Dear B.S.W. Student,

Welcome to Missouri Southern State University’s Social Work Program! We are thrilled about your decision to become a professional social worker. The social work program at MSSU is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and leads students to a Bachelors of Social Work (BSW) degree. The program builds on a liberal arts foundation and is designed to prepare social workers for leadership roles in developing and providing services to individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations. The primary purpose of this handbook is to provide you with a manual that contains the policies, procedures, and descriptions of the Social Work Program at MSSU. We hope you find this to be a useful guide as you matriculate through the social work program.

Again, welcome to MSSU’s Social Work Program!

Sincerely,

Dr. David L. Sharlow, PhD
Associate Professor, Interim Chair/Assistant to the Dean of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Renee White
Renee White BSW, MSW, EdD, LCSW Associate Professor

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Social Work Program Mission Statement ........................................................................ 4
Social Work Program Goals .............................................................................................. 4
Social Work Core Competencies ...................................................................................... 5
Social Work Admission Information.................................................................................. 6
Notification of Admission Decision .................................................................................. 7
Transfer of Credit .............................................................................................................. 7
Social Work Generalist Intervention Model ....................................................................... 8
Social Work Plan of Study ................................................................................................. 8
The Field Experience ......................................................................................................... 8
Social Work Advisement Procedures ............................................................................... 9
Student in Good Standing ................................................................................................. 10
Student Concerns and Grievance Policy ......................................................................... 11
Social Work Dismissal Policy ........................................................................................... 12
Re-Admission to the Social Work Program ...................................................................... 13
Social Work Student & Professional Organizations ......................................................... 13
Social Work Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form ............................................... 14

Appendix A - STUDENT REVIEW CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR ........................................ 15
Appendix B - SOCIAL WORK STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM ........................................ 18
MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Mission Statement
Missouri Southern State University is a state-supported, comprehensive university offering programs leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees. Central to our mission is a strong commitment to international education, liberal arts, professional and pre-professional programs, and the complementary relationship that must exist among them to prepare individuals for success in careers and lifelong learning.

Social Work Program Mission Statement
The Social Work Program will provide a learning environment where students are taught to think critically, be creative, participate actively in their education, and grow as individuals while respecting the rapidly changing and diverse world in which they will live and practice social work. Class work and special student work experiences must demonstrate how to relate effectively to all types of people and to appreciate how emotional, social, economic, political, and spiritual forces influence the behavior of those we are helping. We strive to develop competent, ethical professionals with the knowledge, values and skills for effective practice with individuals, families, groups and communities, and who can provide outstanding leadership in the field of social services.

The program mission is grounded in core professional values of service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and scientific inquiry. These values are consistent with the international affairs mission of the university in terms of producing social workers more sensitive to cultural diversity and committed in their ability to contribute to society as a whole. Historically, competent, engaged and ethical leaders at the local level have underserved southwest Missouri and the surrounding area. Additionally, the region is beginning to see an influx of diverse cultures. Thus, the mission of the social work department is well matched with the political, economic, social, cultural, and demographic environment of the region and to the purpose of the profession.

Social Work Program Goals
The social work program goals reflect the purpose of undergraduate social work education and are derived from the program’s mission. The social work program goals are as follows:
1. To prepare a diverse student population for generalist social work practice to serve client systems of various sizes and types.
2. To provide a flexible educational program that increases the students understanding of variables that affect the bio-psycho-social-spiritual variables that affect the person within the environment and the community, and the global perspectives.
3. To develop analytical skills and critical thinking that will encourage active participation in the development, evaluation, and improvement of evidence-based social work knowledge and skills.
4. To prepare graduates to foster their commitment to lifelong learning and development of social work knowledge, values, and skills, which will empower them and their clients to achieve wellbeing.
Social Work Core Competencies
The social work program at MSSU is grounded in competency-based education and demonstrated mastery of the core competencies prepares undergraduate students for generalist social work practice. The core competencies are as follows:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession’s history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.
Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

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

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

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

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

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

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:
• critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
• apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
• use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
• negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
• facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

• select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
• apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
• critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
• apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

**SOCIAL WORK ADMISSION INFORMATION**

The BSW program works on a cohort model with admission only once a year. Students are notified via e-mail, signs posted around the department, and in-class announcements when applications are available, and when they are due for consideration. Applications are solicited and accepted only in the spring semester for admission the following fall semester.

