Mission Statement of the Department of Social Work

The Department of Social Work at Minnesota State University, Mankato promotes learning to prepare students to become social workers who practice with competence and integrity at the generalist (BSSW) and the advanced generalist (MSW) levels. The Department supports and enhances the work of social service agencies through consultation, scholarship, research, leadership, and other service activities. The Department affirms its commitment to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, with an emphasis on small and rural areas, by enhancing human well-being, promoting social justice, and alleviating poverty and oppression for all members of our diverse society within its global context.

Goals of the BSSW Program of the Department of Social Work:

The Social Work Major prepares students for generalist professional social work practice at the baccalaureate level. The goals of the social work program are:

1. To prepare students to begin careers in generalist social work practice.
2. To promote an identification with and responsibility to the values and ethics of the social work profession.
3. To teach students to value and affirm diversity and work toward social justice in a global society.
4. To encourage critical thinking and both self-directed and cooperative learning.
5. To provide a foundation for graduate social work education.
6. To contribute to the purposes of the social work profession through scholarship and service at the local, regional, state, national and international level.

Information in this publication will be made available in alternative format, such as large print or cassette tape, upon request.
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WELCOME TO THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

Students:

It is clear from the Mission Statement of the Department of Social Work that a major component of our purpose is to recruit, educate, and graduate social workers that will provide skilled professional services to the various client populations that call upon us. In this task, the Department holds many responsibilities to students, to clients, to the profession and to the university. This Student Handbook documents many of the policies that support those responsibilities, so it should be read carefully by all majors.

This handbook introduces you to the social work faculty, contains written guidelines for incoming freshmen and transfer students, provides a description of the social work curriculum, presents information about admissions and retention criteria and procedures, and includes program planning guides for your convenience. The Curriculum Policy Statement from the Council on Social Work Education that guides our curriculum development is also included.

The Social Work faculty and staff want you to be successful in your academic endeavors and encourage you to seek advice and clarification if you have questions or concerns regarding your program. Please, work closely with your advisor to avoid experiencing unnecessary delays in your progress toward the degree. We join you in accepting the challenge of preparation for Social Work practice.

William Anderson, MSW, PhD, LISW
Chairperson, Department of Social Work
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The Social Work Faculty & Staff:

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Faculty profiles are available in the display opposite TN-358 and on the website.

The Department of Social Work is part of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Armstrong 111, (507) 389-6307, under the leadership of Dr. John Alessio, Dean.

(revised and updated, June 2006)
I. Affirmative Action Policies

Statement of Non-Discrimination:

The Social Work Program provides equal opportunity in all aspects of the educational program for all qualified persons regardless of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, sexual orientation/preference, reliance on public assistance, or any other class or group distinction as set forth by state or federal anti-discrimination laws or in University of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board policy.

Disability Accommodation Policy for the Department of Social Work:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that the University provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities. Requests for accommodations must be initiated by the student and supported by documentation of the disability indicating a current need for accommodation. Students may request accommodation through the Office of Disability Services. Students are advised to contact the Office as early in the semester as possible to discuss accommodation needs and develop an accommodation plan. In addition, students are advised to inform the Instructor of their disability and of the involvement of the Office of Disability Services. The Instructor will make the necessary accommodation based upon the direction of the Office of Disability Services. Visit the Office of Disability Services at 132 Memorial Library, or call (507) 389-2825 (v/tty).

Services are also available to assist students with the various application and administrative procedures implemented within the Department. Any student who wishes assistance with any aspect of these procedures should see their advisor or the Department Chairperson, and is also encouraged to seek the assistance of the Office of Disability Services.
II. Introduction

The major in Social Work prepares students for a career helping people as a generalist social work professional practitioner. The major requires: mastery of a social work knowledge base; understanding and acceptance of a social work professional value system; commitment to social and economic justice; practice with diverse populations and populations at risk; and the application of social work skills that demonstrate competence in providing beginning level generalist practice social work services to clients.

A. Generalist Social Work Practice Definition

The Department of Social Work at Minnesota State University, Mankato has adopted the following definition for the “Generalist Practice” of Social Work. The Department is committed to preparing baccalaureate professionals who demonstrate their skills as generalist practitioners.

Generalist social work practitioners:
1. Possess a broad range of knowledge, critical thinking and other practice skills, draw upon culturally sensitive practice theories and models, and move minimal difficulty from one field of practice to another while assuming a variety of social work roles;

2. Are committed to a professional value base, ethical practice standards, and respect for cultural diversity, all of which are based in principles of human rights and social justice, particularly concerning populations at risk;

3. Use generic practice processes to organize planned change within and between systems, and are prepared to work directly with a variety of culturally diverse human systems-societies, while recognizing and supporting strengths in communities, neighborhoods, complex organizations, committees or task forces, formal and informal groups, families, and individuals as well as with environmental systems;

4. View human behavior in the context of the social environment while emphasizing empowerment and the liberation of people to enhance wellbeing across all systems; and,

5. Create changes which maximize human system functioning across all system levels and which access available resources, researching all aspects of social work practice, and integrating direct practice with social policy and social work research activities.
II. Introduction (cont’d)

B. General Requirements for the Social Work Major

To meet the requirements of the accredited undergraduate degree, all students must have course content in the areas of: social work values and ethics, diversity, promotion of social and economic justice, populations at risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policies and services, social work practice, research, and, field practicum. The major builds upon a liberal arts base and includes courses in the above areas both of which may be supplemented by other general education courses and general electives. Consult your advisor for further information. Specific course requirements are listed in the Bulletin and on the Program Planning Guide (see Appendix B).

Because Social Work is a broad professional major, no minor is required. However, concentrations, minors, or double majors in related fields of interest may be pursued and should be discussed with your advisor. Students who plan to complete combinations of majors, minors, or certificates where field experiences are required in each program should meet with their advisor to consider possible options for meeting these requirements.

C. Advising

Advisement is an integral part of preparation for the professional practice of Social Work. Advising involves a responsibility shared equally by student and advisor to assess the student’s academic, attitudinal and personal characteristics that relate to their motivation and readiness for assuming the professional role. The relationship between students and their advisors should be close, positive, and productive to professional growth. All students declaring Social Work as their major must meet regularly with their social work faculty advisor to assess their progress in meeting overall program requirements.

C.1. Social Work Advising

Students who are interested in pursuing a Social Work major must have an advisor assigned from among the social work faculty. Students should contact the Department Secretary at (507) 389-6504 or in 358 Trafton North, to request an advisor. After receiving an advisor, students should contact the advisor as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to discuss their interest in the major and to plan for admission.

C.2. General Education Advising

Students who do not already have an A.A. degree should meet with the staff at “Advising U” (Armstrong 114, 389-6306) to plan their General Education curriculum, especially incorporating the Social Work Foundation courses. Verification that General Education is completed is part of the application process for the Social Work major.
II. Introduction

(cont’d)

C. 3. Transfer Student Advising

Students planning to transfer to MSU, M who are interested in the Social Work major should contact the Department as soon as possible so that they can include courses in their General Education that will meet SOWK Foundation requirements. Even before transfer, students are encouraged to review the Department website and arrange a meeting with a faculty member to plan for a smooth transition.

Students who enter with an Associate of Arts or with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum completed are ready to begin taking Social Work Introductory courses and completing any missing Social Work Foundation courses. Transfer students who have not completed their General Education will need to also include any needed General Education coursework. The Registrar’s Office will identify what courses substitute for General Education requirements; the Department will identify what courses substitute for Social Work Foundation requirements. Students should obtain a copy of their Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) report, if available, or their transfer transcript and meet as soon as possible with a member of the Social Work faculty.

