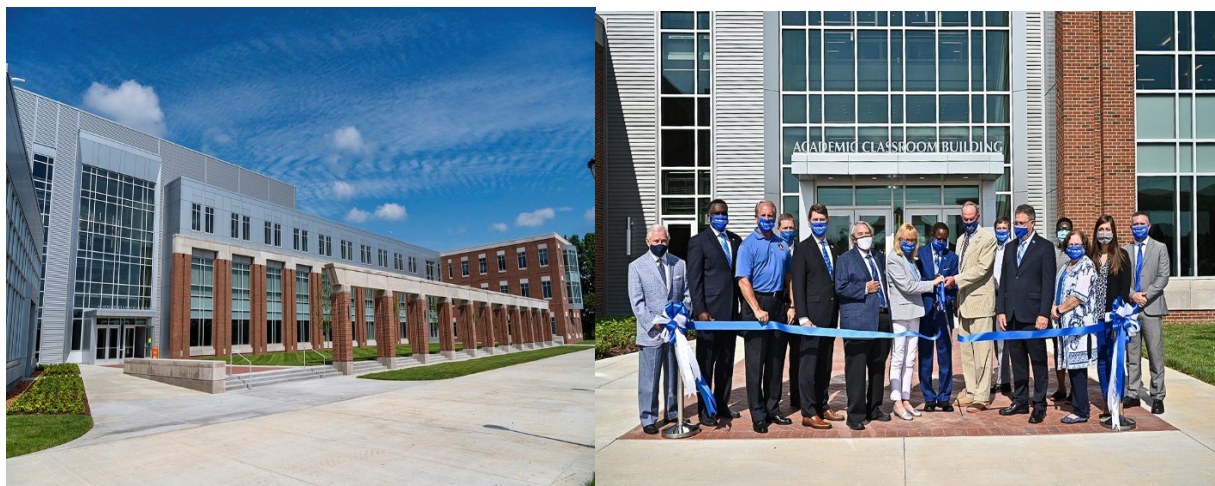
- advancing social work practice.
5. To promote the development of a multiple theoretical orientation applicable across systems and levels of practice that supports competency as advanced generalist social work professionals.
 6. To provide an understanding of diversity and cultural competence, from a lens of cultural humility and with an emphasis on social justice, empowerment, and improving the well-being of people.
 7. To instill in students the history, purpose and philosophical underpinning reflected in the profession of social work and develop professional leadership skills across service delivery systems.

Faculty Information

The Department of Social Work at MTSU has numerous full- and part-time faculty who have a range of social work experience and expertise. A professional social work advisory board consisting of social workers from the practice community provides input and feedback to faculty. The Department of Social Work faculty and staff listing is located at <https://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/faculty.php>.

Campus Location

In 2020, the Department of Social Work and two other disciplines relocated to a new 91,000 square foot building, the Academic Classroom Building (ACB). The \$39.6 million building includes faculty offices, classrooms, and lab spaces. ACB includes 14 classrooms and five computer class laboratories, providing a total of 900 class and lab seats. Fourteen smaller, discipline-specific and research rooms with an additional 87 student stations also are part of the facility. The Department of Social Work is located on the first floor in ACB 130.



Additional information regarding the Department of Social Work is located at <https://mtsu.edu/socialwork/index.php>.

Important Dates

Important dates regarding university registration and the department application process are listed below. The actual dates will be posted on the department's website.

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
MSW Applications Due	January	October
Orientation for newly admitted MSW students	August	January
Field Orientation (required)	August	January
Departmental Scholarship Deadlines		February
Application to Field	October	March
University Priority Registration	November	April

Section II. Master of Social Work (MSW) Curriculum Design

Core Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the accrediting body for social work baccalaureate and master social work educational programs in the United States and establishes the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). EPAS guides the mission, vision, goals, and informs the design and organization of the MSW program curriculum. Successful completion of core courses implies that the student has achieved competency in the following areas:

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

Each core course will contain a department Standardized Assignment that measures a student's competency and practice behaviors. In addition to a numeric grade, the assignment will be used to calculate scores for competencies at designated points in your education. The instructor will provide a competency report before the end of the semester (refer to the last page of core course syllabus) within the Tevera Field Management and Accreditation Software. Tevera can be accessed

at <https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/login>. Additional information regarding social work education competencies can be located at <https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/standards/2015-epas/> and CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (Appendix A).

Advanced Generalist Model

The Master of Social Work (MSW) degree is recognized as the professional degree for advanced generalist social work practice in public and private social service agencies. The advanced generalist practice framework incorporates a systems perspective that includes: the problem-solving approach; a focus on human diversity; the ability to understand and analyze social work research; an ability to begin to evaluate one's own practice; a commitment to human rights and to serving populations at risk and working toward their empowerment; and a commitment to the values and ethics of the social work profession that leads toward social change and social justice.

The MSW curriculum at MTSU is organized, implemented, and evaluated based on an advanced generalist practice framework. The curriculum design is based upon MTSU and the Department of Social Work's requirements and developed in accordance with CSWE's EPAS. The program's curriculum design is to prepare students for professional social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

The MTSU-MSW curriculum prepares students to engage in advanced generalist social work practice. The curriculum is designed so that by the time students graduate they will have acquired the knowledge, skills, and professional values to allow them to meet the needs of the region and enhance human well-being, diversity, and social justice through developing and improving systems of public social services, especially for children and families. Classroom and field-based learning reinforce each other, allowing students to develop the competencies required of advanced generalist social work practitioners. The MSW curriculum is organized as **Foundation** and **Concentration** courses.

The initial 30 credits of the MTSU-MSW Program's curriculum constitute students' foundation education experience. Foundation-level courses and field education equip students with the knowledge, skills, and professional values that form the core of generalist social work practice. The advanced generalist concentration curriculum, which entails 30 credits, builds on students' foundation learning, and offers more advanced course work and field education experiences. The foundation program includes a 400-hour field practicum.

Upon successful completion of the foundation courses, students begin the concentration coursework. These are advanced courses providing specific knowledge and skills build upon the knowledge developed in the foundation courses. The concentration courses comprise 30 hours credits. This includes a 500-hour field practicum.

Students admitted to the MTSU-MSW Program with advanced standing have obtained a Bachelor in Social Work degree and are given credit for the foundation curriculum's course and field education requirements. Advanced standing students complete the course and field education requirements of the 30-credit concentration curriculum.

Students without advanced standing who enter the program with a strong background in content covered by certain foundation courses have the option of taking an examination to be exempt from those courses. Exemption from a foundation course is by examination only, and exemption exams are only available for specific courses. Exemption from a foundation course does not reduce the number of credits a student must complete to satisfy the requirements for the MSW degree; additional elective coursework can be taken to satisfy the 60 credits needed for graduation. This process is explained in Section III.

The profession of social work is guided by six core values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the individual, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Values and principles aid in setting a standard for social workers' behaviors. Social work professionals are required to have the ongoing ability to develop knowledge, skills, and judgment, for safe and ethical practice. Students will need to review the professional ethics of social work, which are guided by the following organizations:

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)	https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/ .
National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW)	https://www.nabsw.org/page/CodeofEthics ,
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)	https://www.socialworkers.org/about/ethics/code-of-ethics .

Social Work Course Descriptions

The MSW program required and elective courses are presented in Figures 1, 2 and 3.

Figure 1. Required MSW Foundation Courses		
SW 6000	MSW Practice I (3 hours)	3 credit hours
	A social work methods course designed to enable the student to understand and apply social work methods within the context of the generalist perspective with individuals and families. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program	
SW 6010	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3 credit hours
	An introduction to the theories and knowledge of the human bio-psycho-social development including theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations, agencies, and communities). Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program	
SW 6020	Research I	3 credit hours
	This is a basic research and statistical methods course, utilizing research in general inquiry and practice evaluation in social work with the generalist	

	perspective. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program	
SW 6030	Social Welfare Policy and Services	3 credit hours
	The historical development, philosophical orientation, and analysis of U.S. social welfare policy and services, including the global context. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program	
SW 6100	MSW Practice II	3 credit hours
	A social work methods course designed to enable the student to understand and apply social work methods within the context of the generalist perspective with groups, agencies, and communities. Prerequisites: MSW Practice I & HBSE	
SW 6110	Social Justice & Equity for Multicultural Populations	3 credit hours
	An overview of the professional commitment of social work to oppressed peoples. Prerequisite: HBSE	
SW 6120	Research II	3 credit hours
	An advanced discussion of program evaluation strategies and single system design issues. The student will conduct a research project. Prerequisite: Research I	
SW 6130	Practicum IA	3 credit hours
	A 200-hour field practicum experience within the generalist perspective. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IB. Prerequisites: MSW Practice I, HBSE, Research I, & Policy	
SW 6140	Practicum IB	3 credit hours
	A 200-hour field practicum experience with the generalist perspective. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IA. Prerequisites: MSW Practice I, HBSE, Research I, & Policy	

Figure 2. Required MSW Concentration Courses		
(Must have taken Foundation courses or be admitted as Advanced Standing)		
SW 6200	Advanced Practice with Individuals	3 credit hours
	Advanced practice with individuals including client system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB	

	(SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission	
SW 6210	Advanced Practice with Families	3 credit hours
	Advanced practice with families including client system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission	
SW 6220	Advanced Group Practice	3 credit hours
	Advanced practice with groups including client system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission	
SW 6230	Advanced Macro Practice	3 credit hours
	Advanced practice with organizations and communities including system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission	
SW 6240	Social Policy Analysis	3 credit hours
	A study of the design, implementation, and analysis of social policies and their impact on social work practice. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission	
SW 6300	Empirical Social Work Practice	4 credit hours
	A seminar in the integration of theoretical perspectives and the application of research findings and empirical outcome evaluation techniques to advanced generalist social work practice. Prerequisites: Advanced Practice with Individuals, Advanced Practice with Families OR Advanced Group Practice, Advanced Macro Practice, & Social Policy Analysis	
SW 6310	Practicum IIA	4 credit hours
	A 250-hour field practicum experience. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IIB. Prerequisites: Advanced Practice with Individuals, Advanced Practice with Families OR Advanced Group Practice, Advanced Macro Practice, & Social Policy Analysis	

SW 6320	Practicum IIB	4 credit hours
	A 250-hour field practicum experience. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IIA. Prerequisites: Advanced Practice with Individuals, Advanced Practice with Families OR Advanced Group Practice, Advanced Macro Practice, & Social Policy Analysis	

Figure 3. Electives		
(9 credits required for Foundation students and 6 electives required for Advanced Standing students)		
SW 5000	Special Topics	3 credit hours
	Special topics in social work and social welfare. Topics include but are not limited to: International Social Work, Grant-writing, Military Social Work, Supervision in Social Work Practice, and Clinical Assessment. May be repeated for a maximum of 9 hours	
SW 5140	Adult Mental Health	3 credit hours
	This course prepares students for advanced generalist practice by integrating foundation level knowledge of policy, research, HBSE and practice with substantive knowledge from the field of mental health. Students will learn the basics of DSM-V diagnosis, biopsychosocial assessment	
SW 5150	Infant, Early Childhood, and Adolescent Mental Health	3 credit hours
	This course prepares students for advanced generalist practice by integrating foundation level knowledge, research, developmental theory, HBSE and practice with substantive knowledge from the field of mental health. Students will learn the basics of diagnosis, biopsychosocial assessment, and evidence-based practices in working with infants, children, adolescents, and their families.	

Section III. Master of Social Work (MSW)

The MSW major prepares for students for advanced generalist social work practice. Social workers promote human and community well-being; our courses focus on developing competent, ethical professionals with the knowledge, values, and skills for effective practice with individuals, families, groups, agencies, and communities. Guided by an awareness of individuals and their environment, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, social work's purpose is realized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons.