To be granted full admission to the Social Work Program, students meet the following requirements by the time the fall semester of the application year commences:

1. All General Education requirements must be met
2. Cumulative G.P.A. of 2.75 or better for ALL completed coursework
3. Preferred completion of SW 231 with a grade of C or better; or enrollment in the first semester

**Conditional** admission is granted on a case-by-case basis when any or all of the three above items are not met. Additionally, completion and submission of an application packet to the program by 5:00 p.m. on March 15th of the year student is seeking admission to the program. Incomplete submissions will not be considered.
The admissions application must include:

- Application form
- Professional resume
- Three reference forms (family/friend references will not be accepted)
- Official college transcript
- Professional Statement

All required forms can be found at [http://www.mssu.edu/academics/arts-sciences/social-work/](http://www.mssu.edu/academics/arts-sciences/social-work/)

Received applications are filed and audited for completeness by the BSW program director. The GPA and various coursework requirements are verified as met. Complete applications, which meet all education requirements, are distributed to the BSW Admissions Committee, which is comprised of all full-time social work faculty, for review and recommendations. The Committee members are charged with assessing the candidate and selecting one of four determinations: 1) fully admit, 2) conditionally admit due to low GPA, 3) conditionally admit due to missing general education courses, or 4) do not admit. The applications are returned to the BSW program director who then grants admission to the top candidates up to the number of admissions set for the year.

Non-priority review of applications occurs for applications received from March 16th until all admission slots are filled.

Variances to this procedure is at the discretion of the Department Chair and only after applicants have requested in writing their reasoning for a variance.

**Notification of Admission Decision**

Applicants are notified by e-mail of their acceptance or denial into the program, and if conditionally admitted, the expectation and timeframe for their admission decision to either become fully admitted or placed on deferment until conditions are met. Applicants are requested to send a return email stating their acceptance or non-acceptance of the admission offer. Students are assigned an academic advisor from the social work department who meets with them to complete a plan of studies through graduation and to complete the required university paperwork for admission into the program. It is during this meeting with their advisor that any conditions on admission are explained to the student. These conditions center on completion of any remaining liberal arts courses. Once admitted, students are required to have a plan of study (either full-time or part-time) on file and are required to complete the curriculum in sequence as outlined on the plan of study.

**Transfer of Credit**

Credits earned at other universities are evaluated one of two ways for acceptance. For all non-social work courses, the university has a policy of what courses transfer, and how they transfer from other universities. If a student believes the transfer credits have not been correctly evaluated, they can request the respective department head re-evaluate the course for credit using the standard university criteria. Social work course credits are evaluated on an individual basis by the BSW program director, ensuring the credits were awarded at an accredited program and using a careful review of the transfer course syllabus content. No more than 9 credit hours of social work classes will be transferred from another institution so that MSSU can ensure competencies and practice behaviors are obtained. If the student believes this has not been done fairly, the matter is referred to the Dean of Arts and Science whose decision is final.

The Social Work Program does not grant credit for either life or work experience in lieu of any social
serves to enrich everyone’s learning, but MSSU cannot give credit for that experience.

ADMITTED SOCIAL WORK STUDENT INFORMATION

Social Work Generalist Intervention Model
The Social Work Program at MSSU utilizes the generalist intervention model of social work practice, employing a flexible problem solving process from a strengths perspective. This model is reinforced through the knowledge and skills content of the social work course.