C. 4. Pre-SOWK Status

Students who are interested in majoring in social work can declare a major as a “Pre-SOWK” major. This status is open to any students who have not yet met the application requirements, applied, and received formal admission to the program. This would include first and second year students and most new transfer students. The primary advantage of changing from “undecided” or a previous major to Pre-SOWK and obtaining a Social Work advisor is that advising reports and other student materials will come to that advisor. Early meetings with a Social Work advisor should reduce subsequent problems in course sequencing and prerequisites and may facilitate efficient scheduling of General Education courses that contribute to the major. The Department Secretary can assign an advisor and change major status to Pre-SOWK (see above, section C. 1.).
III. The Undergraduate Curriculum

In the broadest sense, our curriculum is designed to develop or foster competencies in creative thinking, problem solving, critical evaluation, integration of subject matter and most importantly to demonstrate the ability for self-directed learning and action. Social Work education is a process of helping students explore possibilities and develop their own base for understanding the Social Work profession and their own personal role within the field. Preparation for professional practice in social work requires that the goal of education should be more than gaining knowledge; it also must include application of that knowledge using culturally competent skills within the ethics and values of the profession.

A. Planning Your Social Work Program

This Handbook is designed to be used as you plan for your successful completion of the Social Work major. This section describes the courses you are expected to complete. A worksheet called the Program Planning Guide, and a model curriculum (available for Four-Year Students and for Transfer Students) are available in the Appendix of this Handbook. Students should keep track of their progress and review these documents regularly with their advisor; these forms supplement but do not replace the advising relationship that is so important for professional growth.

B. General Education (Liberal Arts) at MSU,M

The general education coursework required at Minnesota State provides a broad liberal arts base on which social work majors build their professional preparation. Through these courses, students have been introduced to new ideas and information. They will have learned theories and models for understanding themselves, relationships with others, and the social, economic and political institutions and organizational structures which are part of their world.

Students now face the dual tasks of, first, selecting an academic program that will prepare them for working in a field of practice of their choice and, second, of linking what they have learned thus far with what they will continue to learn in preparation for professional practice in that field.

C. Foundation Courses:  
Soc 101; Econ 100; Ethn Studies 100; KSP 235; Pol Sci 111; Biol 100; & Statistics Option (Soc 202, Psych 201, or Health Sci 475)

Prior to applying for admission to the Social Work major and while completing their General Education requirements, students are required to complete these specific courses. Note that all of the courses can count toward General Education categories (of the Statistics Options, only Soc 202 is a General Education course).
This group of required courses assists in the integrated understanding of liberal arts content as a foundation upon which to build Social Work practice knowledge and experience. Taken before or simultaneously with the Introductory Social Work courses, this cluster provides an overview of interacting social systems and problems, and a foundation for understanding the systems within which Social Work intervention takes place. The roots of Social Work practice lie deep in our history and culture, in our understanding of human origins and human development and the minority groups in our society, in the nature of power, influence, prejudice, pluralism and the place of social justice and social control. An understanding of the significance and operation of social setting, roles, and small group influence on individual and collective behavior is crucial to intervention through these systems.

D. Introductory Social Work Courses: SOWK 190; 210; 214

The social work program includes a group of courses designed to assist students in making a final decision about their interest in the field of Social Work. These courses provide students with a historical overview and introduction to the social welfare system and the Social Work profession at both the policy and practice levels. This group is identified as Introductory Social Work Courses on the Program Planning Guide and includes Social Welfare Services (SOWK-190), Introduction to Social Work (SOWK-210), and Community Social Service Projects (SOWK-214). This sequence of courses will engage students in many aspects of the learning process which will assist them in: identification of personal interests, development of goals, realization and acceptance of responsibility for a personally relevant educational endeavor, evaluation of non-classroom based experiences, and, finally, seeking out other resources to enrich and focus their continued investment in preparing for professional practice in Social Work. Note that SOWK-190 and SOWK-214 also fulfill General Education categories.

E. Integrative Social Work Courses: SOWK 305, 312

These courses are taken after completion of the Introductory courses. Completion of these courses is required prior to formal admission to the major. Human Behavior and Social Work Practice (SOWK-305) integrates knowledge from the general education liberal arts base as well as from the introductory courses. Applying knowledge of biopsychosocial development, the course provides a systems approach to understanding the influence of economic, social and political institutions on individual and organizational behavior. Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) gives students the opportunity to further test their interest and ability in social work through a 150-hour observational internship. See the Junior Field Experience Manual for more information about the admissions and placement processes. Students should attend a SOWK-312 planning session the semester before they hope to do their internship.
F. The Social Work Practice Sequence: SOWK-441, 443, 445, 447

Formal admission to the major is required prior to beginning the Practice sequence, and a detailed description of that process is found later in this Handbook. The Social Work Practice sequence includes four courses that are taken sequentially and which prepare students for generalist Social Work practice. These courses build upon the Foundation courses, the Introductory courses, and the Integrative courses which are taken prior to admission to the major. For most students the Practice sequence begins during the second semester of the Junior year. Students must receive permission to register for each of the Practice courses and only students who have been accepted into the major are allowed into this part of the program. The formal admissions process takes place as students prepare to take Practice I (SOWK-441) the following semester.

- **Social Work Practice I (SOWK-441)** has a primary focus on the values and ethics of the profession and students are expected to know and apply the steps involved in resolving ethical dilemmas. Students also are expected to develop skills in the use of a generalist social work planned change process that begins with engagement and continues through termination.

- **Social Work Practice II (SOWK-443)** focuses on developing generalist micro-skills for working with individuals, families and treatment groups. Skills are mastered within the context of ethics and cultural competency.

- **Social Work Practice III (SOWK-445)** extends the planned change model to community development as students learn skills for community analysis change. Students apply these skills in small communities throughout the region. [taken concurrently with SOWK-443]

- **Social Work Practice IV (SOWK-447)** ties macro-practice skills in task group and organizational development to the students’ experiences in their Senior Practicum. Students identify, analyze, describe and engage in organizational development activities using the Practicum setting as a laboratory. [taken concurrently with SOWK-450 & 455]


Social Welfare Issues and Policy (SOWK-412) explores the development of social policy and the influence of policy on social work practice. This course usually is taken along with Practice I and must be completed before Practicum. Applied Social Work Research (SOWK-469) involves students in the evaluation of social work practice and social service programs. This course usually is taken along with Practice II/III and must be taken before entering Practicum as a research project is a component of Practicum.

H. Senior Practicum and Integrative Seminar: SOWK-450, 455
The Social Work Practicum is a skills oriented, educationally directed and professionally supervised field experience in which students complete 440 hours (4 days/wk, Monday-Thursday, 15 weeks) of direct practice experience as their final semester in the program. Students also participate in a weekly Integrative Seminar (Friday mornings) in which they discuss their experiences in their agencies and apply the knowledge and skills they have learned throughout the curriculum. More specific information about the criteria and procedures for admission to the Senior Practicum are included in this Handbook (Section V. B., below) and the Practicum Manual. The SOWK-455 Practicum Manual is required and can be purchased in advance at the copy shop in Wissink Building. Students must have completed satisfactorily all other Social Work requirements prior to beginning their Practicum (Practice IV is offered concurrently with Practicum on Friday afternoons). Only students meeting all departmental requirements and in good standing in the major are allowed to begin their Senior Practicum.


Social Work Electives are also provided within the social work curriculum. These courses are designed to provide additional information and greater depth of understanding of special populations, agency settings or practice theory of interest to students. Students are required to choose at least one course as the elective for their major and may select others as interest and time allow. Students are encouraged to discuss the content and anticipated scheduling of these courses with their advisor in preparation for meeting personal and professional educational goals. Elective course(s) should be completed prior to entering Practicum.

SOWK-415, Child & Family Welfare Services, provides an overview of practice with Children and Families, especially around issues of abuse and neglect;

SOWK-419, Social Work & Aging, provides an overview of practice with elders, their families, and their communities;

SOWK-422, Social Work & Chemical Dependency, examines the Social Work perspective on chemical dependency and its impact on clients;

SOWK-425, Social Work & Health Care, reviews the Social Work role in both health care settings and mental health settings;

SOWK-427, Social Work & Domestic Violence, explores the issues of family violence which affect many clients (this course usually is taught as part of the interdisciplinary violence elective involving Sociology, Corrections, Law Enforcement and Social Work);

SOWK-430, Social Work in the School Setting, exposes students to the many responsibilities and roles of the School Social Worker; and,

SOWK-432, Social Work and Disabilities, reviews the many ways and settings in which Social Workers work with people with disabilities.