Recommended Curriculum Sequence

Full- time Program

MSW Foundation: 30 semester hours

Year 1:

Semester 1	Hours	Semester 2	Hours	Semester 3	Hours
SW 6000 MSW Practice I	3	SW 6100 MSW Practice II	3	Optional	
SW 6010 HBSE (online)	3	SW 6110 Social Justice online)	3	SW 5000 Special Topics	
SW 6020 Research I	3	SW 6120 Research II	3	(online)	3
SW 6030 Policy (online)	3	SW 6130 Practicum IA (200 hrs)	3	Optional	
SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3	SW 6140 Practicum IB (200 hrs)	3	SW 6140 Practicum IB (200 hrs)	3
<i>Total 15 hours</i>		<i>Total 15 hours</i>		<i>Optional Total 6 hours</i>	

MSW Concentration and Advanced Standing: 30 semester hours

Year 2:

Semester 1	Hours	Semester 2	Hours	Semester 3	Hours
SW 6200 Advanced Practice w/ Individuals	3	SW 6300 Empirical SW Practice	4	Optional	
SW 6210 Advanced Practice w/ Families		SW 6310 Practicum IIA (250 hrs)	4	SW 5000 Special Topics	3
OR		SW 6320 Practicum IIB (250 hrs)	4	Optional	
SW 6220 Advanced Groups	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3	SW 6320 Practicum IIB (250 hrs)	4
SW 6240 Social Policy Analysis (online)	3			<i>Optional Total 7 hours</i>	
SW 6230 Advanced Macro Practice	3				
SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3				
<i>Total 15 hours</i>		<i>Total 15 hours</i>			

Part-time Program**MSW Foundation: 30 semester hours**

Semester I - First Year	Hours	Semester II - First Year	Hours	Semester III - First Year	Hours
SW 6000 MSW Practice I	3	SW 6100 MSW Practice II	3	SW 5000 Special Topics	3
SW 6010 HBSE (online)	3	SW 6110 Social Justice (online)	3	(online)	
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 3 hours</i>	
Semester I - Second Year	Hours	Semester II - Second Year	Hours	Semester III - Second Year	Hours
SW 6020 Research I	3	SW 6120 Research II	3	SW 6140 Practicum IB (200 hrs)	3
SW 6030 Policy (online)	3	SW 6130 Practicum IA (200 hrs)	3		
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 3 hours</i>	

MSW Concentration: 30 semester hours

Semester I - First Year	Hours	Semester II - First Year	Hours	Semester III - First Year	Hours
SW 6200 Advanced Practice w Individuals	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3		
SW 6240 Social Policy Analysis (online)	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3		
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 6 hours</i>			
Semester I - Second Year	Hours	Spring - Second Year	Hours	Semester III - Second Year	Hours
SW 6210 Advanced Practice w Families OR		SW 6300 Empirical SW Practice	4	SW 6320 Practicum IIB (250 hrs)	4
SW 6220 Advanced Groups	3	SW 6310 Practicum IIA (250 hrs)	4		
SW 6230 Advanced Macro Practice	3				
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 8 hours</i>		<i>Total 4 hours</i>	

Credit for Life, Volunteer, or Employment Experience

Applicants should be aware that, consistent with CSWE standards, the MTSU-MSW Program does

not grant academic credits for life, volunteer, or work experience.

Transfer Students

Transfer Credit is defined as the awarding of academic credit toward a degree for post-baccalaureate course or field work completed at an accredited academic institution when such work meets the transfer credit requirements of the university as well as those of this MSW Program.

Exemption is defined as the waiving of a required academic course following: 1) an evaluation of the student's previous post-baccalaureate work that determines it to be essentially identical to the required course being waived and that meets the requirements of the university as well as those of this MSW Program; or 2) demonstration by the student via examination of their mastery of a specific foundation content area for which such an examination is available. An exemption as defined herein does not reduce the number of credits required for graduation.

Persons who have completed master's level work at a CSWE-accredited Master of Social Work program* and who are admitted to the Middle Tennessee State University Master of Social Work Program for completion of the MSW degree may be eligible to receive transfer credits and/or course exemptions.

Any exemption granted will not reduce the number of credits the student needs to complete their MSW degree. The number of credits granted or reduced for a given course can neither exceed the number on the transcript from the school where they were earned, nor the number earned in the corresponding course in this program. Regardless of the exemptions or transfer credits granted under this paragraph, the student will be required to complete before graduation all foundation and concentration requirements of this program's curriculum.

The specific transfer credits or exemptions granted will depend on the curriculum of the Master of Social Work program the student attended, the courses the student completed, this program's MSW curriculum, and the requirements of the university. This evaluation will be performed by the MSW Program Coordinator, or their designate, in collaboration with relevant graduate faculty from this program and representatives of the graduate division.

* For the purposes of granting Transfer Credit or Exemption under this paragraph, an accredited Master of Social Work program is one that is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education as posted in the Council's [Directory of Colleges and Universities with Accredited Social Work Degree Programs](#).

- A. Persons who have completed post-baccalaureate academic work at an accredited academic institution in some discipline or profession other than social work and who are admitted to the Middle Tennessee State University Master of Social Work Program may be entitled to transfer up to nine (9) credits of elective coursework. Coursework considered for transfer credits must meet the requirements for transfer credit of the university.

The number of credits granted for a given course can neither exceed the number on the transcript from the school where they were earned, nor the number earned in the

corresponding course at MTSU.

Exemption or transfer credit will not be granted for internship experiences completed during post-baccalaureate work in a discipline or profession other than social work.

- B. Persons whose undergraduate education has afforded them strong preparation in one or more of the subjects covered in this program's foundation curriculum may be able to be exempt from the course(s). Exemption from MSW foundation courses will be determined via available examination only. Any exemption granted, however, will not reduce the number of credits that students will need to complete their MSW degree.

Exemption credit will not be granted for internship experiences completed during baccalaureate work in a discipline or profession other than social work.

MSW Program Admissions Process

In addition to the standard institutional requirements for admission to the graduate college, individuals must also submit an application to the Department of Social Work. Information about the application process is available online at: <http://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/msw.php>.

The Department of Social Work application for the MSW Program consists of:

- A completed MSW Application Form, which includes an essay.
- Three (3) reference forms to be completed by professionals who can address the applicant's interest in social work, potential for successfully completing a master's program, and potential for professional social work practice.

Applicants interested in obtaining Advanced Standing must have a) completed a Bachelor of Social Work degree from a CSWE-accredited program, and b) attained a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 in their undergraduate course work. International students who hold a baccalaureate degree from a social work program outside the U.S. must have their transcript reviewed by CSWE for a determination of equivalency.

Applicants should be aware that, consistent with CSWE standards, the MTSU-MSW Program does not grant academic credits for life, volunteer, or work experience.

Applicants who have successfully completed graduate coursework at an accredited college or university in a discipline other than social work may be able to transfer up to nine (9) credits of elective coursework.

Those who have successfully completed graduate coursework in social work at a program accredited by CSWE should contact the Department of Social Work for information on transferring credits.

Application Decision Process

The MSW Admissions Committee consists of department faculty members. The committee reviews applications for admissions to the program and determines the application process. Upon completing the review of applications, the Admissions Committee makes the determinations regarding admission status for each applicant. The committee members review based on the following:

1. Completed application packet by deadline date of the appropriate semester.
2. Essay scored for factors related to critical thinking, inclusion of social work values, research capacity, and quality of written work.
3. Ratings from references as noted on the MSW reference form.
4. Grade point average that meets requirements for the MSW program.
5. Volunteer and practicum (internship) experience.
6. Prior work experience related to social services.

Note that admission to the MSW program is competitive. Admission decisions include acceptance, conditional acceptance, or denial.

The essay is an important part of the admission decision process. Applicants may want to seek assistance from a proofreader, or other resource to assist with the essay. For more information on the MTSU Writing Center or to make an appointment, visit: <https://www.mtsu.edu/writing-center/> or call 615- 904-8237. The writing center is located in Walker Library, Room 362 or you may email them at uwcenter@mtsu.edu.

Students who are denied admission may reapply to the MSW program during another admission cycle.

All applicants in a specific cohort are notified about the admission decision via email at the same time. Admission to the program notifications will be sent prior to registration time (fall or spring). The student is **required to attend the MSW Social Work Program Orientation** as scheduled for their incoming semester.

Conditional Admission Policy

Applicants may be granted a conditional admission to the program when one or more of the admissions requirements is not yet fulfilled but in progress. When students are in process of completing social work prerequisites and general education requirements, conditional admission may be granted until the undergraduate degree is completed and the applicant can provide an official transcript confirming graduation. Conditional admission may also be recommended when the admissions committee finds a need to interview an applicant to clarify or obtain additional information about information in the application. It is the applicant's responsibility to assure that these outstanding conditions are fulfilled. Upon completion of outstanding items, the conditional admission will be changed to a full admission.

Enrollment Status

Full-time students, who will complete the Middle Tennessee State University Master of Social Work Program in two (2) years, will need to enroll in 12-15 credits per semester.

Part-time students, who will complete the Middle Tennessee State University Master of Social Work Program in four (4) years, will need to enroll in 6-8 credits per semester.

A student wishing to change their enrollment status from full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time should first discuss the matter with their academic advisor. The student must then submit to the MSW Program Coordinator a written request that indicates the rationale for the change of enrollment status. The written request must be submitted in advance of the student changing the number of credits for which they register. The MSW Program Coordinator will review the request and will notify the student and the academic advisor of the decision.

A change of enrollment status does not increase the amount of time the student has to complete the MSW degree beyond four years from the date of the student's entry into the program.

Field Education

Field education is one of the cornerstones of professional social work education. During their field practicum, MSW students have the opportunity to apply what they are learning in the classroom to real world situations. They also can bring their field practicum experiences back to the classroom for reflection, examination, analysis, and synthesis.

Students who enter the MSW Program without advanced standing complete two field experiences: a 6-credit foundation placement (400 hours) and an 8-credit advanced generalist practice placement (500 hours). Students who enter with advanced standing complete a single, 8-credit advanced generalist practice placement (500 hours). In addition to agency-based supervision, a faculty member serves as a liaison between the program and the placement to foster the integration of field and classroom learning. Applicants should be aware that, consistent with CSWE standards, the MTSU-MSW Program does not grant academic credits for life, volunteer, or work experience.

Social work field education is essential to the MSW degree and consists of applied learning and demonstration of competence in practice. Field education is the signature pedagogy for professional social work. The field practicum is a requirement for all social work majors. A listing of social service agencies is available in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>), and MSW students are responsible for securing their field placements. Students may also discuss their interests with the Field Coordinator. The field placement process will be reviewed in detail during Field Orientation.

Once students are accepted into a practicum, students receive professional guidance from their on-site Field Instructor (supervisor) and the faculty-Field Liaison who guides them through the semester. All social work students are assigned to social service agencies for field experiences as generalist social workers.

Orientation to the MTSU-MSW Program's field education component is provided to students each semester. For further information on field education policies and procedures, including a listing of the specific criteria to be met before beginning a field placement, see the *Field Education* section of this manual.

Professional Liability Insurance

Prior to entering the MSW field practicum (Practicum IA, IB, IIA and IIB), students must obtain professional liability insurance. Additional information can be located on page 35 in this handbook.

Section IV. Graduate Student Requirements

Graduation Requirements and Information

To qualify for graduation, MSW students must complete all of this program's course and field education requirements and have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher. In addition, the student must complete the requirements of the College of Graduate Studies.

It is the responsibility of the MSW student to submit in a timely fashion all necessary paperwork required for graduation by the College of Graduate Studies.

In all instances, meeting the requirements for graduation is the responsibility of the student. Review the University Catalog for a complete listing of all graduation requirements at <https://www.mtsu.edu/ucat/>.

Standardized Examinations Requirements

Comprehensive Examination

As a non-thesis program, the culminating experience for the MSW Program will be a written comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination will be completed in the student's final semester of study and will incorporate both the application of research and the integration of classroom and field-based learning experiences. Information about the comprehensive exam will be provided in the SW 6300 Empirical Social Work Practice course.

Advisement Policies and Procedures

Student advisement is an important and essential component of the Department of Social Work. There are three broad purposes of advisement:

- Provide guidance on academic matters.
- Assist with problem solving.
- Offer consultation on professional development and social work career opportunities.

Once admitted to the MSW program, students are assigned to an academic advisor who is a faculty member. Advisement in the MSW program occurs at two levels. Academic advisement facilitates the student staying in the academic sequence and professional advisement looks at the goodness of fit between a student and the profession of social work. The developmental approach to advisement taken by the program suggests that the major objective should be student growth. This includes assisting students in self-understanding and self-acceptance; considering both their life and career goals; and developing an educational plan.