Social Work Advisement Procedures
A primary responsibility of the BSW social work faculty is the advisement of social work majors. Students receive a faculty advisor in social work as soon as they declare a major in social work and before formal admission to the BSW program. Students who are declared majors but who have not been admitted into the program are assigned to an advisor in the department. Students are urged to schedule at least one advising conference per semester with their advisors until they graduate. The faculty advisor has several specific objectives to accomplish. Faculty advisors explain requirements for general education and the social work major and review this handbook with students. They discuss prerequisites, co-requisites, and the overall relationship of courses to each other in the social work major. Advisors provide information about extracurricular activities such as the BSW Student Association. Faculty advisors also model social work values and professionalism and assist students in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work. Advisors review students’ educational performance in all facets of the social work program, along with being available to discuss personal/academic concerns of students and serving as a broker to link students to needed services. They also provide information about graduate school opportunities, assisting students interested in pursuing this option, and discussing career and professional employment opportunities. Advisors assist students in meeting all university and departmental requirements, but the student is ultimately responsible for completing all requirements and knowing all requirements of the major and for graduation. Advisors recommend that students use the undergraduate catalog to familiarize themselves with admissions requirements, social work courses and their prerequisites, and program requirements for graduation. Students may make a request to the BSW program director for a change in advisor and, whenever possible, this request is honored.

Student in Good Standing
Students must remain “in good standing” as they progress through the program. To remain in good standing, students shall:
- Complete all required coursework with at least a grade of “C” or above.
- Maintain an overall GPA of 2.75 and a Social Work Course GPA of 2.75
- Complete coursework in the required sequence with the required co-requisites as indicated on their plan of study.
- Complete advisement at least once per academic year.
- Adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics at all times.
(http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp)

Students are informed of the criteria for evaluating their academic and professional performance in several ways. First, instructors provide students with written criteria on every course syllabus. Second, students meet with their advisor regularly to maintain their correct course sequencing and to be made aware of policies relevant to their academic progress. Advisors also meet with a student who is having difficulty with grades or in maintaining professional conduct. Third, program faculty conduct student reviews before students enter field experience placement to ensure they have the
requisite skills and competencies to be successful in field practice; students are given verbal feedback via conferencing at the end of the spring semester prior to the fall semester commencing with field experience.

**Social Work Program Plan of Study**
{50 Credit Hours—must have at least 120 overall credits to graduate}

**Part-time Plan of Study:**
Year 1 & 2 Gen Ed Coursework  
**Spring of Sophomore Year---Application to the Program**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2019 (7 credits)</th>
<th>Spring 2020 (6 credits)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SW 231: Social Work: A Helping Profession - 3</td>
<td>SW 320: Human Behavior II (Mezzo/Macro) - 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW 310: Human Behavior I - 3</td>
<td>SW 370: Social Diversity - 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW 498: Intro to professional education-1</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Spring 2021 (7 credits)</th>
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<tr>
<td>SW 300: Social Welfare Policy and Services - 3</td>
<td>SW 420: SW Practice II (Mezzo – Groups/Families) - 3</td>
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<td>SW 410: Practice Skills for Helping Individuals – 3</td>
<td>SW 430: SW Practice III (Macro- Orgs/Community) –3</td>
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<td>SW 498: Preparing for field experience -1</td>
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<th>Spring 2022 (6 credits)</th>
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<tr>
<td>SW 392: Mental Health Services</td>
<td>SW 393: Family &amp; Children Services</td>
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<td>SW 498: Gerontology</td>
<td>SW 391: Substance Abuse Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW 498: The Happiness Project (also offered in Summer)</td>
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<td>SW 480: Field Experience I – 4</td>
<td>SW 485: Field Experience II – 4</td>
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<td>SW 481: Field Experience I Seminar – 2</td>
<td>SW 486: Field Experience II Seminar -2</td>
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**Full-time Plan of Study:**