III. The Undergraduate Curriculum (cont’d)

J. Other Recommended Coursework: SOWK-255, Supportive Coursework
The Department increasingly has included content on global social welfare needs, issues and services throughout the curriculum. In addition, we offer a General Education elective, Global Responses to Human Need (SOWK-255), as an option for majors and non-majors. This course is an overview of international issues of social justice, human rights and the provision of social services.

Students are encouraged to expand their knowledge and skills to prepare themselves to work in fields of practice which interest them. The Department offers a brochure, Career and Specialty Areas in Social Work (available in the Department office), which identifies other courses around the University that students will find supportive of their particular interests within the various areas of social work practice.

In particular, students are urged to consider the importance of non-English language skills as they prepare to practice in a manner that is responsive to ethnic diversity. In addition to the educational and cultural benefits of learning a new language, graduates who speak Spanish, for example, have a distinct advantage in the job market.

K. Social Welfare Minor: SOWK-190, 210, 214, 305, 412 & 2 400-level electives

The Social Welfare Minor allows students in other majors a richer view of social work and social welfare issues beyond the Social Work General Education courses. This minor supports those students in “related” degrees (Corrections, Psychology, Sociology, Women’s Studies, etc.) but this minor will NOT qualify students for licensure as Social Workers, NOR will it make them eligible for positions requiring licensure. Minors are not permitted to take any of the Practice sequence courses or the Senior Practicum or Integrative Seminar as they are not formally admitted to the major.
IV. Academic Policies

A. Credits from Other Sources Applied to Coursework in Major

A. 1. Transfer Credit for Prior Educational Achievement

Students planning to transfer to Minnesota State Mankato must make formal application through the Admissions Office, 122 Taylor Center, Mankato, MN 56001. Telephone: 1-800-722-0544 or 389-1822; Website: http://www.mnsu.edu/supersite/admission/
Transfer students must meet the same admission and retention standards required of any students who study at Minnesota State Mankato and must have been honorably dismissed by the institution granting previous admission. To be eligible for graduation in Social Work, transfer students must complete at least 30 credit hours at Minnesota State Mankato. Complete information about transfer policy may be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin available from the Admissions Office. On receipt of an admission application and appropriate transcripts, that office will evaluate the prior course credits that can be accepted at Minnesota State Mankato.

A. 2. Transfer Agreements with Other Academic Institutions

The Department of Social Work has established formal articulation or equivalency agreements with several regional community colleges that spell out which courses can be transferred such that they will meet some of the requirements of the major. Check with your advising center to see if your school has such an agreement in place.

A. 3. Course Substitutions and Waivers

Credit for academic courses that are required for the major at MSU,M but which were completed at other institutions will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the student’s faculty advisor or the Department Chairperson. The student must provide a copy of the course syllabus including assignments and texts used for each course for which they are requesting substitution. If a favorable decision is reached, it will be submitted to the Registrar on a Substitution and/or Waiver Request form. This form will become a part of the student’s permanent record providing assurance that the substitution will be honored when requirements for graduation are evaluated.

A. 4. Social Work Transfer Credits to be Applied to the Major

All students transferring to Minnesota State with a Social Work major must take at least twenty-four credit hours within the program regardless of the number of social work credit hours they have accrued elsewhere. All courses that are considered equivalent to MSU,M Social Work courses must have been completed successfully with a grade of “C” or better in a program accredited by CSWE, or as part of a formal articulation agreement with another institution.
IV. Academic Policies (cont’d)

Students transferring to Minnesota State Mankato as seniors or having completed a Practice course at another CSWE accredited program must provide a supporting letter of recommendation from their major advisor or department chairperson at their former program attesting that the student is leaving that program in good standing. The student must meet all criteria for regular admission and have completed equivalent coursework. See Section IV. B. 2. regarding non-substitution of Practice and Practicum courses.

B. Substitution for Social Work Courses

B. 1. Substitution for Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312)

B. 1. 1 Prior Work Experience (see also Section B. 3.)

Occasionally there are students who, by virtue of extensive work experience, may seek to substitute for Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312). For example, a returning student with a degree in a “related” field may have several years of experience as a “county social worker” (a position currently exempt from licensure in MN) and may wish to substitute more advanced coursework for the observational junior level experience. Note that this section would not be applicable to the many students who hold jobs as paraprofessionals in social service settings before or during their schooling.

Students who believe they have work experience exceeding the expectations of SOWK-312 first should meet with their advisor to discuss their experience and then provide a formal letter of request and documentation of their work experience to the Junior Field Experience coordinator. These materials will be conveyed to the Department faculty for review and decision-making. Once the decision is made and conveyed to the student, copies of all materials will be placed in the student’s permanent file. If such a substitution is granted, students will take the five credits in other departmental electives.

B. 1. 2. Credit for non-Social Work Internships in Substitution for SOWK-312

Students who have taken non-social work courses for credit that require service learning, structured volunteer work, or community service hours may petition the Department to count some of those hours toward the 150-hours required for SOWK-312. In no circumstances other than formal articulation agreements will more than 50-percent of the hours previously accrued be counted for SOWK-312. The student should review these materials with their advisor and then provide to the Junior Field Experience Coordinator the following:

- A letter of request that the previously accrued hours be considered for application to the 150-hour requirement of SOWK-312;
IV. Academic Policies (cont’d)

The syllabus explicating the learning objectives and activities of the previous internship or other experience;
Documentation of the hours and where they were accrued; and,
Examples of any assignments, journals, papers, and assessments that were generated as part of the prior learning experience.

The Junior Field Experience Coordinator will review the documentation and make a recommendation to the faculty of the Department regarding how many hours will be accepted and how the student will complete the SOWK-312 requirements. The faculty decision will be communicated to the student and all materials will become part of the student’s permanent file.

B. 2. Substitution for Practice Courses: SOWK-441, 443, 445, 447

The Department does not accept courses in substitution for the four Practice sequence courses. The particular structure and sequencing of the Practice sequence is a key part of the design of the curriculum and thus these courses are not eligible for substitution. Thus even with generous substitution of Introductory, Foundation, and Integrative courses, it is not possible to finish the major in less than three semesters.

B. 3. Substitution for Senior Practicum & Integrative Seminar: SOWK-450, 455

Fieldwork, life experiences, and work experiences may NOT be substituted for the required Senior Practicum (SOWK-455) and the Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450).

B. 4 Sequence Policy Exceptions

The curriculum of the Social Work major has been established carefully to meet the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education and to create a logical progression that will best facilitate the development of the values, skills, and knowledge of generalist Social Work practice as specified in the Department Objectives.

It is required that students pursue their studies following the established sequenced curriculum. Advising materials in this Handbook, on the Web, and used in classes reflect the appropriate pattern of courses, and advisors work with their students to plan with this sequencing in mind.

While advance planning and close work with an advisor generally avoid most problems, on occasion extraordinary circumstances in a student’s situation might call for a variance from this pattern.
IV. Academic Policies (cont’d)

The Department affirms the student’s right to petition for a variance from the normal sequence using the following procedure:

The student must identify the potential conflict between policies and their situation and discuss the issue with their advisor as early as possible.

A formal letter requesting a variance must be presented to the Department after consultation with the advisor. The letter must present, in detail, the reasons why the variance is requested. These reasons must be far more pressing than convenience or financial issues.

The Department will act promptly on the request if possible; the student may need to present their case at a Department meeting to allow for full discussion.

The decision of the Department will be given to the student and their advisor to facilitate planning.

C. Non-Retention in the Major

The Department is charged by its accrediting body to serve as one of the “gatekeeping” institutions for the profession. Students who have been accepted into the major but who subsequently do not meet Department standards will be referred to their advisor to explore other options for completing their degree. Normal Departmental and University appeal procedures are available to students who do not agree with the faculty decision.