For any concerns or questions related to courses, the instructor should be the first point of contact. Other questions and concerns should be directed to the assigned Faculty Advisor.

Academic Advising

The **Academic Advising process** offers direction about curriculum plan, as well as assistance in registration for courses and completing registration. The purpose of academic advisement is to:

1. Advise the student through the process of obtaining a MSW degree, which includes completing an academic map, preparing an application packet, obtaining a final degree check, and preparing for field practicum and graduation.
2. Assist the student in preparing semester schedules prior to registration.
3. Work with the student around any academic problems that may arise.
4. Work with students to ensure graduation requirements are met (i.e., intent to graduate).

The academic advisor is the student's major link with the University faculty and the channel for communication with the administration. Students are expected to meet with their assigned academic advisor each semester to outline their social work program and goals, and to set semester schedules. The student's academic map and college transcripts provide consistent academic information to assist accurate planning of their progression through the program.

Professional Advising

The Faculty Advisor additionally serves as a professional resource for students. The faculty advisor is available to assist with clarification on social work topics, licensure, the Code of Ethics, and mentorship. They can assist with career advising and progress toward achieving career objectives, as well as practice experience and practice interests. They can also coach students on time management, problem-solving, and additional support adjusting to college and thriving in an academic and professional setting. The faculty advisor serves as a role model of social work values and professionalism; the advisor assists with the student's professional development, helping the student to assess their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work and to clarify their career goals and options. **Students are encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor at least one time per semester.**

The assigned social work faculty advisor can be found on each student's Pipeline account. To locate the social work faculty advisor's name:

- Log in to **PipelineMT** at <https://www.mtsu.edu/> and sign into your Pipeline account.
- Click **Registration and Student Records**.
- Click on **Assigned Advisor(s)** icon,
- Select a term and **Submit** (make sure you select the correct term).
- All student assigned advisor(s), including office locations, emails, and phone numbers are provided

Faculty advisors will have posted office hours during which they are available to meet with students for advisement. They may also be contacted by phone or email.

Advisement Procedure

Once submitted, the student will have access to the name of their assigned faculty advisor. When appropriate, advisors inform and refer students to the MTSU Counseling and Career Center, the Writing Lab, the Financial Aid Office, the Student Health Center, the Disability and Access Center, and other university services. Advisors confine their role in advisement to those issues germane to student academic needs.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

The MTSU-MSW Program is committed to ensuring that MSW students are treated fairly and with respect and dignity during their graduate education. Students deserve to have their work evaluated in a non-biased and timely fashion. They should receive appropriate recognition for their contributions to work they do with faculty members. No student in the MTSU-MSW Program should be subject to bias or discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

A fuller statement of students' rights and responsibilities can be found at:
<http://catalog.mtsu.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=2670>.

Student Participation

The Social Work Program fully supports students' rights and responsibilities in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs. Social work students are encouraged to be full participants in the rights and responsibilities provided them at Middle Tennessee State University, as outlined in the university catalog which is available online. The program also encourages, and will facilitate, students organizing in their interests.

Student Organizations

Participation in student organizations are an integral part of the student college experience and offers experiences beyond the classroom environment. Benefits to participating in student organizations are networking, peer support, and opportunities to grow personally and professionally in the field of social work. There are several student social work organizations in the Department of Social Work

Bilingual Students' Social Work Organization (BSSWO)

The Bilingual Students' Social Work Club was chartered at MTSU in 2019 for the following purposes: to be a safe space for bilingual social work students; to enhance and expand professional skills of the members; to learn more about diverse communities and how to serve them; and to improve individual and group cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. Applications for membership are available in the Social Work office. Additional information is located at <https://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/BilingualStudentsSW.php>

National Association of Black Social Workers, Student Chapter (NABSW)

The National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) was established in 1968 to advocate and address important social issues that impact the health and welfare of the Black community. NABSW is comprised of over 100 membership chapters and over 30 university and college student chapters throughout the continental United States, Canada, and the Caribbean. MTSU's chapter of NABSW was established in 2010.

The mission of NABSW is committed to enhancing the quality of life and empowering people of African ancestry through advocacy, human services delivery, and research. NABSW will work to create a world in which people of African ancestry will live free from racial domination, economic exploitation, and cultural oppression. In collaboration with national, international, and other appropriate groups, NABSW will continue to leverage its collective expertise to strategically develop capacity of people of African ancestry to sustain and flourish. The vision of NABSW is guided by the Swahili Seven Principles of Nguzo Saba (Unity, Self-determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith), and the Seven Cardinal Virtues of Ma'at, which are Right, Truth, Justice, Order, Reciprocity, Balance, and Harmony. Additional information is located at: <https://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/nabsw.php>

Phi Alpha Honor Society

This honor society is for social work students dedicated to excellence in scholarship and high professional standards. Established in 1962, Phi Alpha Honor Society boasts over 450 chapters nationwide. The national social work honor society was chartered at MTSU in 1998. The purposes of Phi Alpha Honor Society are to provide a closer bond among students of social work and promote humanitarian goals and ideals. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work. Applications for membership are available in the Social Work office. Additional information is located at <https://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/phialpha/index.php>

Student Social Work Organization (SSWO)

The SSWO, formerly known as Social Work Forum, is an organization of social work majors officially recognized by MTSU. All social work students are invited to become members along with other interested students. The mission of SSWO is to (a) advance excellence in social work practice, (b) encourage members, (c) provide an opportunity for members to socialize with peers and colleagues, and (d) provide opportunities for students to participate in various learning experiences. SSWO is comprised consists of students who would like (a) an opportunity to meet other students also interested in social work, (b) to keep current on issues related to the social work profession, (c) to attend conferences, and (d) to participate in social service activities in the community. SSWO is a great way to reach out, make new friends, and make a difference. SSWO is an informal organization that meets regularly during fall and spring semesters. Applications for membership are available in the Social Work office. Additional information is located at <https://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/swforum.php>

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

NASW is the national organization for professional social workers with over 120,000 members and 55 chapters throughout the United States and abroad. The organization's programs in professional development, professional standards, professional action to achieve sound social policy affecting those who are served, and membership services, are structured to help all Social Workers to advance their practice in the field of helping people. The organization believes in commitment to a high standard of practice and guides its members to this standard through the Code of Ethics. NASW meetings are held annually, both on the National and State level. Local branch meetings are held monthly. Low student membership rates are offered for those pursuing an education in the field of Social Work. Liability insurance, sometimes required during a student's practicum semesters is also obtained from NASW. Applications for insurance and NASW membership can be obtained in the Social Work Office. Additional information is located at <https://www.naswtn.com/> and <https://www.socialworkers.org/>. Members of NASW also receive the professional journal *Social Work*, which is committed to improving practice and extending knowledge in social work and social welfare. The journal is published bimonthly and is indexed/abstracted in:

Criminal Justice Abstract, Social Citation Index, Social Work Research and Abstracts, Social Sciences Index, and various other publications.

Faculty Meetings

A student will be elected by the student social work organizations (Bilingual Students' Social Work Organization, National Association of Black Social Workers, Phi Alpha Honor Society, Student Social Work Organization) to function as liaison between social work students and social work faculty. Social work faculty may choose to select additional student(s) to serve as student liaisons. The liaison(s) will be non-voting participants at social work department faculty meetings and will have a scheduled time on the agenda to share concerns and information from student organizations and the student body. Student liaisons will be excused from the discussion at faculty meetings when the faculty address confidential issues.

Social Work Department Advisory Board

A student will be elected by the social work student organizations (Bilingual Students' Social Work Organization, National Association of Black Social Workers, Phi Alpha Honor Society, Student Social Work Organization) to be the student representative on the Social Work Department Advisory Board and will be a full participant in board activities.

Grade Appeal

[University Policy 313, Student Grade Appeals](#), provides an avenue for MTSU students to appeal a final course grade in cases in which the student alleges that unethical or unprofessional actions by the instructor and/or grading inequities improperly impacted the final grade.

Academic Integrity/Misconduct

MSW students are expected to intellectually honest and forthright in their academic and field placement activities. All work MSW students complete for all courses should be their own. MSW students are expected to give credit to the sources used in their work by including appropriate

citations and identifying direct quotations with quotation marks and providing complete reference information.

Please review the [information on Academic Integrity and Misconduct](#). Academic integrity is a hallmark of Middle Tennessee State University. We expect students to present original work for all academic assignments turned in for credit and appropriately credit all sources used. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. **Plagiarism:** The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper attribution. This includes self-plagiarism, which occurs when an author submits material or research from a previous academic exercise to satisfy the requirements of another exercise and uses it without proper citation of its reuse.
2. **Cheating:** Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. This includes unapproved collaboration, which occurs when a student works with others on an academic exercise without the express permission of the professor. It also includes purchasing assignments or paying another person to complete a course for you.
3. **Fabrication:** Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Going online and using information without proper citation, copying parts of other students' work, creating information to establish credibility, or using someone else's thoughts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment is academic misconduct. If a student has a question about an assignment, they should ask the class instructor. All cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Director of Student Academic Ethics and may result in failure on the test/assignment or for the course.

Students guilty of academic misconduct are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions (including suspension from the university), which may be imposed through the regular institutional procedures as a result of academic misconduct, the instructor has the authority to assign an "F" or zero for an activity or to assign an "F" for the course. Students accused of plagiarism will be immediately reported to the Director of Student Academic Ethics.

Some course instructors may be submitting materials to an online service (Turnitin.com) which will review the work for plagiarism. The student should also review the report generated for each assignment and self-check for plagiarism. Information on how to cite work correctly is provided within the course modules or through the [University Writing Center](#).

Performance Standards

Because of the positions of authority that social workers hold and the potential to do harm in those positions, academic requirements in social work programs are, by necessity, comprehensive. In addition to academic requirements for completion of courses at specific grade levels, social work students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the values, ethics, and conduct required of professional social workers. Students demonstrate these performance requirements in three primary roles in the program: as learners, as students in a professional program, and as future

professional practitioners. Comprehensive academic performance standards in the social work program include cognitive-affective skills, behavioral, and professional components and are primary indicators of professional readiness for social work practice.

Students who are unable to achieve or to demonstrate the essential behavior identified in this document will come before the Academic and Professional Standard Review Committee, in accordance with the program policies and procedures that govern how issues of student continuation in and termination from the program are addressed.

Academic Performance Standards Policies

- Students must achieve and maintain an overall GPA of 3.0.
- Students must achieve and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in required social work courses.
- Students cannot meet social work requirements if they earn below a C in graduate level coursework. If a grade below C is earned in a course required the course must be successfully repeated (with C or better) before the student is eligible to move from the foundation to concentration curriculum. If the course is a prerequisite to another social work course, the student cannot enroll in the next course in the sequence until the prerequisite is successfully repeated with a C or higher.
- All social work students who earn a grade below a C in a required social work course are eligible to repeat the course **one time only**. Any student earning a grade below C at the time of withdrawal from a required social work course will be allowed to repeat the course **one time only**.
- All social work students are allowed to repeat **only two required social work courses** in which they received a grade below a C.
- Every effort is made to ensure that the student's success while completing the field experience. Therefore, students who do not pass the Field Practicum **may not repeat the course** and therefore cannot graduate with a MSW degree.
- When a student's GPA falls below 3.0, the student has two (2) semesters in which to recover the 3.0 GPA standing. If this does not occur, the MSW student will be removed from the program.

Behavioral Performance Standards

- Students must demonstrate judgement and conduct consistent with the values and ethics of the profession as advanced in the *NASW Code of Ethics*, as well as the established laws, policies, and professional standards of practice.
- Show a willingness to receive and accept feedback and/or supervision in a positive manner and to use the feedback to enhance professional development.
- Demonstrate the ability to deal with life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms.
- Relates interpersonally in a manner that is respectful, non-manipulative, nondiscriminatory, and characterized by maturity.
- Use proper channels for conflict resolutions.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in all relevant relationships and arenas.