**Year 1 & 2**  Gen Ed

**Spring of Sophomore Year—Application to Program**

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<td>SW 498: Preparing for field experience - 1</td>
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<td>SW 485: Field Experience II – 4</td>
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<td>SW 481: Field Experience I Seminar – 2</td>
<td>SW 486: Field Experience II Seminar - 2</td>
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<td>ELECTIVE: choose one--3</td>
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The Field Experience

Upon completion or enrollment in the required courses, students make application for the Field Experience. Admission to the Field Experience requires a review of academic performance, and an assessment of the student’s professional performance and ethical conduct in the social work program. Student Reviews are generally completed within the spring semester prior to the Field Experience semesters and shared with students in a private, scheduled meeting with the social work faculty.

*Student Review Criteria for Evaluating Professional Behavior is utilized and is found in Appendix A of this handbook.*

Students who are deemed unprepared to assume responsibility for professional services to clients may be denied or delayed placement in the Field Experience. Once admitted into the Field Experience curriculum component, students complete a 450 hour Field Experience in a professional human services agency under the supervision of an approved social work field instructor. The hours will usually be taken over two successive semesters (Fall & Spring) in the same setting. In order to provide the best possible learning experiences, students must be prepared to engage in the Field Experience in settings that may not be in their home community. The design of the Field Experience centers on the selection of a quality learning setting that supports the student’s career goals. Students will complete tasks specific to their Field Experience center that relate to the stated objectives. While their tasks are specific to their center, the assignments must reflect a generalist approach to social work practice.

The Field Experience Coordinator will email students who qualify for application to the Field Experience in the spring semester with explicit instructions for making application to the Field Experience. Only completed applications submitted by the due date will be considered. The online application can be located at [http://www.mssu.edu/academics/arts-sciences/social-work/](http://www.mssu.edu/academics/arts-sciences/social-work/) Please be advised the application requires the following documents to be uploaded: Transcript, Degree Audit, Professional Liability Insurance, and a Resume. Deadlines for student applications for all Field Experience students are set for a purpose. Failure to submit a completed Application for Field Placement, to interview timely, and to submit the Confirmation of Placement sheet by the posted deadline date may result in not being eligible for placement in that specific semester.

The Social Work Field Experience Admissions Committee meets to discuss and review each student’s readiness for the Field Experience and makes determinations about the student’s placement in the Social Work Field Experience.

*Please Note:* The MSSU Social Work Program strongly discourages completing Field Experiences in current work sites. Submission of all requested material does not automatically qualify the student for placement; additional materials may be requested or the request may be denied. The Field Experience Coordinator has the final approval for all Field Experience Placement decisions.

To qualify as a field instructor, an individual must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a MSW or BSW with at least two years of practice experience.
2. In special circumstances, the Field Experience coordinator may waive these requirements.
3. Commitment to social work education in general and to field instruction in particular; attention to the student’s individual needs and abilities; willingness to share expertise, time, and individual experiences with a student; willingness to complete the midterm and final evaluations in a timely manner, to share the evaluation with the student, and to submit it to the Field Experience Coordinator.
4. An understanding of the MSSU Social Work Program expectations and curriculum
5. Be willing to assist students with assignments when pertaining to their Field Experience agency.

Field Instruction Orientation will take place the first week of the fall semester. Students and field instructors will need to attend. The orientation will include pertinent topics and documents to Field Experience.

**Student Concerns and Grievance Policy**

Procedure for grade change. Students are informed of the process for grievance in the BSW Handbook. Faculty members, upon receipt of a student’s request for a grade change, will review their records. If it is determined that a student’s request is justified, the faculty member will prepare a Grade Change Authorization and submit it to the department head, which will forward it to the Office of the Registrar. A faculty member may not change an F grade to a W grade in those cases in which the student did not follow the proper procedures for dropping the course.

The student can appeal a negative decision of a faculty member. The steps in the appeal process are as follows: (1) present the appeal first to the faculty member’s department head; (2) then to the college dean; (3) then to the provost, (5) finally, to the president of the university.