C. 1. Conditions for Non-Retention in the Major

Students can be non-retained in the major for one or more of the conditions outlined below:

C. 1. 1. Grades

Students who earn a “D” or “F” in any of the Practice courses (441, 443, 445, 447) will not be retained in the major. Students who earn a “D” or “F” in any of the other required 400-level courses must repeat that course with at least a “C” grade prior to entering Senior Practicum. [Students earning a “D” or “F” in any of the required courses for admission to the major must repeat those courses prior to admission; see Section V. A. 2. 1.] Students are expected to maintain or increase their admissions GPA as they move through the program; students whose GPA falls below the admissions requirement must consult with their advisor about strategies for raising their performance.
IV. Academic Policies (cont’d)

C. 1.2. Unethical Behavior

Among other consequences, a student also may be disqualified from continuing in the major if they have been found to be in violation of an ethical standard of the University or the profession in relation to: their participation in any portion of the academic program (e.g., cheating, plagiarism); violation of student conduct standards as set forth in University policy; or ethical violations committed while working or volunteering in the community.

C. 1.3. Criminal Behavior

Conviction on criminal charges may constitute grounds for removal from the major. Discovery by the Department of previously undisclosed criminal convictions may also lead to removal from the major. Depending upon the offense, a criminal conviction may make it difficult or impossible for students to find a Senior Practicum placement or to get licensed upon graduation.

C. 2. Conditions for Re-Admission to the Major after Non-Retention

C. 2.1. Grades
Students who made a grade of a “D” or “F” in the major may be required to wait one semester before reapplying for admission. The decision to reapply must be reviewed with the faculty advisor. All Admission to the Major procedures must be followed.

C. 2.2. Unethical or Criminal Conduct

Students dismissed from the major as a result of their criminal or unethical behavior may reapply for admission. The student must apply in writing to the Department to request reconsideration. Following this request, the Department reserves the right to refuse consideration of the request or to deny the request upon consideration. The Department may consult with appropriate University and/or professional authorities about the student and their behavior. The Department may solicit information from others working with the applicant, including access to legal, administrative, or clinical records, or any other information deemed potentially useful for informed decision-making. Failure to comply with Department requests will be a sufficient basis for non-reconsideration.

C. 2.3. Procedures

Students who have been suspended or non-retained from the major but who wish to return to the major must write a formal letter to the Department through the Chairperson, addressing in detail their understanding of the reasons for non-retention, describing their responsibility in the problem, listing any consequences they have faced, indicating the
steps they have taken to address the issues, and summarizing their work with their advisor toward developing a new plan for finishing the major. The request for re-admission will be reviewed by the Department faculty and a response plan developed and sent to the student. All documentation becomes a part of the student’s permanent file. If formally re-admitted, students are expected to demonstrate continued academic and personal performance meeting the Department’s standards.
V. Admissions Policies

A. Admission to the Social Work Major (and the Practice Sequence)

Social Work majors and their faculty advisors will have worked together closely to plan the students' programs of study so that at this first point of formal review there should be no surprises. Applicants for admission to the major must review the following criteria, procedure, and possible outcomes carefully. The Department sets formal deadline dates for applications at the end of each year for the following year. Those deadlines are published in a variety of ways, such as on posted signs, on department wall calendars, and on the department website, and are announced in SOWK-305.

A. 1. Preparation for Applying for the Major

- Review the standards for admission in this handbook.
- Download the Application for Admission from the website (paper copies are also available).
- Listen to the information provided in SOWK-305 and other courses and ask questions if you have any.
- Meet with your advisor regularly to plan for admission, to develop a graduation plan, and to review your completed application before submission.
- Complete your Application with great care, remembering that many of the faculty have not yet met you and will be basing their impression of you on the materials you submit. Keep a copy of everything you submit.

A. 2. Admission Criteria

All students wishing to be admitted to the Social Work major must achieve the following standards. Exceptions to any of these requirements can only be made based on the collective academic and professional judgment of the faculty. The Department reserves the right to limit class size; students who meet the following criteria are given priority in the admissions decision-making process.

A. 2. 1. Grade Point Average (GPA)

Formal admission to the Social Work major requires that applicants have achieved a 2.8 GPA in the required social work and foundation pre-major courses, and a 2.8 cumulative (overall) GPA. In addition, students must have a grade of “C” or better in all required courses.

Students may be admitted with a lower cumulative GPA upon presentation of convincing evidence of explanatory factors, strong academic performance in recent semesters or strong performance within the major. These students will not receive permission to register for SOWK-314 until they have completed the current semester and demonstrated continued academic success.
V. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

A. 2. 2. Completed Course Work

Students should have completed at least 64 credits by the end of the semester during which they apply to the major. In addition, they should be in or have completed all of the foundation courses (Bio-100, Soc-100, EthnStu-100, KSP-235, PolSci-111, Econ-100 and their choice of statistics course) and the introductory Social Work courses (190, 210, 214, 305 and 305).

Completion of the Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) prior to Admission to the Major is preferred, but it may be taken concurrently with SOWK-314 if all other course requirements are met. Students still completing required course work during the semester of application may be admitted provisionally, but will not receive permission to register for SOWK-314 until the semester is completed and they have documented successful completion of the prerequisites.

As part of their Application, students will prepare a course plan indicating their expected course load for each remaining semester until graduation. Faculty will review this plan to assess whether it meets program sequencing requirements and whether it appears manageable.

A. 2. 3. Evidence of Successful Involvement in Community Service

Students demonstrate their successful involvement in community service by providing their final evaluation from Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312), along with identifying other volunteer or internship experiences they may have completed. Students are encouraged to build their experiences and their resume by participating in a wide range of service activities.

A. 2. 4. Adequate Mastery of Written and Verbal Skills

Competence in written and oral communication is an essential social work skill. Students who struggle in this area may be required to take additional English/Speech courses or may be referred to the Center for Academic Success for ongoing support and tutoring. In addition to performance in courses already completed, faculty will review the essay questions in the Application to identify obvious writing problems.

A. 2. 5. Personal and Academic Characteristics

Evidence of personal and academic characteristics which are conducive to successful Social Work education and practice may be considered by the faculty in assessing readiness for Admission to the Major. Such characteristics include reliability, time management, consistency of performance, successful coping with the ordinary personal responsibilities, and a constructively critical openness to new ideas and experiences. The Department faculty will review the essays in the Application, input from the student’s advisor, and any other available information to develop their joint professional opinion about the student’s readiness to continue in the major.
V. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

A. 2. 6. Transfer Students

Transfer students applying for the major must have met the standards described in Section IV. A. A. of this Handbook; they should be prepared to document the full range of their classroom and field experiences and they should have met with their advisor to prepare a Substitution and Waiver form to cover any requirements not completed at Minnesota State Mankato.

A. 2. 7. Codes of Ethics

As part of their Application, students will attest that they have read and agree to be bound by the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Minnesota Board of Social Work licensure law.

A. 2. 8. Legal Issues

Students who are admitted to the major must be in good standing with the University. Students who have criminal convictions or other possible impediments to professional practice or employment must discuss these issues with their advisor and, in some circumstances, with the faculty as a whole. Prior convictions do not automatically preclude continuation in the major, but they may make it difficult or impossible to find Senior Practicum placements or to obtain licensure. Students should be aware that SOWK-312 and SOWK-455 require criminal background checks as does the application for licensure; it will not be possible or professional for students to attempt to conceal legal issues.

A. 3. Application to the Major Procedure

The Application to the Major is available on the department website and should be reviewed carefully by each student well prior to the deadline, questions should be addressed with the student’s advisor, and neatly organized materials should be submitted prior to the deadline to the Department secretary. All materials should be placed in a manila folder with the student’s name printed neatly on the tab.