- Show potential for responsible and accountable behavior by observing deadlines, keeping appointments or canceling appointments if unable to keep them, attending class regularly and on time and observing assignment due dates.
- Responds in a timely and appropriate manner to communication from faculty, supervisors, field instruction personnel, and clients.
- Speaks with dignity, respect, and cultural sensitivity to peers, clients, faculty, staff, advisors, supervisors, agency personnel, and Field Instructors (Supervisors).
- Prepares written products that reflect mastery of the conventions of the written word in clarity, accuracy, completeness, as well as that evidence correct grammar and syntax, proper diction, accurate reasoning, and APA formatting.

Social Media and Professional Communication Standards

Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. email, blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material that could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the Department of Social Work, the Tennessee Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as Middle Tennessee State University, and the Department of Social Work while in the classroom, the University, and the broader community.

Reasonable Accommodations

Middle Tennessee State University is committed to campus access in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any student interested in reasonable accommodations can consult the [Disability & Access Center \(DAC\)](#) website and/or contact the DAC for assistance at 615-898-2783 or dacemail@mtsu.edu.

Title IX

Students who believe they have been harassed discriminated against, or been the victim of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking should contact a Title IX/Deputy Coordinator at 615-898- 2185 or 615-898-2750 for assistance or review [MTSU's Title IX website](#) for resources. MTSU faculty are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are legally obligated to share reports of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking with the University's Title IX coordinator to help ensure students' safety and welfare. Please refer to [MTSU's Title IX website](#) for contact information and details.

Harassment

MTSU is committed to establishing an atmosphere where your work, education, and participation in the university's activities and programs will be free from intimidation or offensive behaviors. Sexual, racial or other forms of harassment have no place in a university community. For more information, contact: Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Equity and Compliance Office, Cope Administration Building, 615-898-2185.

Section V. Awards and Scholarships

The Department of Social Work awards and scholarships information is located at <https://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/scholarships.php>. Also refer to important dates, on page 3 of this handbook.

Marian Clark Scholarship

- MTSU students in field practicum this summer or the next academic year.
- BSW or MSW student.
- All applicants must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 or 3.5 in the social work major.

Outstanding Student Nomination-Master of Social Work Student Award

- Nominees must be admitted to the MSW program.
- GPA, field work performance, and public service outside the Department of Social Work will be considered but the most important criteria will be the following:
 - love of learning.
 - assistance to other social work students in their learning process.
 - contribution to the professional and Department of Social Work.
- Those making nominations should include a "Statement of Nomination" on the nomination form. The Statement of Nomination will assist the committee in its determination of the recipient of the award.
- Any social work student or social work faculty member can nominate; nomination must come from two people (e.g., two students, two faculty, or one student and one faculty).
- The due dates for nomination forms and nomination letters due dates are located on the department's webpage at <https://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/scholarships.php>.

- Selected students will be recognized at the College's annual scholarship ceremony during the spring semester.
- Application deadline is in February each year.

Section VI. General Information

Writing Standards

Students are expected to prepare written assignments and communication (e.g., email) in a scholarly and professional manner. Writing skills are emphasized throughout the curriculum. All written work submitted to the Department of Social Work shall follow the format of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). APA style is the most commonly used writing style in the social sciences. Academic writing requires the student to master an accepted and uniform writing style.

Submissions should be typewritten in double-space format and carefully edited for spelling and grammar. The APA Manual serves as the guide for style and format of all papers submitted in the MSW program. Information regarding APA style and writing guide can be located at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa6_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_powerpoint_slide_presentation.html <https://apastyle.apa.org/>. Additional information on guides to social work journals can be located at <https://library.mtsu.edu/home>

Writing Assistance

Students are expected to use good academic English; grades will be lowered for poor grammar, syntax, or spelling. The University Writing Center (UWC) offers **free writing assistance** for any writing assignment in any class. The UWC staff, comprised of English graduate assistants, works with students to develop the skills necessary to become confident, competent writers by providing one-to-one consultations and helpful handouts. The Writing Center offers many online services as well, including a Grammar hotline for quick questions, a learning environment system (LES) email dropbox and chat room, and a website filled with helpful handouts, exercises, and resource links for individual work. Check the Center website for hours. Access to online services is available 24/7. Additionally, students may refer to the MTSU Watson Library.

Tutoring

Student tutoring resources include the [University Computer Labs](#), [Smarthinking](#), and the [University Writing Center](#). Other tutoring resources are available on the [Student Support website](#).

D2L Assistance

Students needing assistance with the D2L system are encouraged to contact the support staff at 615-904-8189 or visit <https://elearn.mtsu.edu>.

Technical Support

Students who experience technical problems including, but not limited to, logging into their course, timing out of their course, and using the course website tools are encouraged to contact the [MTSU Help Desk](#) online (24/7) or at 1-615-898-5345.

Outreach and Support Programs

The MTSU community is committed to the academic achievement of each student, and we know that struggling to address basic needs can affect a student's ability to perform academically. Students who are having trouble finding a safe and stable place to live or enough food to eat can contact <https://mtsu.edu/one-stop/outreach.php> go to the MTSU Food Pantry at the MT One Stop.

Licensure

The MSW program at MTSU is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and qualifies graduates to seek state licensure as social workers. Students should be aware that licensure requirements vary from state to state and are subject to change. MTSU has not made a determination whether this program will meet all of the requirements of another US state or territory. Students in the MTSU MSW program who plan to practice outside the state of Tennessee should consult the Association of Social Work Boards' list of state regulations at <http://aswbsocialworkregulations.org/licensingWebsitesReportBuilder.jsp> for the most current information about licensure procedures in the U.S. state or territory in which they plan to practice and discuss their plans with their advisor. For more information, visit the following, <https://www.aswb.org/> and <https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/health-professional-boards/sw-board/sw-board/licensure.html>.

Career Opportunities

Graduates are employed in many different public and private work settings, including:

Advocacy programs	Homeless shelters
Aging services	Hospices
Business and industry	Hospitals/clinics
Child and adult day care centers	Income maintenance programs
Child welfare agencies	Legal service agencies
Churches	Mental health services
Community action agencies	Nursing homes
Criminal justice agencies	Public health agencies
Disability service agencies	Residential treatment programs
Domestic violence programs	Schools (elementary and secondary)
Family service agencies	Substance abuse programs
Home care agencies	Vocational rehabilitation services

Employers of MTSU Alumni

ACLU of Tennessee	Middle Tennessee State University
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Alzheimer's Association	Murfreesboro City Schools
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Nashville Vet Center
Boys and Girls Clubs of Rutherford County	Project Help
Catholic Charities	Rutherford County Schools
Child Advocacy Center	Sunnington Assisted Living
Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Center of Murfreesboro	Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
Meharry Medical College	Tennessee Department of Children's Services
Metro Nashville Public Schools	Youth Villages

Section VII. Academic Standards

Procedure for Termination of Enrollment

Enrollment in the MSW program at MTSU may be terminated for the following reasons:

1. Failure of student to maintain a satisfactory GPA;
2. Failure to meet the Academic and Professional Standards in the social work program; including violations of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics;
3. Violations of the University Code of Student Conduct.

Additional information can be located at <https://www.mtsu.edu/student-conduct/code/>
<https://www.mtsu.edu/student-conduct/quick-guide.php>.

Academic and Professional Standards

According to the following process, a student may be dismissed from the MSW program on recommendation by a faculty member, Field Instructor (Supervisor), or a participating practicum agency. The recommendation is made to the Social Work Department Chair and/or the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Faculty familiar with the student's performance must be consulted prior to this action being taken. A formal vote from the Academic and Professional Standards Committee is required to initiate dismissal.

A student may be terminated from the program on the basis of the following Academic and Professional Standards:

1. **Academic Performance:** Students must pursue academic honesty and meet grade requirements. Students are required to maintain a grade of C - or better in all social work courses. Students who earn a final grade of "D" or "F" in any social work course may not re-enroll in these courses or subsequent courses in the program without written permission from the program coordinator. Students may request written permission to re-enroll within 10 days of receiving the final grade to the MSW Program Coordinator. Students may retake a required social work course once. Failure to achieve a passing grade of C or better on the second attempt will result in referral to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Students are allowed to repeat a maximum of two required social work courses. Student who are unable to meet this standard will be terminated from the program.
2. **Absenteeism:** Students must meet the requirements of class and practicum attendance.

Students must meet the requirements of professionalism or professional behavior as stated in course syllabi.

3. **Professional Behavior:** Students must act in a professional manner when engaging in the classroom, University, agency, and wider community. Students must treat peers, faculty, agency personnel, clients, and others with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith. Students must abide by the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and MTSU Student Code of Conduct. Students must demonstrate professionalism in appearance, oral, written, and electronic communication. Students are expected to use technology appropriately and professionally. Additional information regarding social media and Professional Behavior is located on pages 21-22 of this handbook and <https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS>.
4. **Assaultive or Threatening Behavior:** Students will not participate in violent, assaultive, or threatening behavior that is directed at peers, clients, colleagues, staff, instructors, or others.
5. **Damaging Behavior:** Students must treat others with respect, demonstrate a respect for diversity and difference, protect confidentiality, ensure freedom of expression, and demonstrate a commitment to community.
6. **Ineffectiveness in Work with Clients:** Students must demonstrate professional behavior and effective performance and apply progressive learning techniques to evidence progress in working with clients. Student must not violate practicum agency policy.

Understanding of the requirements and comportment expected of a student in the social work major are detailed in the MSW Admission application and must be signed by the student when the application is submitted.

Resolution of Academic and Professional Standards Violations

Progressive Discipline. If a student violates any of the above tenets, the student will be terminated from the program and/or may receive an Improvement Plan, which initiates termination. Refer to Appendix B, for an example of the Improvement Plan. Continuation of the identified behavior will result in termination from the program. However, dangerous and/or serious behaviors or violations can result in immediate expulsion. The Academic and Professional Standards Committee is charged with assigning, reviewing, and terminating improvement plans for students.

Informal Resolution

Informal Resolution (minor professional violations) is a professional standard violation and considered minor if the harm is minimal and manageable. Examples of minor violations include, but are not limited to, first incidence of (1) a student being disrespectful to another student, faculty member, adjunct, or staff which does not cause harm; (2) a student exercises bad judgement in field which does not cause serious harm or other violations; (3) failing grades.

The Academic and Professional Standards Committee will meet with the student(s) involved to discuss the actions or concerns. The instructor must complete the Academic and Professional Standards Violation form (Appendix C) form for each student and each offense. The improvement plan (Appendix B) offers support to students who meet criteria for termination but show potential

for improvement in the program given more support. Examples of criteria that warrant an improvement plan include failing grades and unprofessional behavior. Possible outcomes may include (1) mandatory faculty advising sessions; and/or (2) the instructor or faculty advisor may require the student to complete an assignment or read an article(s) to reinforce social work concepts, values, and ethics.

Formal Resolution

Formal Resolutions are major professional standards violations. Examples of professional performance that may result in termination from the program:

- Professional disrespect of the personal rights and dignity of all persons, including students, faculty, supervisors, and clients receiving services from the student.
- Discrimination or harassment related to race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, age.
- Violating the confidentiality of the professional relationship;
- Hostility and disrespect towards students, faculty, or others at school or in the field.
- Consistent failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships.
- Continued inability or unwillingness to demonstrate a nonjudgmental attitude; or
- Any other violations of the NASW Code of Ethics; violations of the policies of MTSU Code of Student Conduct, and Department of Social Work policies.

The protocol for improvement plan includes:

1. Faculty advisor and Field Coordinator, Field Liaison, Field Instructor (as deemed necessary), or a participating practicum agency refers student for academic and/or unprofessional behavior to the program coordinator or Department Chair using the Academic and Professional Standards Violation form (Appendix C).
2. The program coordinator will request the Academic and Professional Standards Committee to convene to review the student's case and decide whether to initiate an improvement plan. Improvement plans may be informal and formal. Improvement plans that are informal intend to be short term (less than one academic year). Formal improvement plans remain in place throughout the student matriculation. A sample student improvement plan is located in Appendix B.
 - Committee reviews documentation and/or meets with student, student's faculty advisor, and faculty familiar with the student's performance.
 - After reviewing all documentation, the Committee decides to initiate an improvement plan. The improvement plan is completed by student and social work faculty advisor.
 - A student has ten (10) business days to sign the improvement plan. Students who do not sign the improvement plan will be terminated from the program. Students may have one semester to fulfill the expectations of the improvement plan unless the behavioral issues continue.
 - Social work faculty advisor submits the outcome of the improvement plan to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. The committee makes a recommendation to the Department Chair for the student's termination or continuation in the program.
3. The Department Chair or a designee informs the student of their termination or

continuation in the MSW program.