At any step of the appeals process, any of the above individuals can authorize a grade change, and must notify the involved individuals of their action (i.e., the department head must notify the student and the faculty member of his/her decision; the college dean must notify the department head, faculty member, and student of his/her decision; the provost or designee is responsible for notifying the college dean, department head, faculty member, and student of his/her decision. If the request for grade change is appealed to the final step, the president will take action deemed appropriate and so inform the provost, college dean, department head, faculty member, and student. It is solely the student’s responsibility to appeal in the order specified at each step of the process, and the student may halt the appeal at any step.

Grievances other than grades, are handled via the established university policy, as outlined below: Student Grievance Procedure Missouri Southern State University strives to treat all students and campus community members fairly and responsibility in accordance with campus policies and procedures. To the extent possible, all grievances should be settled through informal discussions at the lowest administrative level, and disputed matters should be processed as a formal grievance only when either party feels that a fair and equitable solution has not been reached in the informal discussion.

**Informal process**: Student/Faculty Member – if a student has a complaint or disagreement with a faculty member he/she should:

1. First, speak with the individual Faculty member.
2. If the student does not reach an acceptable solution with the individual Faculty member, he/she then speak with the Department Head of the specific college.
3. If the student does not reach an acceptable solution with the Department Head of the college, he/she then speak with the Dean of the Specific College.
4. If the student does not reach an acceptable solution with the Dean of the Specific College, he/she should then then speak with the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
5. Student/Staff Member - If a student has a complaint or disagreement with a staff member, he/she should:
   1. Contact the Student Affairs Office and arrange a meeting with the Dean of Students or with the Vice President of Student Affairs.
6. Student/Student - If a student has a complaint or disagreement with another student, he/she should:
7. Contact the Student Affairs Office and arrange a meeting with the Dean of Students or with the Vice President of Student Affairs.

**Formal Process:** Any student grievance that was not solved through the informal process may be presented in writing and filed with the Vice President of Academic Affairs for academic grievances or the Vice President of Student Affairs for any grievance concerning staff or students. A student must file a grievance within the current school year. For additional information on filing a grievance please contact the Vice President of Student Affairs office in 347 Billingsly Student Center @ 471-625-9522.

**Social Work Dismissal Policy**

Students admitted to the social work major may be dismissed from the program for the following academic and professional reasons:
1. Failure to maintain a 2.75 grade point average in social work courses;
2. Failure to maintain a 2.75 overall grade point average;
3. Failure to pass any social work course with a “C” or above.
4. Attitudes and behavior which are deemed to be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics (http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp)

**Academic Concerns.** Students who do not meet the above academic standards can be terminated from the program, being notified via email and certified letter.

**Professional Performance Concerns.** Students in the program, who fail to adhere to the Code of Ethics, demonstrate appropriate communication, interpersonal skills, or professional behaviors, as identified by a faculty member, will be asked to meet with the faculty member and/or advisor, and may be required by the department to seek remediation including, but not limited to, repeating pre-Field Experience courses, taking specially arranged remedial classes, receiving counseling, or may be dismissed from the program, depending on the severity of the violation.

**Procedure for professional performance concerns**
1. The faculty member and/or advisor discuss the concern with the student, and an attempt is made to resolve the concern. The concern and any remediation efforts will be documented in the student’s file and/or advising notes.
2. If informal efforts by the faculty member or advisor are viewed as unsuccessful, the concerns are expressed in writing to the director of the program, including specific concern(s), documentation of related event(s) and any attempts to resolve with the
student. The director will notify the student of this concern within five business days of receiving the written complaint. The student may then respond to the complaint within 10 business days following receipt of the letter/email. The program director will meet with the student (his/her academic advisor may attend) in an attempt to resolve or remediate the issue no later than 30 business days following the faculty member’s written complaint. An attempt to resolve or remediate the matter will be made before advancing the matter to the dean.