A. 3.1. Completed Application for the Major Packet

There is a checklist in the Application packet that identifies all of the required material. Incomplete or disorganized applications will result in delays in review or delayed/denied admission.
V. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

A. 3. 2. Decision-Making

Approximately 2-3 weeks after the application deadline, the faculty members will meet to discuss each application individually and make a collective academic and professional decision about the students’ readiness to be admitted to the major.

A. 3. 3. Admissions Decisions

After the application materials have been reviewed by the Department, the Admissions Coordinator will inform the students as to which of the following possible decisions applies to their application. A formal letter is sent to each student at the address provided in their application.

- **Accepted into the Major**: Applicants have met all criteria for admission and are informed that they will be given permission to register for SOWK-441 for the following semester.

- **Accepted with Conditions**: Applicants are accepted into the major pending completion of specified criteria. Students will be required to document to the Admissions Coordinator that they have completed any deficiencies prior to receiving permission to register for SOWK-441. Typical incomplete components of the application include current course grades and current participation in fieldwork. This is the most common admission decision, as most applicants are currently completing some required coursework.

- **Accepted but Delayed**: Applicants have met the requirements for admission but have been delayed for at least one semester. This delay could be at the student’s request (e.g., the student is doing an international experience the next semester and is applying for admission for the semester after their return) or could be a class size issue based on the number of applicants and the student’s comparative readiness to move forward in the program.

- **Admission Delayed**: Applicants have significant deficiencies in their applications and are encouraged to address these deficiencies before re-applying to the major. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor to develop a plan for resolving any application issues and to discuss any issues noted by the faculty. Students may reapply once they have addressed these concerns.

- **Admission Denied**: Applicants do not meet the criteria for admission to the major and do not provide any evidence that they will be able to meet those criteria in the foreseeable future. Students denied admission should meet with their advisor to review the concerns about their application and to consider exploring other possible majors.
V. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

A. 3. 4. Appeals Procedure

Procedures for appealing the decision of the Department regarding a student’s application to the major can be found in this Handbook in Section VII: Student Rights and Responsibilities.

V. B. Admission to Senior Practicum and the Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450/455) and Retention in the Program

B.1. General Information

The Social Work Department Faculty is responsible to assure that the students entering the Senior Practicum (SOWK-455) meet at least the minimum standards required by the Minnesota Board of Social Work and the Council on Social Work Education, and the expectations of the profession. The faculty takes this responsibility seriously because the students enrolled in Senior Practicum will have access to consumers of social and human service agencies. The Social Work profession and Minnesota Statutes require that all consumers have the right to receive competent and ethical services. Therefore, all students entering into Senior Practicum will meet all of the requirements outlined in this handbook and in the Field Manual.

Senior Practicum (SOWK-455) and Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450) have been designated as the Capstone for completion of the Bachelor of Science in Social Work (BSSW) degree at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Successful completion of Senior Practicum and Integrative Seminar requirements (attendance, participation, assignments, and documentation) will meet the Capstone expectation of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Concurrent enrollment is required.

The requirement for completion of Senior Practicum and Integrative Seminar is never waived nor are substitutions permitted. It is completed during the student’s senior year (usually the last semester of attendance at MSU) after Practice I, II, and III are completed. In conjunction with Senior Practicum the students will be enrolled in Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450) and Practice IV (SOWK-447).

B. 2. Application Date:

The student’s application to Senior Practicum is submitted to the Department the semester prior to the semester in which the student wishes to enroll in Senior Practicum. (Fall Semester students will submit their applications during the previous Spring Semester. Spring students will submit their applications during the previous Fall Semester). The Senior Practicum application is to be delivered to the Social Work Office by noon on the Friday deadline. The specific dates will be posted on the departmental bulletin boards and on the website and announced in classes. Students who will be off-campus in the semester preceding their anticipated enrollment should submit their applications in advance to the Practicum Coordinator. If students want to explore placements beyond the University’s southern Minnesota service area, they should be in touch with the Practicum coordinator at least two semesters prior to enrolling in SOWK 455.
V. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

B. 3. Criteria for Admission

1. Completion of all General Education requirements, and all social work required courses through Practice III (SOWK-445). All incompletes and in-progresses must be removed prior to admission. Normally the student will be ready to graduate at the completion of Senior Practicum; exceptions should be reviewed with the student’s advisor.

2. Students are required to continue to meet a satisfactory academic achievement of 2.8 overall GPA and major GPA, with a grade of “C” or better in all required major courses.

3. Students are required to continue to demonstrate personal characteristics that are required for formal admission to the program. (Please see the Application for the Major and see the Practicum Application for specific expectations of student behavior.)

4. If students have been admitted into the major with specific conditions or recommendations from the Department, the student is to provide written evidence demonstrating that the recommendations or conditions have been met.

5. Students must have received an ‘average’ or better in their Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) evaluation and/or the narrative evaluation must reflect the student’s appropriateness for the social work profession.

B. 4. Admission Procedure

Students are required to purchase and read the current edition of the Senior Practicum Manual from the Wissink Copy Shop. Students are to complete the application procedure that is outlined in the Practicum Manual. Students will submit the following in a standard size manila file folder (NOT a large envelope) to the Social Work Office by the deadline during the semester prior to anticipated enrollment:

a. A typed copy of the Practicum Application (a copy will be sent to the potential Placement agency).

b. A typed copy of the student’s resume (a copy will be sent to the potential Placement agency).

c. A copy of the graduation approval letter from the Registrar’s office.

d. A copy of the Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) final evaluation.

e. A Criminal Background Check conducted by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

f. A signed copy of the Professional Statement that is in the Senior Practicum Manual.

B. 5. Departmental Decisions

The Practicum Coordinator will review all applications and submit recommendations to the Social Work Faculty. The Social Work Faculty will discuss the Coordinator’s recommendations and will conduct an in-depth review of student applications where the Coordinator has noted concerns. The student will receive a timely and confidential notification of their decision. One of the following actions will be taken:

1. The student will be retained in the Social Work Program and admitted to Senior Practicum (SOWK-455).
V. Admissions Policies (end)

2. The student will be retained in the program and admitted conditionally to Senior Practicum pending satisfactory completion of prerequisites and continuing achievement of required GPA standards.

3. The student will be retained in the program and admitted conditionally to Practicum pending satisfactory completion of an additional Junior Field Experience.

4. The student will be retained in the program but their admission will be delayed until the next Practicum admission period.

5. The student will not be retained in the program and will not be admitted to Practicum. (This will only occur if it is the consensus of the faculty that the student’s past or ongoing academic or fieldwork performance and/or personal characteristics do not meet the program’s requirements and do not offer minimum expectations for future competent and ethical practice. The student’s application for Practicum will be rejected and the student will be assisted in selecting another major.)

All students have the right to appeal the Department’s decision. Please consult with the Student Handbook (Section VII) for appeal procedures.

B. 6. Placement Procedures

Students who are admitted to Senior Practicum will be notified of several meetings which they will be required to attend. The meetings will focus on possible practicum placements and the procedures for placement.

The student’s interest in a particular area of practice and the location of the agency for convenient housing/commuting will all be considered when possible but students are not permitted to contact agencies independently. Students will select their placements for introduction interviews after having discussed their learning interests with the Practicum Coordinator. Students must realize, however, that the agency has the right to refuse a student, the student has the right to refuse an agency, and/or the Department has the right to not place a student with a particular agency.

Students should review additional policies and procedures in the Field Practicum Manual available in the Wissink Copy Shop.
VI. Student Opportunities

A. The Social Work Club

Getting involved in a student organization can become one of the high points of college life. Meeting other students with similar interests, sharing experiences, working on projects together, raising funds for a favorite charity or field trip, attending professional meetings, sponsoring a campus activity, hosting an alumni dinner or helping to evaluate the social work program, all help build lasting friendships and provide opportunities to gain and exercise leadership skills. The Club has won a variety of campus and state awards for their community activities.

The Social Work Club is a student organization. It is encouraged and supported by the social work faculty but it is organized and administered by students. Election of officers, committee chairpersons and/or representatives to other organizations on campus is accomplished each spring term. Read the Club’s bulletin board, get additional information from the Social Work Department office or from your advisor and get involved. The Social Work Department encourages the Club President or other representative to submit a request to be on the Department meeting agenda whenever desired to provide input on student concerns.