- Students who wish to challenge the improvement plan or termination must write an appeal letter to the Department Chair. The appeal letter must provide the student's reasons for refusing the improvement plan or challenging termination.
- Students who wish to challenge the improvement plan or termination have ten (10) business days to write an appeal letter to the Department Chair. The appeal letter must provide the student's reasons for challenging termination.
- The expectations of the academic and professional standards of the program remain in place for the duration of enrollment.

When students do not show evidence for improvement in the program, termination from the program is recommended. Examples of criteria that warrant immediate termination include refusal to participate in an improvement plan, unsuccessful completion of an improvement plan, failing grades, and unprofessional behavior including dangerous and/or serious behaviors or violations. The protocol for termination includes the following:

1. Faculty advisor, and Field Coordinator, Field Liaison, Field Instructor (as deemed necessary), or a participating practicum agency refers student for academic and/or unprofessional behavior to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee or Department Chair.
2. The Academic and Professional Standards Committee reviews student's case and decides about terminating a student from the social work program.
 - The committee reviews documentation and/or meets with student and faculty familiar with the student's performance.
 - If the committee decides to terminate a student from the social work program, the committee will make the recommendation to the Department Chair for the student's termination.
3. The Department Chair or a designee informs the student of their termination in the MSW program.
 - Students who wish to challenge termination have ten (10) business days to write an appeal letter to the Department Chair. The appeal letter must provide the student's reasons for challenging termination. The Department Chair reviews the student's appeal letter with the Academic and Professional Standards Committee.

In certain circumstances, a student may be terminated from the MSW program with specific remedial steps to be taken before formal re-application to the program may be made. Students have the right of appeal for the termination process through the identified grievance procedures of the Social Work Program and the University.

Statute of Limitation on Earning the MSW Degree

There is a four-year statute of limitation on the earning of the MSW degree, consistent with the Council on Social Work Education's Accreditation Standards. The four-year period is counted from the date of entry into the program for four full academic calendar years.

Under extenuating circumstances (listed below), an academic advisor can recommend an extension of time to the MSW Program Coordinator. If approved, the period of extension and the conditions for completing the program will be recorded in the student's folder, with a copy sent to the student.

Extenuating circumstances include the following:

- extended illness of the student.
- extended personal emergency.
- mobilization into a US military unit.
- death of a close family member.

Leave of Absence/Stop Out

Under special circumstances, a MSW student may be granted a leave of absence from the program. A student wishing to take a leave of absence should refer to their university's Graduate Catalog for information on specific requirements and procedures. The time out of the program during an approved leave of absence/stop out will not count against the total time allowed to complete the MSW degree.

Readmission to the Master of Social Work Program

In addition to seeking readmission in the graduate division, a person seeking to re-enter this program must submit a letter to the MSW Program Coordinator. The letter should discuss why the individual wishes to return to the MSW Program and the plans the student has to ensure that they will now be able to participate fully and meet the program's course and field education requirements. The letter will be reviewed by the MSW Program Coordinator and the graduate faculty. Their recommendation will be forwarded to the graduate division.

Grievance Procedures

Any student who is dissatisfied with his/her treatment in any academic situation (except grades) which may occur in the Social Work Department may have his/her grievance addressed by utilizing the Department's grievance procedures.

The Social Work Department's Grievance Procedures are as follows:

1. The student discusses the issue with the faculty member(s) with whom there is a difference.
2. If the issue remains unresolved, the student should contact the department of social work chair.
3. If there is still no resolution, the student should prepare a written statement addressed to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. The statement should provide the Committee with all relevant information about the issue or problem, and the steps the student has taken to obtain a resolution of the problem.
4. Upon receipt of the student's statement, the Committee will meet to consider the issue or problem. The committee will accept written statements from any involved faculty member. The committee will prepare a written report with recommendation(s) for resolution. A case review of the student's grievance will include the committee and any faculty with the exception of the Department Chair and the faculty member with whom

- the student has a dispute.
5. The committee will send the report to the Department Chair for appropriate action.
 6. The student, if not satisfied, may confer with the chair of the Department of Social Work and with the Dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences.

Section VIII. Field Education

Purpose of Field Education

The purpose of the field practicum is to provide an educationally directed practice experience for the MSW student. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has identified field education as the signature pedagogy of social work education:

“Signature pedagogy represent the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students In social work, the signature pedagogy is field education... the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. It fosters a learning environment where anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion are valued.” (CSWE, 2022).

The field experience provides opportunities for students to apply the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to real life interactions with clients. Students can observe the benefits and challenges of working within various organizational settings with diverse client populations. Through this experience, students become socialized to the profession and can deepen their understanding of the profession’s values and ethics as well as its commitment to social, economic, and environmental justice.

At MTSU’s Department of Social Work, a field placement is provided through a school-agency partnership. This is referred to as “field practicum.” The field practicum is made up of two components:

1. Supervision by a professional social worker in the agency (Field Instructor/Supervisor).
2. Faculty member (Field Liaison) from the social work department.

Throughout the practicum experience students attend Field Instruction course and meet with their faculty liaisons to ensure their progress is developed, directed, monitored, assessed, and supported academically.

All field practicum sites and Field Instructors (Supervisors) are selected by the Department through a prescribed process overseen by the MSW Field Education Coordinator. Each agency signs an Affiliation Agreement prior to the beginning of a student’s placement. Students are placed in a variety of generalist practice social work settings designed to be inclusive of all course content. Field placements are geared toward student interests and educational feasibility.

Structure of Field Education

Students who enter the MSW Program without advanced standing complete two, distinct field placements: a 6-credit, 400-hour foundation placement and an 8-credit, 500-hour concentration placement. Those who come into the program with advanced standing complete a single, 8-credit, 500-hour concentration field placement.

The foundation placement exposes students to the knowledge and skills needed to engage in generalist social work practice. During the concentration placement, advanced generalist practice, knowledge, and skills are developed, and students acquire the ability to respond with greater autonomy to increasingly complex practice situations involving diverse client systems of various sizes. Diversity, populations at risk of discrimination and oppression, and social and economic justice are stressed in both foundation and concentration placements. Each field placement also allows students to deepen their understanding of professional values and ethics. Finally, students are encouraged in their field experiences to use evidence, both from the literature and from their own practice evaluations, to inform their work with clients and constituencies.

Students have the option of completing their field education credits as a single block placement during a given semester or dividing the placement between two consecutive semesters. To complete the foundation placement in a single semester requires students to devote about 27 hours/week; if performed during two consecutive semesters, students spend approximately 16 hours/week at their placement. For the concentration placement, students spend about 33 hours/week at their placement in order to finish it in a single, semester; to complete the concentration placement during two consecutive semesters requires students to be at their placement approximately 20 hours/week.

Definition of Terms

This section includes definition of terms for field agency, Field Instructor (Supervisor), Task Supervisor, Field Liaison, and Field Coordinator.

Field Agency

Agencies at which field placements are performed are known as *field agencies* or *field placement agencies*. Field agencies are public or private nonprofit, or private for-profit organizations that meet the selection criteria described in the next section. Field agencies are carefully screened to ensure that they can provide a rich variety of learning experiences for students completing field education. A field agency and MTSU will have an Affiliation Agreement on file or one will be initiated.

Field Instructor (Supervisor)

The social worker who provides supervision and instruction for a student's field placement is termed the *Field Instructor (Supervisor)*. In most cases, the Field Instructor (Supervisor) is an agency employee who works in the program or unit to which the student is assigned; however, the

role is occasionally assumed by someone who may not be at the placement site (see Task Supervisor).

The responsibilities and duties of Field Instructors (Supervisors) are varied and extensive. Field Instructors (Supervisors) meet with prospective students to discuss what a practicum at the agency would entail and to assess students' appropriateness for the setting; subsequently, they complete a post-interview evaluation form that provides feedback for placement decisions. They orient students to the agency, acquainting students with the agency's policies, procedures, and service delivery strategies as well as with other relevant organizations in the agency's environment. They consult with students in the development of a learning contract; structure and supervise students' learning experiences; give feedback to students on their performance; and, ultimately, participate in the evaluation of students' field education learning. Field Instructors (Supervisors) engage in problem-solving with students and Field Liaisons if problems arise in the field setting and communicate with the Field Coordinator regarding any agency changes that may impact the placement.

Of most importance, Field Instructors (Supervisors) serve as professional role models. They reflect and model professional social work values, skills, and behavior. Students are keenly aware of how their Field Instructor (Supervisor) interacts with clients, co-workers, and other community contacts. Field Instructors (Supervisors) can help students to understand different communication styles and contexts, agency politics, and how to balance real life dynamics with text-book ideals.

Task Supervisor

Occasionally, the professional at the field agency to whom a student directly reports does not meet the requirements to be appointed as a Field Instructor (Supervisor). This individual, who provides a student's day-to-day supervision, is termed a *Task Supervisor*. The Task Supervisor does not replace the Field Instructor (Supervisor), but instead works with the Field Instructor (Supervisor) and the Field Liaison to develop, implement, and monitor the student's learning tasks.

Field Liaison (Faculty)

The Field Liaison is a faculty member who provides linkage between the university, the student, and the field agency. Field Liaisons have primary responsibility for coordinating students' assignments and activities during the field practicum. They are able to utilize their professional experiences in the field to assist students in integrating theory with practice, thereby enhancing agency-based instruction. They work in partnership with students and their agency-based Field Instructors (Supervisors) to ensure that learning activities build on students' strengths and allow them to progressively develop the competencies of an advanced generalist social worker. Field Liaisons monitor and evaluate students' performance in the field, engage in problem-solving should issues arise in the placement, and ultimately assign students' grades for the semester.

Field Coordinator

The Field Coordinator is a faculty member has been identified as having responsibility for the overall operations of the field education component. This person works to ensure that: high-quality foundation and concentration field agency placements are available, agency-based Field Instructors (Supervisors) are oriented to their responsibilities, students are prepared to enter field and are matched appropriately with a field agency, field education policies and procedures are carried out, and feedback is regularly obtained so as to strengthen the field component as well as the social work program as a whole.

Field Instructor (Supervisor) Expectations

Field Instructors (Supervisors) are expected to attend a field orientation as well as other training sessions that may be provided during the academic year. In addition, input and participation from Field Instructors (Supervisors) is appreciated in order to continue to upgrade and enhance the field program, the MSW curriculum, and the entire MSW Program.

There is no monetary compensation for serving as a Field Instructor for the MSW Program. However, the social work program offers continuing education credit for participation in the Field Instructor training and may also provide access to other university resources.

Expectations for Field Placement

Attendance

All MSW students must observe agency work hours and notify the Field Instructor and Task Supervisor, if applicable, of any unavoidable absences or lateness in advance if possible. Students must make up time for being late and/or absent. They are responsible for completing the required number of field hours.

Adherence to Agency and University Policies

Students are expected to comply with agency and university policies during their field placements. Students represent their practicum agencies, the MSW Program, and their university in their contacts with clients, other agencies, and the general public. They therefore are expected to present themselves in a professional manner and demonstrate behavior that is consistent with agency requirements, university standards, and the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>).

Dress Code

Students are expected to follow the agency dress code. Professional appearance and adherence to agency protocol related to clothing, tattoos, piercings, footwear, and accessories is expected. Since expectations may vary among agencies, students should consult the agency Field Instructor to learn more about the dress code policy within the practicum placement.

Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

MSW students should take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest that could arise in the selection of a field placement and during the course of a placement. MSW students should inform the Field Coordinator of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that could influence the field placement selection process. Once in a placement, students should immediately inform the Field Instructor, and Task Supervisor if applicable, when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take action to resolve the matter expeditiously in a way that affords maximum protection to clients' interests.

Dual Relationships

Students should refrain from engaging in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of potential harm or exploitation to the client. Dual or multiple relationships occur when MSW students relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Additional information can be located <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/Social-Workers-Ethical-Responsibilities-to-Clients>.

Confidentiality

MSW students are expected to maintain the confidentiality of information obtained during their practicum experiences and to behave in ways consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>). Students will sign a statement of confidentiality in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>) when applying to field practicum.