3. If the student is provided a remediation plan, the student’s advisor and/or program director will meet with the student at least once per semester (or more, if necessary) to monitor the student’s progress and to offer support for successful completion of the remediation plan.

4. If the concern is unresolved, the student has not shown significant improvement after remediation, dismissal of the student from the program will occur. The student will be notified via email and certified mail.

Re-Admission to the Social Work Program
For students whose progress through the program is interrupted by two (2) or more years, re-application to the program is required. Additionally, there may be required repetition of designated courses, particularly in social work practice. The Field Experience is considered a single, continuous course experience. Students who fail to complete the Field Experience in two successive semesters will be required to repeat the entire 450 hours of the Field Experience upon readmission. Students who have been dismissed from the program due to academic and/or professional behavior concerns may re-apply to the program following the same procedure as a new applicant. Additional documents may be required from the department based on the dismissal. For more information, students should contact their advisor or the department chair.

Social Work Student & Professional Organizations
The Social Work Program has a Student Advisory Committee that allows for student participation in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs. This committee meets at least once each semester. Additionally, all students are offered the opportunity to complete periodic course evaluations, satisfaction and climate surveys.

The Social Work Program sponsors a student organization that has existed from the very beginning of the social work program at MSSU. Each year members of the social work staff and/or faculty are chosen or volunteer to serve as sponsors of the League of Lions (the student organization). Student officers are also elected each year. The LOL Social Work Club is a voluntary organization for social work students and students who have declared social work as their major. This club provides avenues for service and leadership opportunities, along with connection to resources in the community.

The Social Work Program sponsors a student honor society – Phi Alpha - that began in December 2016. The honor society has GPA criterion of 3.0 overall and 3.25 for social work coursework, as well as the completion of at least 9 hours in the social work curriculum.
Students are also encouraged to participate in professional organizations, including but not limited to: National Association of Social Workers-NASW is the professional organization for practicing social workers in the US. It provides leadership on social issues at the state and national levels, supports a wide variety of social legislation beneficial to social workers and their clients, publishes a monthly journal entitled Social Work, and is dedicated to encouraging high standards of social work practice. The Missouri Chapter of NASW has several divisions including one that covers the Springfield area.

Joplin Professional Social Workers Group- JPSWG has been in existence since 2002. It is a grass roots, voluntary membership comprised of social work students, degreed social workers and licensed social workers. There is a closed Facebook page, which can be accessed at https://www.facebook.com/groups/107461642614409/

SOCIAL WORK STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM
Social Work major will be asked to sign a Social Work Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form verifying that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the social work student handbook. Social work majors must have a Social Work Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form on file in the Department of Social Work as a condition for continuation in the social work program. A copy of the document is located in Appendix B.
Appendix A
Student Review Criteria for Evaluating Professional Behavior

In order to meet its responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that its graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, the Social Work Program evaluates the academic performance of its students. Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a program. Academic performance is determined by both scholastic achievement and professional behaviors.

There are several behaviors that reflect a commitment to successful professional behaviors. These together with proficiency in writing, testing, assignments, and practice behaviors, constitute academic performance in the Missouri Southern State University BSW program.

Attendance and Punctuality
Attendance is the demonstrated ability to attend scheduled events and meetings including class sessions. Additionally, this includes the ability to attend informal meetings, like study sessions or participation in group projects. Punctuality is the exhibition of the ability to arrive at events and meetings at or before the scheduled time. Including formal class sessions and scheduled meetings, like advisement meetings, attendance to out of class assignments. Additionally, non-scheduled events and informal events are given the same attention to punctuality.

Communication
Communication is the demonstrated ability to manage communication with professors, instructors, and fellow students. This behavior includes communicating effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Particularly in class this behavior is apparent by expressing ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrating a willingness and an ability to listen to others. Another aspect is sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty. One indicator of success with this behavior is responsiveness to communication. Responsiveness to communication is the habit and practice of promptly attending to communication and correspondence from other people. The correspondence may be electronic, like email or blackboard, but also includes traditional mail, memos, and other forms of communication. Responsiveness encompasses both prompt reception and response, not only reading correspondence but also attending to it by responding appropriately. An indication of success in this area is dedication to informing professors when circumstances lead to tardiness or absence from class.