B. Phi Alpha Honor Society

The Department sponsors a chapter of the national Social Work honor society, Phi Alpha. Membership is by invitation, based on academic achievement and a demonstrated commitment to the profession. See the Phi Alpha Bulletin Board in TN-372 for further information.

C. Scholarships

The Department offers several scholarships each year to assist students with the expenses of their education. See the website for current information about scholarships. Applications are accepted during Spring semester for the following year. While most of the scholarships are for majors well into their program of study, there are always a few set aside for beginning students and new transfer students. The Department particularly appreciates the contributions from faculty, retired faculty (the Sandee Scholarship), alumnae, and community organizations (Region IX MSSA, Downtown Kiwanis Club) that provide the financial support for scholarships.

D. The Child Welfare Training Stipend

The Department participates in a state-wide consortium of five undergraduate Social Work programs along with the University of Minnesota’s graduate program designed to prepare professional social workers for practice in Child Welfare. Students apply for the opportunity to receive financial support each semester and do their Senior Practicum in a Child Welfare setting and in return are expected to work in Child Welfare after graduation. See the Department’s Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Grant Coordinator for more information and application materials.
E. Departmental Listserv and Email

Students are encouraged most strongly to subscribe to the Department’s listserv. This email service is designed for Department faculty and students to be the most efficient way to distribute information to everyone interested in Social Work. Information about how to subscribe can be found at: http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/sowkers

Students are also encouraged to use the campus email system for all class and professional email; students and faculty have been very frustrated by the high failure rate of the various “free” commercial email servers, especially when sending out important information as attachments and to groups of recipients. Always check your “junk” mail folders to make sure that real mail has not been trashed.

F. International Opportunities

The Department continues to offer several international opportunities for students and plans to seek new arrangements and affiliations that will support our commitment to including an international focus in our curriculum. Listed below are brief summaries of several current opportunities; please see your advisor to learn more about them and about new possibilities.

F. 1. Finland (Helsinki Polytechnic)

The Department maintains a formal exchange relationship with Helsinki Polytechnic, where students from either program may student for a semester or a full year in the other country. Helsinki Polytechnic offers an English-language Social Work program with course work that substitutes for some Minnesota State Mankato requirements. Students pay their normal tuition at their home institution and can take courses applicable to their major. Other than airfare, most costs are comparable to the typical expenses associated with attendance in Mankato. See your advisor for further information.

F. 2. Bristol, England, Comparative Social Policy

The Department annually arranges for students to study comparative social policy for two-weeks in the summer in Bristol, England. Students can use this experience and preliminary work in the US to substitute for or supplement Social Welfare Issues & Policy (SOWK-412). While examining British policies and services students also interact with peers from other US institutions so cross-state comparisons can also be made. Opportunities are also available for cultural and tourist experiences in England and beyond. See your advisor for further information.

F. 3. Other International Opportunities

In addition to the Department’s international General Education course Global Responses to Human Need (SOWK-255), the Department as a whole or individual faculty sometimes facilitate other international study or travel opportunities. For example, in 2002 the Department
co-sponsored (with Political Science) a study tour of South Africa focusing on community development and AIDS programs. As opportunities become available the Department will notify students.

G. Opportunities to Contribute to the Department and College

G. 1. Participation on Faculty Search Committees

It is the policy of the Department and the University to include student members on search committees when hiring new faculty members. The search process can be an excellent learning opportunity for committed students and the process benefits from student input to hiring decisions.

G. 2. CSBS Student Advisory Council

The College of Social & Behavioral Sciences has a Student Advisory Council to assist the Dean in planning and evaluating College activities. Student representatives from the Social Work Club and from Phi Alpha serve on the Council.

H. Student Professional Involvement Opportunities

Social Work majors have many opportunities on and off campus to develop their professional skills and relationships. The Department actively facilitates student involvement in a variety of campus and statewide (and occasionally national) programs. Some examples are:
- Region IX MN Social Services Association (MSSA) Fall conference (Mankato)
- MN Social Services Association State Conference (In March in Bloomington)
- MN Conference on Social Work Education (statewide faculty/student gathering)
- Undergraduate Research Conference (campus competition for research presentations)
- National Social Work meetings such as CSWE, BPD, NASW, etc.

See your advisor for more information on dates and locations for these and other opportunities.
VII. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Grievance and Appeal Procedures for the Social Work Major

Student rights and responsibilities are addressed at the Student Resources website, including extensive links to campus policies related to student rights and responsibilities: http://www.mnsu.edu/conduct/studentresources.html

Beyond these general guidelines for Student Conduct Standards at Minnesota State University, the Social Work Department has established specific procedures intended to serve as a guide for action whenever a student or group of students has a grievance with matters pertaining to academic issues within the social work program. These might include such issues as fulfillment of course requirements, contention in regard to credit and/or grade received, evaluation and/or interpretation of curriculum requirements for the major, and acceptance or rejection of a request for admission to or retention in the social work program or to specific courses within the program.

Instructions for appealing a Department decision or a Course grade begin in the following section. Please see your advisor if you have further questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities. Your advisor will assist you in gaining clarification and/or resolution of the issue of concern. The Department procedures are modeled after the Minnesota State Mankato Grade Appeals Process.

A. 1. Introduction

On occasion a student may disagree with a faculty decision regarding a grade that the student has received or with a departmental decision regarding the student’s acceptance into the program or retention in the program. Prior to initiating the formal processes described below, students are encouraged to meet informally with the instructor and/or with their advisor to attempt to resolve the matter. The formal process for appealing a grade is clearly spelled out on the campus policy website: http://www.mnsu.edu/supersite/administration/basic-stuff/academics.html#gradeappeal That process is also summarized in Steps 1-4 below. In the situation where a student disagrees with a departmental decision the process for requesting a department meeting is spelled out below. In other situations where students have a grievance they may petition the department for review of the issue; the faculty will vote on whether to consider the grievance.

PROCEDURE: A formal grade appeal will be reviewed in the following manner. Note that the student should keep a copy of all written materials submitted and a log of all contacts regarding the issue. The student should follow the formal process carefully, meeting all deadlines and providing complete information and appropriate copies to all parties.

STEP 1: The student submits a written grade appeal to the instructor; this appeal should contain whatever documentation is needed to support the student’s claim and should state the change in grade that the student is requesting. Within two weeks the instructor shall respond to the student in writing. If the student is not satisfied with the response he/she may proceed to Step 2.
VII. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (end)

department chairperson is the instructor whose grade is being appealed the student shall proceed to Step 3.

**STEP 2:** The student submits a written grade appeal to the department chairperson with a copy to the instructor. In addition to the material presented in Step 1, the new appeal should also contain a summary of the efforts made with the instructor to resolve the matter. The student, the instructor, and the chairperson may meet to discuss the appeal if necessary. Within two weeks the departmental chairperson will respond to the student in writing with a copy to the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the response he/she may proceed to Step 3.

**STEP 3:** The student submits a written appeal to the Dean of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences with copies to the chairperson and to the instructor. Again, this appeal shall contain the documentation regarding the disagreement plus a summary of the efforts made with both the instructor and the chairperson in Steps 1 & 2. The Dean may review the materials or appoint a College Grade Appeals Committee to conduct the review; the student will receive a response within two weeks with copies to the chairperson and to the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the response he/she may proceed to Step 4.

**STEP 4:** The process continues with an appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs with copies to the Dean, chairperson, and instructor. The Vice President may involve a University Grade Appeals Committee for advice and both the student and the instructor shall be allowed to make a rebuttal of the committee’s record. The decision of the Vice President is final and copies will be sent to the student, Dean, chairperson, and instructor.