Professional Liability Insurance

Although the risk is relatively small, the MSW Program requires that all students in placement obtain professional liability insurance. In some cases, agencies may be able to include students, especially students who are their employees, under the agencies' "blanket policy." However, neither the MSW Program nor the university is able to cover the costs of students obtaining such coverage. Students are encouraged to check with their insurance providers as well as with NASW (<https://naswassurance.org/professional-liability-insurance/>) for information about the availability and costs of such coverage. Students must submit documentation of the liability insurance in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>) when applying to field practicum.

Transportation

MTSU field practicum students are **not** to transport clients in their personal vehicles for any reason. Students may ride with an agency employee in a vehicle when transporting clients as part of service delivery. For students completing an employment-based practicum, consult agency personnel and supervisor to discuss transportation related responsibilities, insurance needs, and liability considerations.

Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from their field practicum. Neither the MTSU-BSW/MSW Programs nor MTSU can cover practicum-related transportation costs or provide vehicles for student use. All costs incurred travelling to and from the field placement agency, including but not limited to gas, parking, and tolls, are the responsibility of the student. In some cases, students may be required to use their own vehicles to perform activities associated with the field experience, such as making home visits or attending case conferences at other agencies. Students who use their own vehicles for agency business should talk with their Field Instructor/Task Supervisor about agency policy and procedures for reimbursement of expenses incurred. It is the responsibility of the student to submit documentation required for reimbursement to the agency.

Agency Selection

Field agencies provide students the opportunity to engage in supervised experiential learning – that is, to apply what they have learned in the classroom to actual situations faced by client systems of all sizes and to bring their practice experiences back to the classroom. The learning activities created in field agencies encourage students to deepen their understanding of the profession's values and ethics, commitment to populations at-risk and social and economic justice, and emphasis on issues of diversity and cultural competence. Students, in turn, provide field agencies the opportunity to bring new ideas and insights to service delivery.

Contact regarding a field placement site can be initiated by the university or the agency. The affiliation process begins with a phone conversation between the agency and the Field Coordinator to determine if the agency meets the criteria below. An agency can apply to become a field education site by contacting the Field Coordinator. If appropriate as a field site, an agency application form is sent and a visit to the agency may be scheduled. The Field Coordinator reviews the application; if approved, an Affiliation Agreement is signed by authorized representatives of the agency and the university. To become affiliated, agencies must meet the following criteria:

1. An agency's philosophy of service should be compatible with the philosophy, values, and ethics of the social work profession. The primary purpose of the organization (or program) must be to address human needs.
2. Services provided by the agency must be appropriate for graduate social work practice, the learning opportunities must be suitable to foundation generalist and/or advanced generalist practice, and there must be a sufficient caseload of clients (and work) for students to gain "hands on" experience. Placements must be in-person with clients or constituents to allow for direct practice experiences.
3. There must be appropriate supervision available. Thus, there should be at least one staff member with a MSW and two (2) years' post MSW practice experience who can serve

- as the student's Field Instructor. Preference is for Field Instructors (Supervisors) who are licensed for social work practice in Tennessee. (See below for exceptions to this requirement.)
4. Agencies must support the field education process by providing release time for Field Instructors (Supervisors) to carry out their field instruction responsibilities and to attend field-related meetings.
 5. Agencies must provide students with adequate workspace and office supplies, access to a telephone, computer and other resources needed to carry out their learning tasks, and access to clients and agency records appropriate for the learning experience. When travel is required by the agency, students should have access to transportation and/or travel reimbursement as well as information regarding transportation policies and liability coverage.
 6. Agencies must provide an agency orientation and review safety procedures and guidelines of the organization with the individual student at the start of the practicum.
 7. Agencies should not engage in discriminatory practices in the hiring of personnel, the acceptance of students, or the provision of services to clientele.
 8. Agencies must agree to participate in various processes of the field program, including field orientation, periodic field agency updates, and interviews with prospective field students, and communication with faculty serving as Field Liaisons as well as others representing the university.
 9. Agencies must agree to abide by the policies and procedures of the university with which it is partnering.
 10. Agencies must agree to inform the Field Coordinator as soon as possible regarding staff or organizational changes that affect the field placement.
 11. Agencies must be willing to work in partnership with the faculty serving as Field Liaisons, as well as others representing the university, to maximize the field education of social work students and, as necessary, to engage in creative problem-solving to resolve problems arising in the field placement.

There may be unique situations when agencies do not have a MSW available to provide direct field instruction, although the agency's philosophy is consistent with that of the social work profession, its services address human needs, it offers learning opportunities appropriate to the development of foundation generalist and/or advanced generalist knowledge and skills, and it has staff capable of offering day-to-day task supervision. In such instances, a qualified Field Instructor from another program within the agency, another agency, or from the Department of Social Work will be assigned. The assigned Field Instructor will work collaboratively with the day-to-day Task Supervisor and the student to ensure the appropriateness of learning assignments, guide student activities, and evaluate student performance. The assigned Field Instructor will help the student integrate a social work perspective into the field learning experience.

Field Instructor Selection

Field Instructors (Supervisors) play one of the most critical roles in the educational process of MSW students. They engage in the dual role of agency practitioner and social work educator. Because the primary goal of field instruction is social work education, rather than agency service, the teaching role of the Field Instructor is critical. Conversely, the primary task of the field student

is that of learning rather than serving agency personnel needs. In order to be approved as a Field Instructor, an agency employee should meet the following criteria:

1. A MSW degree from an accredited social work program.
2. At least two years professional social work employment experience post-MSW, including at least six months employment at the field agency.
3. Ability to instruct MSW students and provide one hour weekly for supervision, including sensitivity to how differences in learning styles and diverse cultural backgrounds can impact students' learning.
4. Acceptance of the MSW program's advanced generalist social work educational model.
5. Willingness to engage in problem-solving with students and Field Liaisons to address issues that arise during the field placement.
6. Commitment to work cooperatively with the MSW Field Coordinator and the Field Liaison to ensure a successful placement experience.
7. Demonstrated professional social work values, knowledge, skills, and behaviors in relation to clients, agency co-workers, social work interns, and other community and professional constituencies.

Field Instructor Expectations

Field Instructors (Supervisors) are expected to attend a field orientation as well as other training sessions that may be provided during the academic year. In addition, input and participation from Field Instructors (Supervisors) is appreciated in order to continue to upgrade and enhance the field program, the MSW curriculum, and the entire MSW Program.

There is no monetary compensation for serving as a Field Instructor for the MSW Program. However, the social work program offers continuing education credit for participation in the Field Instructor training and may also provide access to other university resources.

The Field Education Process

Admission of MSW Students to Field Practicum

To be accepted for foundation field education (SW 6130/6140), MSW students must complete the foundations courses below:

- Practice I (SW 6000).
- HBSE (SW 6010).
- Research I (SW 6020).
- Social Welfare Policy and Services (SW 6030).

Students must achieve an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in their social work courses. In addition, students must attend a general field introductory session, as well as any other required field education meetings; complete and submit all required paperwork in a timely fashion; and meet with the Field Coordinator, as required.

To be accepted for concentration field education (SW 6310/6320), MSW students must complete the concentration courses below:

- Advanced Practice with Individuals (SW 6200).
- Advanced Practice with Families (SW 6210) OR Advanced Group Practice (SW 6220).
- Advanced Macro Practice (SW 6230).
- Social Policy Analysis (SW 6240).

Students must achieve an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in their social work courses. In addition, students must attend a general field introductory session as well as any other required field education meetings; complete and submit all required paperwork in a timely fashion; and meet with the Field Coordinator, as required. It is students' responsibility to inform the Field Coordinator of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that could influence the field placement selection process. Students are further responsible for ensuring that request for placement forms, interviews with the Field Coordinator and with the potential Field Instructor, and written confirmation of the placement are completed by the deadlines set by the Department of Social Work.

Students must enroll concurrently in Empirical Social Work Practice (SW 6300) during the semester in which they do their concentration field placement.

MSW Field Application Process

The following steps describe the sequence of events for placement in the field:

1. Eligible students attend a field orientation session conducted by the Field Coordinator. This session is held in the semester preceding students' entry into field.
2. Students complete and submit a Field Application in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>) by the specified date. The field application will include the MSW Field Application, MSW field resume, uploaded copy of liability insurance, signed Code of Ethics, signed MSW Confidentiality Statement, and signed Acknowledgement of Risk.
3. The Field Coordinator reviews the field applications for eligibility and completeness.
4. The Field Coordinator meets individually with students to discuss field placement options.
5. Students schedule and complete interviews with identified contacts at potential field agencies.
6. Students and Field Instructors (Supervisors) submit a confirmation of agency placement Tevera.
7. The Field Coordinator confirms and finalizes assigned placements and notifies students and field agencies.
8. If no Affiliation Agreement is on file with MTSU, an agreement will be initiated.

Tevera Field Management and Accreditation Software

Tevera is a web-based data management system that the Department of Social Work uses to collect data for purposes of assessment, evaluation, and accreditation. Tevera is an integral part of all core courses, including the field practicum. Field candidates are expected to have an activated Tevera account. Candidates for the BSW and MSW programs will complete assignments, assessments, and time logs, which require an activated account. There are no exceptions to this policy for social work majors. Tevera can be accessed at <https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>.

Tevera is a one-time purchase that you will have lifetime access to. Once purchased, Tevera must be activated. You **DO NOT** need to purchase and activate Tevera a second time or for any subsequent courses. Tevera is covered through financial aid with the university's Barnes and Noble Bookstore only.

<https://mtsu.bncollege.com/shop/middle/home>

<https://knowledge.tevera.com/space/AS/622428297/Tevera+Purchase+Options>

Placement of Students

Application and Selection Process

Student will be responsible for contacting the potential practicum agency and meeting with the Field Instructor to finalize the placement. Written confirmation of the placement must be received by the Social Work office prior to the end of the semester preceding the student's placement. **Note:** students interested in a field placement with the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS), or Vanderbilt are required to apply through the MSW Field Coordinator.

The following steps describe the sequence of events for placement in the field:

1. Eligible students attend a field orientation session conducted by the MSW Field Coordinator. This session is held in the Fall and Spring semester preceding students' entry into field.
2. Students complete and submit a Field Application in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>) by the specified date.
3. The Field Coordinator reviews the field applications for eligibility and completeness.
4. The Field Coordinator meets individually with students to discuss field placement options.
5. Students schedule and complete interviews with identified contacts at potential field agencies.
6. Students and Field Instructors (Supervisors) submit a confirmation of placement form in Tevera.
7. The Field Coordinator confirms and finalizes assigned placements and notifies students and field agencies.

Reminder: it is students' responsibility to inform the Field Coordinator of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that could influence the field placement selection process.

Employment-Based Practicum

Students who are working in a social service agency or whose employment with a social service agency will begin at least 30 days prior to the start of their field placement can request a field practicum at their place of employment by contacting the MSW Field Coordinator. The student must also upload a job requisition in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>) for review. The employing agency must be agreeable to serving as the employee's field practicum site and willing to create learning experiences, provide field instruction, and comply with other field education requirements. The practicum assignment must be clearly educational, should afford the student learning experiences that contribute to their development as an advanced generalist social worker. The use of settings where the student is already an employee as a field practicum site may be permitted if the following conditions are met:

1. Assignments developed for the practicum must be educationally focused and meet the CSWE competencies for field education.
2. The student's work supervisor should not serve as the Field Instructor.
3. The agency must meet the same criteria as other field practicum agencies.
4. The person designated as the Field Instructor must meet the same criteria as other Field Instructors (Supervisors).
5. The Field Coordinator may make an agency visit.
6. If the student is employed at a social service agency that is not yet an approved field practicum site, the student should notify the MSW Field Coordinator approximately four months prior to the anticipated internship start date to allow ample time for the agency to go through the agency approval process. Agencies must meet all the criteria outlined on pages 36-37.