Respect
Respect is a commitment to showing respect to other people. Additionally, this area includes participating in an environment and culture of support for others. In the educational environment, this includes showing value for fellow students, professors, instructors, and university support staff.

Self-Awareness
Self-awareness is recognizing and exhibiting knowledge of how personal values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect thinking, behavior, and relationships, including how these impact other people. Both verbal and non-verbal communications are considered when evaluating self-awareness. Self-awareness includes the ability to self-evaluate and modify behavior, accurately.
awareness of self and how one is perceived by others. Self-awareness includes reflection on personal limitations as they relate to professional capacities & a willingness to change behavior when it interferes in working with others.
Diversity Awareness
Diversity awareness is the recognition of values differences in others. It is a respect and value for another person’s culture, experiences, and people groups. Diverse opinions are valued and appreciated. This is demonstrated in a variety of settings including the classroom.

Collegiality
Collegiality is the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others. When collaborating with the others the student engages and relates with other people positively.

Course Engagement
Course engagement is the practice of involvement in class without monopolizing the learning environment. Class activities and discussions are undertaken with enthusiasm but in a way that does not hinder others in the environment from fully participating. In contrast, the participation leads others to participate and enriches the experience for the group.

Written Expression
Written expression is writing clearly, using correct grammar and spelling, and applying appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation. Another aspect of written expression is sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to complete adequately all written assignments, as specified by faculty.

Responsiveness to Feedback
Responsiveness to feedback is a receptiveness to criticism and feedback from other people. The feedback may originate from a variety of sources; professors and instructor, field experience supervisors and clients, university staff and employees, and student peers. When feedback is received, responsiveness is defined the ability to accept it and adjust accordingly.

Initiative & Reliability
Initiative is the ability assess and begin projects, assignments and behaviors independently and to take action without external motivation. Reliability is dependability and consistency in meeting expectations. Specifically, these are demonstrated through the ability to plan and complete coursework, paperwork, and school and field experience expectations in a timely manner.

Professional Appearance
Professional appearance is personally presenting in a manner that is consistently appropriate for both the classroom and professional settings. Appearance includes both appropriate dress and personal hygiene. Additionally, this will ensure no interference within relationships and responsibilities.

Compliance with Professional Requirements
Compliance with professional requirements is the demonstration of behaviors that comply with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in classroom, field, and community. Professionalism indicates a potential for responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others,
deadlines, completing assignments on time, keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements, and accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner. Including the ability to effectively with others, regardless of level of authority, in an appropriate & responsible manner through proper channels for conflict resolution.
Compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics is valued and used as a guide for current behavior and classroom performance. The behavior and performance both demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the NASW Code of Ethics. Ethical behaviors include:

a) Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.

b) No history of charges and/or convictions of an offense that is contrary to professional practice.

c) Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. Suspension of personal biases during interactions with others.

d) Comprehension of another individual’s way of life and values. Empathetic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.

e) Appreciation of the value of diversity. Effective and nonjudgmental relation to and work with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person’s age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or values system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.

f) Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients’ rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.

g) Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, volunteer experience, and field placement.

h) Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one’s own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.

i) Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways; or participate in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist.
APPENDIX B
SOCIAL WORK STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have been given the opportunity to review the Social Work Student Handbook in its entirety.

As a social work major, I certify I have read, I understand, and I agree to abide by the Social Work Student Handbook. I acknowledge that I may be dismissed from MSSU’s Social Work Program if in the professional judgment of social work faculty, a violation of this handbook occurs.

_________________________________________  ______________________________________
Signature                                                                                   Date

_________________________________________

Please print full legal name