**A. 2. Appealing Department Decisions**

Students who wish to appeal a Department decision (denied admission, denied retention, etc.) must first consult informally with their advisor; if the students choose to proceed, they must begin with a written request for reconsideration delivered to the Department Chairperson who will then schedule a meeting with the Department faculty to review the request. The process may then proceed following Steps 3 and 4 listed under A. 1. Grievance procedure (above).
Appendix A

Council on Social Work Education
Educational Policy Statement from EPAS
CSWE, 2001 (with subsequent revisions)

Educational Policy

1. Purposes

1.0 Purposes of the Social Work Profession

The social work profession receives its sanction from public and private auspices and is the primary profession in the development, provision, and evaluation of social services. Professional social workers are leaders in a variety of organizational settings and service delivery systems within a global context. The profession of social work is based on the values of service, social and economic justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, and integrity and competence in practice. With these values as defining principles, the purposes of social work are:

• To enhance human well-being and alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice.
• To enhance the social functioning and interactions of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by involving them in accomplishing goals, developing resources, and preventing and alleviating distress.
• To formulate and implement social policies, services, and programs that meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.
• To pursue policies, services, and resources through advocacy and social or political actions that promote social and economic justice.
• To develop and use research, knowledge, and skills that advance social work practice.
• To develop and apply practice in the context of diverse cultures.

1.1 Purposes of Social Work Education

The purposes of social work education are to prepare competent and effective professionals, to develop social work knowledge, and to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems. Social work education is grounded in the profession’s history, purposes, and philosophy and is based on a body of knowledge, values, and skills. Social work education enables students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession for competent practice.

1.2 Achievement of Purposes

Among its programs, which vary in design, structure, and objectives, social work education achieves these purposes through such means as:

• Providing curricula and teaching practices at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and related disciplines.
• Providing curricula that build on a liberal arts perspective to promote breadth of knowledge, critical thinking, and communication skills.
• Developing knowledge.
• Developing and applying instructional and practice-relevant technology.
• Maintaining reciprocal relationships with social work practitioners, groups, organizations, and communities.
• Promoting continual professional development of students, faculty, and practitioners.
• Promoting interprofessional and interdisciplinary collaboration.
• Preparing social workers to engage in prevention activities that promote well-being.
• Preparing social workers to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
• Preparing social workers to evaluate the processes and effectiveness of practice.
• Preparing social workers to practice without discrimination, with respect, and with knowledge and skills related to clients’ age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
• Preparing social workers to alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice.
• Preparing social workers to recognize the global context of social work practice.
• Preparing social workers to formulate and influence social policies and social work services in diverse political contexts.

2. Structure of Social Work Education
2.0 Structure
Baccalaureate and graduate social work education programs operate under the auspices of accredited colleges and universities. These educational institutions vary by auspices, emphasis, and size. With diverse strengths, missions, and resources, social work education programs share a common commitment to educate competent, ethical social workers.

The baccalaureate and master’s levels of social work education are anchored in the purposes of the social work profession and promote the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. Baccalaureate social work education programs prepare graduates for generalist professional practice. Master’s social work education programs prepare graduates for advanced professional practice in an area of concentration. The baccalaureate and master’s levels of educational preparation are differentiated according to (a) conceptualization and design, (b) content, (c) program objectives, and (d) depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skills. Frameworks and perspectives for concentration include fields of practice, problem areas, intervention methods, and practice contexts and perspectives.

Programs develop their mission and goals within the purposes of the profession, the purposes of social work education, and their institutional context. Programs also recognize academic content and professional experiences that students bring to the educational program. A conceptual framework, built upon relevant theories and knowledge, shapes the breadth and depth of knowledge and practice skills to be acquired.

2.1 Program Renewal
Social work education remains vital, relevant, and progressive by pursuing exchanges with the practice community and program stakeholders and by developing and assessing new knowledge and technology.

3. Program Objectives
Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts and contains a coherent, integrated professional foundation in social work. The graduate advanced curriculum is built from the professional foundation. Graduates of baccalaureate and master’s social work programs demonstrate the capacity to meet the foundation objectives and objectives unique to the program. Graduates of master’s social work programs also demonstrate the capacity to meet advanced program objectives.

3.0 Foundation Program Objectives
The professional foundation, which is essential to the practice of any social worker, includes, but is not limited to, the following program objectives. Graduates demonstrate the ability to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients’ age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
5. Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues.

B6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.

M6. Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.

7. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.

8. Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.

9. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
10. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
11. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems.

1 Items preceded by a B or M apply only to baccalaureate or master’s programs, respectively.
and seek necessary organizational change.

3.1 Concentration Objectives
Graduates of a master’s social work program are advanced practitioners who apply the knowledge and skills of advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. They analyze, intervene, and evaluate in ways that are highly differentiated, discriminating, and self-critical. Graduates synthesize and apply a broad range of knowledge and skills with a high degree of autonomy and proficiency. They refine and advance the quality of their practice and that of the larger social work profession.

3.2 Additional Program Objectives
A program may develop additional objectives to cover the required content in relation to its particular mission, goals, and educational level.

4. Foundation Curriculum Content
All social work programs provide foundation content in the areas specified below. Content areas may be combined and delivered with a variety of instructional technologies. Content is relevant to the mission, goals, and objectives of the program and to the purposes, values, and ethics of the social work profession.

4.0 Values and Ethics
Social work education programs integrate content about values and principles of ethical decision making as presented in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. The educational experience provides students with the opportunity to be aware of personal values; develop, demonstrate, and promote the values of the profession; and analyze ethical dilemmas and the ways in which these affect practice, services, and clients.

4.1 Diversity
Social work programs integrate content that promotes understanding, affirmation, and respect for people from diverse backgrounds. The content emphasizes the interlocking and complex nature of culture and personal identity. It ensures that social services meet the needs of groups served and are culturally relevant. Programs educate students to recognize diversity within and between groups that may influence assessment, planning, intervention, and research. Students learn how to define, design, and implement strategies for effective practice with persons from diverse backgrounds.

4.2 Populations-at-Risk and Social and Economic Justice
Social work education programs integrate content on populations-at-risk, examining the factors that contribute to and constitute being at risk. Programs educate students to identify how group membership influences access to resources, and present content on the dynamics of such risk factors and responsive and productive strategies to redress them.

Programs integrate social and economic justice content grounded in an understanding of distributive justice, human and civil rights, and the global
interconnections of oppression. Programs provide content related to implementing strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation and to promote social and economic justice. Programs prepare students to advocate for nondiscriminatory social and economic systems.

4.3 Human Behavior and the Social Environment
Social work education programs provide content on the reciprocal relationships between human behavior and social environments. Content includes empirically based theories and knowledge that focus on the interactions between and among individuals, groups, societies, and economic systems. It includes theories and knowledge of biological, sociological, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development across the life span; the range of social systems in which people live (individual, family, group, organizational, and community); and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being.

4.4 Social Welfare Policy and Services
Programs provide content about the history of social work, the history and current structures of social welfare services, and the role of policy in service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being. Course content provides students with knowledge and skills to understand major policies that form the foundation of social welfare; analyze organizational, local, state, national, and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery; analyze and apply the results of policy research relevant to social service delivery; understand and demonstrate policy practice skills in regard to economic, political, and organizational systems, and use them to influence, formulate, and advocate for policy consistent with social work values; and identify financial, organizational, administrative, and planning processes required to deliver social services.

4.5 Social Work Practice
Social work practice content is anchored in the purposes of the social work profession and focuses on strengths, capacities, and resources of client systems in relation to their broader environments. Students learn practice content that encompasses knowledge and skills to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This content includes engaging clients in an appropriate working relationship, identifying issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets; collecting and assessing information; and planning for service delivery. It includes using communication skills, supervision, and consultation. Practice content also includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing empirically based interventions designed to achieve client goals; applying empirical knowledge and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

4.6 Research
Qualitative and quantitative research content provides understanding of a scientific, analytic, and ethical approach to building knowledge for practice. The
content prepares students to develop, use, and effectively communicate empirically based knowledge, including evidence-based interventions. Research knowledge is used by students to provide high-quality services; to initiate change; to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery; and to evaluate their own practice.