Developing The Learning Contract

One of a student's first activities after starting a field placement is to work on the development of their field learning contract. The student, with consultation from the Field Instructor, identifies learning tasks that, over the course of the placement, will allow them to achieve the educational competencies specified in the syllabus and the Field Education Learning Contract and Evaluation form located in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>). Nine (9) competencies and supportive behaviors have been established for foundation placements and nine (9) competencies and supportive behaviors have been established for concentration placements. Students, with input from their Field Instructors (Supervisors), are expected to articulate a minimum of one learning task for each of the identified behaviors. Reflecting the generalist and advanced generalist orientations of the two MSW placements, the learning tasks within the behaviors should be structured so as to provide students' learning opportunities with client systems of various sizes and diverse characteristics. The Field Education Learning Contract and Evaluation form should be completed within the first three weeks of a student's field placement and submitted to the Field Liaison for review in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>). The Field Liaison will contact the student and the Field Instructor if there are questions.

CSWE Competencies and Practice Behaviors

The goals of the MSW program address educational issues related to practice, policy, research, human behavior, cultural competence, and professional development. Consistent with these program goals, we designed our foundation curriculum to support students' achievement of the following foundation competencies and behaviors:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
 - a. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics.
 - b. Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism.
 - c. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
 - d. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.
 - e. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
 - a. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro level.
 - b. Present themselves as learners and engage client systems as experts of their own experiences.
 - c. Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice
 - a. Apply understanding of social and economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and systems levels.
 - b. Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.
4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
 - a. Use practice experiences to inform scientific inquiry and research.
 - b. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.
 - c. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy and service delivery.
5. Engage in Policy Practice
 - a. Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.
 - b. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.
 - c. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - a. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.
 - b. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and

constituencies.

7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - a. Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs and challenges within clients and constituencies.
 - d. Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - a. Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.
 - b. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.
 - c. Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.
 - d. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.
 - e. Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.
9. Evaluate practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - a. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluations of outcomes.
 - b. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.
 - c. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention process and outcomes.
 - d. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Students, with input from their Field Instructors (Supervisors), are expected to articulate at least one learning tasks for each of the identified behaviors. Reflecting the generalist orientation, the learning tasks within the behaviors should be structured to provide learning opportunities with client systems of diverse sizes and characteristics. The Field Education Learning Contract and Evaluation should be completed within the first two weeks of a student's field placement and submitted to the Field Liaison for review in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>). The Field Liaison will contact the student and the Field Instructor if there are questions.

In addition to creating the learning plan, students will track their hours daily in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>). Biweekly timesheets will be submitted as outlined in the course syllabus. These will be signed and reviewed by the Field Instructor, Task Supervisor (if applicable), and faculty Field Liaison.

Although students may like to complete more than the required number of hours per week in order

to reduce the number of weeks in the practicum setting, they should be aware that they have made a commitment to the agency and are expected to extend their practicum throughout the semester in which they are enrolled. Therefore, students should not expect to complete their practicum prior to the final week of classes.

All students must observe agency work hours and notify the Field Instructor of any unavoidable absences or lateness in advance if possible. Students must make up time for being late and/or absent. Students are entitled to hazardous weather closings and to holidays that are observed by the field agency. Students are not expected to report to their field agency on holidays observed by the university. Should these differ from the holidays observed by the field agency, students are expected to communicate with their Field Instructors (Supervisors) prior to the absence.

Ongoing Field Supervision

Meeting with the Field Instructor. MSW students are expected to meet regularly with their Field Instructors (Supervisors) for supervision. Typically, these meetings occur weekly, at a prescheduled time, for about an hour. Informal conversations that occur during the normal course of work interactions supplement, but do not replace, these formally scheduled field supervision meetings. The weekly meetings are educationally focused and are intended to foster students' field-based learning, integration of classroom and experiential learning, and professional development. These regular meetings afford students (and Field Instructors/Supervisors) opportunities for reflection. They also allow students the opportunity to receive ongoing feedback on their performance throughout the semester.

Field Liaison contact. Students have regular contact with the faculty Field Liaison during their field placements. At least once during the semester, the Field Liaison visits the placement agency to meet with the student, Field Instructor, and Task Supervisor, if applicable. Students also have regular, online contact with the liaison; each week, students are expected to electronically submit field journals to the faculty Field Liaison. In addition to ongoing placement monitoring, the Field Liaison is available to both the student and the Field Instructor to assist in addressing concerns that may arise in the placement.

Evaluation

A formal evaluation is conducted in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>) at the end of a student's field placement. The educational competencies and behaviors with associated tasks established in the student's learning contract provide the criteria against which the student's progress is assessed. The Foundation and the Concentration Field Education Learning Contract and Evaluation forms provide space for recording competency-specific and general evaluative assessments.

The field practicum is graded on a "pass" or "fail" basis. The Field Instructor recommends a grade to the Field Liaison. However, it is the Field Liaison, as a faculty member, who is ultimately responsible for assigning the grade and submitting it to the university. In addition to the above

evaluation of learning, the student is also asked at the end of the placement to provide feedback on the learning experience. The Student Evaluation of Internship form in Tevera documents students' assessments of the field learning opportunities and the field instruction received at the placement site.

Change of Field Practicum

Problem Solving

If difficulties arise in a field placement, the student, Field Instructor, and Task Supervisor (if applicable) are expected to work together to try to resolve the issues. A student should make the Field Instructor/Task Supervisor aware of the problem (and vice versa) and explore ways to address the matter before involving others in the situation. At times, however, a resolution cannot be achieved by the student and their Field Instructor. In these instances, the Field Liaison should be contacted and asked to participate in the problem-solving process.

Occasionally, difficulties arising in a field placement result in the need to change the agency placement. If the difficulty is sufficiently severe and cannot be resolved by the student, Field Instructor, Field Liaison, and Task Supervisor (if applicable) through engaging in problem-solving, the Field Liaison will apprise the MSW Field Coordinator of the situation and the Field Coordinator will consider a change of placement. Additionally, per the educational agreement between the university and the agency, the agreement to have students placed at the agency is strictly voluntary and can be cancelled at any point.

Termination of Student from Field Practicum

A student can be removed from their field placement due to unsatisfactory performance at the practicum. Reasons for termination include, for example, engaging in behavior that is unethical, illegal, or dangerous to clients or staff; breaching agency policy, refusing to be supervised, failure to maintain the agreed upon schedule, or being unable to fulfill agency assignments. A student who is terminated from their placement will receive a grade of "Fail" for the field education credits in which they are registered and will be referred to academic and professional standards committee.

Additionally, student should review:

NASW Code of Ethics

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

University Code of Student Conduct

<https://www.mtsu.edu/student-conduct/code/>
<https://www.mtsu.edu/student-conduct/quick-guide.php>

Academic and Professional Standards outlines the process of student dismissal from the program/practicum

MSW Student Handbook, page 26-27

Resolution of Academic and Professional Standards Violations, informal and formal

MSW Student Handbook, page 27-29

Grievance Procedures

MSW Student Handbook, pages 30-31

Safety and Risk Management

Safety

Student safety protocol for field practicum placement is conducted in the required Field Orientation in the MSW Program. Students are asked to self-assess any issues that may be of concern with regards to their field experience and are encouraged to identify the issues on their field application and/or with the Field Coordinator. Students should also consult with their Field Instructor (Supervisor) and Task Supervisor (if applicable) on such issues.

Acknowledgement of Risk Policy

It is the belief of Middle Tennessee State University faculty that you have a right to be informed of risks associated with this aspect of your educational and professional preparation and that with proper knowledge and preparation, risks can be minimized. Students must maintain professional liability insurance. A copy of a student's liability insurance policy is submitted as part of the application to field in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>). The Acknowledgement of Risk Form (Appendix D) will be signed by students as part of the application to field in Tevera. It is advisable that students maintain health insurance and automobile insurance. Students need to discuss personal safety issues with their field supervisor and faculty Field Liaison to be informed of agency policies and procedures. Students should also become aware of COVID vaccination, TB, Flu, Hepatitis B, or any additional vaccination requirements.

Incident Reporting

The student should complete the Personal Safety Incident Report (Appendix E) if any of the following have occurred during the field placement: sexual harassment, personal injury (i.e., by violent client or other persons, auto accident, personal injury by animal, exposure to or contraction of infectious disease, damage to personal property, etc.). This report should be completed in Tevera (<https://mtsu.tevera.app/#/logon>) within 24 hours of the incident. If you are unsure about completing this form, contact the Field Coordinator for assistance.

Section IX. Appendices

Appendix A – CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)

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

Social work educators serve the profession through their teaching, scholarship, and service. Social work education at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels shapes the profession's future through the education of competent professionals, the generation of knowledge, the promotion of evidence-informed practice through scientific inquiry, and the exercise of leadership within the professional community. Social work education is advanced by the scholarship of teaching and learning, and scientific inquiry into its multifaceted dimensions, processes, and outcomes.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate and master's level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models and methods of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparable outcomes across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate.

EPAS describe four features of an integrated curriculum design: (1) program mission and goals; (2) explicit curriculum; (3) implicit curriculum; and (4) assessment. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards are conceptually linked to each other. Educational Policy describes each curriculum feature. Accreditation Standards are derived from the Educational Policy and specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work program at the Baccalaureate or Master's level. A complete listing of the CSWE EPAS can be located at <https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS>

Appendix B – Student Improvement Plan

MSW Academic and Professional Standards Improvement Plan

MSW students are expected and agree to meet the academic and professional standards of the Department of Social Work at MTSU. These standards include:

1. Maintain a satisfactory GPA;
2. Meet the academic and professional standards in the social work program including the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and expectations in the social work program (refer to procedure for termination of enrollment in the MSW handbook); and,
3. Meet the University Code of Student Conduct (refer to university catalog).

Students who do not meet the academic and professional standards may be terminated from the program or receive an improvement plan. Students who receive improvement plans will meet with their social work faculty advisor to discuss the identified behavior and a plan for resolution. If the behavior is not resolved in one semester, the student may be terminated from the program. The academic and professional standards are in place for the duration of the MSW program; however, students have one semester to address identified issues in the improvement plan. Students have ten (10) days to sign the improvement plan. Additional information regarding procedure for termination of enrollment can be located in the MSW handbook.

Today's Date: _____

Semester/Year: _____

Student Name (Print): _____

M#: _____

Summary of Identified Behavior or Lack of Progress/Participation

- ☐ Informal Improvement Plan
- ☐ Formal Improvement Plan

Plan (includes student and faculty responsibilities):

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Social Work Faculty Advisor (Print): _____ Date _____

Social Work Faculty Advisor: _____ Date _____

Social Work Department Chair (Print): _____ Date _____

Social Work Department Chair: _____ Date _____

Outcome

[illegible]

- ☐ Student satisfactorily met expectations of the Improvement Plan (IP) and will continue to uphold the IP for the duration of the MSW program.
- ☐ Student unsatisfactorily met expectations of Improvement Plan and should be terminated from the MSW program. Social Work Faculty advisor will recommend other majors.

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Social Work Faculty Signature: _____ Date _____

***Copies are sent to the following: Student, Student File, Academic and Professional Standards Committee Chair, Department Chair, MSW Coordinator**

Appendix C – Academic and Professional Standards Violations Form

Date of Referral	
Student Name	
Student M#	
Faculty Member Making Referral	
Course Number	

The purpose of this form is to identify and bring awareness to initial concerns regarding observed student behavior(s) and academic performance. This process is designed to ensure students have the resources they need and a plan for action in order to be successful in the Social Work Program.

Identify the concerning behavior from the list below and include a numerical value next to that behavior indicating evidence of severity. For behaviors not included on this list, please write in under “Other.”

The faculty member/field team raising the concern will schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the issue(s) and develop a plan for success. When this form is completed and signed by both the faculty member and student, the student will receive a copy of the form; and it will be included in the student’s file. Faculty should forward this form to the BSW/MSW Program Coordinator for review by the Academic and Performance Committee.

Severity Rating	
1	Minor evidence of concern: Behavior has been observed infrequent or minimally disruptive
2	Moderate evidence of concern: Behavior has been observed occasionally or is becoming disruptive
3	Significant evidence of concern: Behavior has been observed frequently or is severely disruptive

Academic Concerns	1	2	3
Absent from or tardy to class/field practicum or leaves class/field practicum early			
Sleeps during class			
Inappropriate attire			
Poor written or oral communications skills; poor grammar; inability to articulate points in a professional manner; overuse of informal language in written assignments			
Lacks independence in completing work (for example: overly dependent on additional instructions from instructor; dependent on other students for help, etc.)			
Disruptive behaviors in class /field practicum (for example: chatting with others; inappropriately using cell phone or computer; overly communicative, which bars others from contributing to discussions and impedes instructor’s ability to conduct class, field practicum environment, etc.)			
Academic Performance: Students must pursue academic honesty and meet grade requirements. Students are required to maintain a grade of C or better in all social work courses.			
Work performance does not meet minimal requirements or expectations; work turned in incomplete or late; unprepared for class/field– significantly impacting overall performance			
Personal problems and issues interfere with learning and performance			
Cannot take control of or manage life and/or learning			

Personal problems and issues interfere with learning and performance – significantly impacting ability to be successful			
Issues associated with field practicum (tardiness, absences, non-professional behavior, ethics violations, boundary issues, etc.) – significantly impacting ability to be successful			
OTHER CONCERN(S) NOT LISTED			

Behavior Concerns	1	2	3
Dishonesty of any type			
Disrespectful to clients, faculty, staff, or other students (for example: in discussing sensitive issues such as diversity; being insensitive to the feelings or needs of others, etc.)			
Mental health problems interfering with acceptable performance			
Evidence of substance abuse interfering with acceptable performance			
Legal issues impacting professional progression			
Inability to work in groups.; does not carry fair load in the group; lack of collaborative skills in working with others			
Inappropriate comments in class/field practicum; too much personal sharing, often inappropriately; acts out self- interest in most situations; egocentric- significantly impacting overall performance			
Immaturity in behavior; lack of self-awareness– significantly impacting ability to be successful			
Boundary issues– significantly impacting ability to be successful			
Poor coping skills– significantly impacting ability to be successful			
Evidence of volatility or violent behavior; lack of self-control			
Inability to form healthy and/or productive relationships with others; critical of others; discourteous; poor social skills; little or no self-awareness of impact of behavior on others			
Not receptive to constructive criticism or negative feedback; doesn't take ownership of problems; blames others for shortcomings; defensive or nonresponsive to feedback			
Personal and/or ethnocentric viewpoints that interfere with acceptance of core social work values; unable to internalize core social work values; overly biased with religious viewpoints to the extent that there is no openness to professional growth; danger of imposing these beliefs in practice			
OTHER CONCERN(S) NOT LISTED			

Provide a short narrative that further elaborates concern(s):

Plan for Corrective Action:

Referred to Academic and Professional Standards Committee (please check all that apply)

Referred to Academic and Professional Standards Committee

_____ Yes _____ No

_____ If Yes, please indicate date submitted _____

_____ Faculty advisor has also been notified

Faculty Signature	
Date	
Student Signature	
Date	

Appendix D – Field Education Forms



Master of Social Work Program Practicum Application

[pending final reviews]



Code of Ethics Agreement

As a social work student in Middle Tennessee State University's Social Work Program, I will uphold and abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.

I understand that I may be counseled out of the program on the basis of:

- **Academic Performance.** I will meet grade requirements. I will pursue academic honesty.
- **Absenteeism.** I will meet the requirements of class and practicum attendance.
- **Professional Behavior.** At all times, I will act in a professional manner with peers, faculty, agency personnel, and clients; always treating others with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith.
- **Assaultive or Threatening Behavior.** I will not participate in inappropriate behavior that is directed at clients, colleagues, or instructors.
- **Damaging Behavior.** I will treat others with respect, demonstrate a respect for diversity, protect confidentiality, ensure freedom of expression, and demonstrate a commitment to community.
- **Ineffectiveness in Work with Clients.** I will demonstrate minimal levels of effective performance and apply progressive learning techniques to evidence progress in working with clients. I will not violate practicum agency policy.
- **Progressive Discipline.** I understand that should I violate any of the above tenets, I will be counseled and receive one warning. Continuation of the behavior will result in my being counseled out of the program. (See Student Handbook).

Student Signature:

Date

Note: If you have ever been convicted of a crime, you need to discuss this with your advisor. A criminal conviction will limit the field agencies where you can be placed. A criminal conviction will limit your employment opportunities in social services. A criminal conviction will be considered by the Licensure Board if you apply for a social work license. This does not mean that you cannot be a social worker if you have a criminal conviction, but it would be good to get guidance from your advisor.



Confidentiality Statement

I have read the Confidentiality Statement in the MTSU Department of Social Work Field Manual and agree to abide by the terms of that statement. I have also read the NASW Code of Ethics and agree to uphold the ethical guidelines contained therein for social work practice. I will respect the privacy of clients and, in accordance with agency policies, hold in confidence information obtained in the course of my field placement. I will hold in confidence any proprietary information about the agency shared with me during the field placement. I will not disclose data that can be linked to individual clients or staff members when using information from my field experience in course work.

Student Name:

Student Signature:

Date



Confirmation of Agency Placement

Agreement for student placement for:

Semester:

Year:

Student Name:

Student Email:

The Department of Social Work at Middle Tennessee State University and Field Instruction Agency below jointly agree to Field placement for the student for the purpose of providing undergraduate Social Work Field Education.

Agency:

Contact:

Address:

City:

Phone:

Email:

For Field Instructor

I certify that I have met with the student above and we have agreed on placement for the semester.

Agency Field Instructor Signature:

Date

Student Signature:

Date

Please keep a copy for your records as this serves as your official agreement and confirmation of field placement and submit the original form with signatures to the MTSU Social Work Field Coordinator. Any changes after the agreement is signed should be directed to the MTSU SW Field Coordinator.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK IN THE FIELD PRACTICUM

This document is designed to inform you of the potential risks associated with the field practicum. It is the belief of Middle Tennessee State University faculty that you have a right to be informed of risks associated with this aspect of your educational and professional preparation and that with proper knowledge and preparation, risks can be minimized.

1. **Malpractice Liability insurance:** Students are required to maintain professional liability insurance with a minimum amount of \$1 million/\$2 million aggregate as a minimum with any higher coverage as acceptable. An important aspect of professional practice is knowing the limits of your knowledge and skills and avoiding interjecting in situations that are not in your area of competence. Whenever you have a question about the handling of a particular case and whether or not a given intervention is appropriate, see your field/Task Supervisor (preceptor).

2. **Automobile liability insurance:** Students are discouraged from using their personal vehicle for field-related usage (other than travel to and from the practicum). If you will be using your personal vehicle in field, it is recommended that you check with your insurance company for a clear understanding of your coverage. Ask specifically about coverage that will protect you should an incident occur while transporting a client. Check with your field/Task Supervisor (preceptor) to determine if the agency provides coverage for you if you use your personal vehicle to transport clients. Many agencies consider students to be “volunteers” and this may allow them to provide some coverage through policies for volunteers. Whenever possible, use an agency vehicle to transport clients.

3. **Personal safety:** You may encounter risks to your personal safety during the field practicum when dealing with angry or hostile clients, making home visits, or being exposed to clients who have an infectious diseases and/or mental illnesses. It is important to learn what you can do to minimize the risks to your personal safety. You need to discuss personal safety issues with your field/Task Supervisor (preceptor) early in the practicum so you can be informed of agency policies and procedures and any recommended courses of action.

4. **COVID-19:** After COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic, numerous restrictions were initiated to limit physical contact. Social Work is an essential service; therefore, your exposure to COVID-19 is a real possibility in face-to-face practicum settings. It is recommended that you take the necessary precautions to shield yourself against exposure.

- Wear a face mask (nose and mouth covering at minimum)
- Maintain physical distancing of six (6) feet apart at minimum
- Use universal precautions (assume that everything is contaminated); therefore, wash hands frequently with soap and water for a minimum of 20-seconds
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and dispose of it,
- Clean frequently touched items often
- If you are feeling sick (coughing, fever of 101 or higher, chest pain, body aches, etc.) stay home
- Get tested for COVID-19 prior to entering the field practicum component. Some settings may require this test.

Students must read the contents from the CDC website below regarding COVID-19 and acknowledge your assumption of risk in the field.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

5. **TB skin test:** The prevalence of TB in society has increased in recent years. If you anticipate a field practicum setting that serves populations at risk for TB, it is recommended that you take this test prior to entering the field. Some settings may require this test.

6. **Hepatitis B vaccine:** If you anticipate a placement where there is the chance of being exposed to blood-borne pathogens, it is recommended that you get this vaccination. This involves a series of three injections over a six-month period. Students may contact the local health department or their preferred medical provider to obtain the vaccination.

7. **Influenza Vaccination:** Flu season generally runs from November through the end of March. To minimize exposure, students are encouraged to get the flu vaccination prior to entry into the field practicum. This vaccination may be required by your practicum agency.

I have read the above and acknowledge that the field practicum may present some risks. I understand that any expense or treatment for illness or injury suffered during the field education experience is my responsibility. I also understand that prudent choices and exercising caution can minimize these risks. I further recognize that it is my responsibility to become informed of agency policy and practices regarding the above situations.

Student Signature:

Date



MSW Learning Contract

Student:
Semester:
Year:
Agency:
Agency Address:
City:
State:
Zip Code:
Agency Phone:

Field (Agency) Instructor:
Field (MTSU) Liaison:
Field (Agency) Instructor email address:

This document will serve as the Educational Contract, Mid-Term Evaluation and Final Evaluation document for MTSU MSW students who are enrolled in the foundation practicum. The competencies shown are the competencies that are to be met by all students. The students, working with the Field Instructor, will complete the educational contract by listing tasks that will support development of each competency and behavior to be accomplished by the student at the practicum site during the designated semester of placement. A minimum of one task will be listed for each behavior. Tasks identified are dependent on the agency setting and client population. The Faculty Field Liaison must approve the educational contract.

The Field Instructor should ensure that the tasks on the educational contract are appropriate for MSW students working under supervision. Evaluation of student activity is based on task accomplishment and is not related to grading criteria. In the event a student is graded at the 5 level for all tasks relating to one objective at mid-term, new activities may be developed for the remainder of the semester. Please inform the Faculty Liaison of modifications made to the educational contract. The Field Instructor will evaluate the student at mid-term and at the end of the semester using the following scale:

5= Professional level activity, equivalent to employee
4=Competent level activity, with indirect supervision
3=Meets expectations, with direct supervision
2= Beginning level activity only
1=Attempted but failed due to engage in this task
N/A=List task deferred at this time

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

- a) Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- b) Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain

professionalism.

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)
- c) Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)
- d) Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)
- e) Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- a) Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro level

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)
- b) Present themselves as learners and engage client systems as experts of their own experiences

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)
- c) Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice

- a) Apply understanding of social and economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and systems levels

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)
- b) Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

- a) Use practice experiences to inform scientific inquiry and research

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- b) Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- c) Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy and service delivery

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

- a) Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- b) Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- c) Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- a) Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- b) Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

Tasks:

- 1)

2)

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

- a) Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies

Tasks:

1)

2)

- b) 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

Tasks

1)

2)

- c) Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs and challenges within clients and constituencies

Tasks:

1)

2)

- d) Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies

Tasks:

1)

2)

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- a) Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies

Tasks:

1)

2)

- b) Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies

Tasks:

1)

2)

- c) Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes

Tasks:

1)

2)

- d) Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies

Tasks:

1)

- 2)
- e) Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

Competency 9: Evaluate practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- a) Select and use appropriate methods for evaluations of outcomes

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- b) Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- c) Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention process and outcomes

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

- d) Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo and macro levels

Tasks:

- 1)
- 2)

Appendix E – Incident Report Form



Incident Report Form

The student should complete this form if any of the following have occurred during the field practicum: sexual harassment, personal injury (i.e.; by violent client or other persons, auto accident, personal injury by animal, exposure to or contraction of infectious disease, damage to personal property, etc.). If you are unsure about completing this form, contact the Field Education Coordinator for advisement.

Date of Referral

Student Name

Student M#

Agency Name

Agency Address

Name of Field/Task Supervisor

Field/Task Supervisor Contact

Information (Phone, Email Address)

Date of Incident

Time of Incident

Description of the Incident

Provide the Names of All Parties Involved and Their Relationship to Agency

With Whom Have You Discussed This Incident

Has a Formal Report Been Filed with the Agency?

Describe Any Action Taken to Date

Describe Any Remaining Concerns Related to This Incident

SIGNATURES

Student

Date

Field Education Coordinator

Date

Program Coordinator

Date