4.7 Field Education

Field education is an integral component of social work education anchored in the mission, goals, and educational level of the program. It occurs in settings that reinforce students' identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; and promotes the development of professional competence. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated on the basis of criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program objectives.

5. Advanced Curriculum Content

The master’s curriculum prepares graduates for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. Using a conceptual framework to identify advanced knowledge and skills, programs build an advanced curriculum from the foundation content. In the advanced curriculum, the foundation content areas (Section 4, 4.0–4.7) are addressed in greater depth, breadth, and specificity and support the program’s conception of advanced practice.
The major is preparation for generalist professional social work practice. The program is accredited for baccalaureate level education by the Council on Social Work Education. This major is also excellent preparation for graduate work in social work and related fields. This accredited major meets one of the requirements for social work licensure, which is required to practice social work in most settings in MN.

Criteria for formal admission to the practice sequence are available from the social work faculty and the student handbook, as is information about course sequencing. Admission to the major requires a 2.8 overall GPA and in all supporting and foundation courses. **STUDENTS SHOULD PLAN TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THEIR SOCIAL WORK ADVISOR.**

### Social Work Intro Courses
- _190 Social Welfare Services (3) *
- _210 Intro to Social Work (3)
- _214 Community Social Service Projects (3) *

### Social Work Integrating Courses
- _305 Human Behavior (3)
- _312 Junior Field (5)

### Social Work Research/Policy
- _412 Social Welfare Issues & Policies (3)
- _469 Applied Social Work Research (3)

### Social Work Practice/Field Sequence
- _441 Practice I (4)
- _443 Practice II (4)
- _445 Practice III (3)
- _447 Practice IV (3)
- _411 Practicum Seminar (2)
- _418 Practicum (10)

### Electives
- _415 Child and Family Welfare (3)
- _419 Social Work & Aging (3)
- _422 Social Work & Chemical Dependency (3)
- _425 Social Work in Health (3)
- _427 Social Work & Domestic Violence (3)

### Foundation Courses (required)
- _101 Sociology (3) *
- _100 Ethnic Studies (3) *
- _100 Biology (4) *
- _235 Education Studies=KSP(3)*
- _100 Economics (3) *
- _111 Political Science (3) *
- Statistics Option
  - _Sociology 202 (3) *
  - _Psychology 201 (4)
  - _Health Sciences 475 (3)

### International Opportunities
- _SOWK 255 Global Response to Human Need (3)

### Study Abroad Opportunities
- _Finland Exchange Program
- _Bristol International Credit Earning Programme

### Review the Careers Booklet for additional suggestions for electives.

### Electives
- _430 Social Work & School Setting (3)
- _432 Social Work & Disabilities (3)
- _485 Topics (3)
- _495 Honors Paper (1-3)
- _497 Internship (1-10)

The information listed comes from the University Bulletin and any discrepancies defer to the bulletin. This document is available in alternative format to individuals with disabilities by calling Student Relations, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences at (507) 389-6306 (V) or (800) 627-3529 (MRS/TTY). Job Placement & Occupational Outlook Website:  [http://www.mnsu.edu/dept/cdc](http://www.mnsu.edu/dept/cdc)
First Year
First year general education electives should include English 101-102 and the rest should be distributed across the colleges, bearing in mind that most of the social work foundation courses (e.g., Sociology, Biology, etc.) and two of the social work introductory courses (SOWK-190 & SOWK-214) also meet general education requirements. These courses can be taken either semester of the first year. Please work closely with your SOWK advisor!

- Sociology 101 Intro to Soc (3cr)*
- Biology 100 Our Nat World (4cr)*
- GenEd Elective (6cr)*
- SOWK-190 Social Welfare Services (3cr)*
- GenEd Electives (13cr)*

Second Year
By the end of the second year, students should have completed their general education courses and their foundation courses for the major. These courses can be taken either semester of the second year.

- SOWK 210 Intro to Social Work (3cr)
- GenEd Electives (13cr)*
- SOWK 214 Comm Social Svc Proj (3cr) *
- Pol Sci 111 US Govt (3cr) *
- Econ 100 Intro to Economics*  
- EdStudies/KSP 235 Human Devel (3cr) * 
- EthStu 100 Amer Racial Minorities (3cr)*
- GenEd Elective (3cr) *

Third Year
During the first semester of the third year students will apply for formal admission to the major -- those accepted will proceed on immediately with the Practice sequence and the senior year Practicum.

- SOWK 305 Hum Behavior (3cr)
- SOWK 312 Junior Field (5cr)++
- Statistics Requirement (3-4cr)
- Electives (8cr)  
- (Apply to the Major)
- SOWK 441 Practice I (4cr)++
- SOWK 412 Soc Welf Issues & Policy (3cr)  
- SOWK 4xx Elective (3cr)
- Electives (6cr)

Fourth Year
The required SOWK-Elective can be taken either at the end of the third year or the beginning of the fourth year. Students may take more than one of the 400-level SOWK electives.

- SOWK 443 Practice II (4cr)++
- SOWK 445 Practice III (3cr)++
- SOWK 469 Appl SOWK Research (3cr)
- SOWK 4xx Elective (3cr)
- Elective (4cr)  
- (Apply for Practicum)
- SOWK 447 Practice IV (3cr) ++
- SOWK 455 Practicum (10cr) ++
- SOWK 450 Integrative Seminar (2cr) ++

* indicates General Education  
++ indicates Permission required
This 2+ year curriculum presumes that students seeking to enter into a professional major have already accomplished the following before arriving at MSU: (1) completed their general education requirements, and (2) completed their social work foundation courses (most could be part of a well-planned general education). Students not prepared to start toward their major upon arrival would need to spend at least a semester resolving deficiencies. Please work closely with your SOWK advisor!

**Preliminary Summer**
Most students will need to use at least one summer to complete the major in two years; the summer could occur either prior to the start of the Third Year (as shown) or between the Third and Fourth years

SOWK 190 Social Welfare Services (3cr)*
SOWK 210 Introduction to SOWK (3cr)
(complete foundation deficiencies)*

**Third Year**
Students should have completed their Foundation required courses by the end of the first semester of the Junior year (Biology, Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Ethnic Studies, Educational Studies/KSP, and the Statistics Option). During the first semester of the third year students will apply for formal admission to the major -- those accepted will proceed on immediately with the Practice sequence and the senior year Practicum.

SOWK 214 Comm Soc Svc Pro (3cr)*
SOWK 305 Human Behavior (3cr)
SOWK 312 Junior Fieldwork (5cr)++
Electives (6cr)
(Apply to the Major)

SOWK 441 Practice I (4cr) ++
SOWK 412 Soc Welf Issues & Policy (3cr)
SOWK 4xx Elective (3cr)
Electives (6cr)

**Fourth Year**
The required SOWK elective can be taken either at the end of the third year or the beginning of the fourth year. Students may take more than one of the 400-level SOWK electives (415, 419, 422, 425, 427, 430, 432).

SOWK 443 Practice II (4cr) ++
SOWK 445 Practice III (3cr) ++
SOWK 469 Appl SOWK Research (3cr)
SOWK-4xx Elective (3cr)
Electives (4cr)
(Apply for Practicum)

SOWK 447 Practice IV (3cr) ++
SOWK 455 Practicum (10cr) ++
SOWK 450 Integrative Seminar (2cr) ++
SOWK 4xx Elective (3cr)

* indicates general education  ++ indicates permission required

Given the number of students who have jobs and families, it may be advisable for many to take a lighter course load, which would involve using more summers and semesters to reach graduation.
The objectives of the BSSW Program of the Department of Social Work have been: 1) developed based on the Mission Statements of the University and College; 2) derived from the Mission and Goals of the Department; and, 3) tied to the intent and content of the CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement (CPS, section B5.7). Each objective is referenced [in brackets] to the CSWE CPS and to the Goals of the Department.

Graduates of the MSU, M baccalaureate social work program will be able to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of generalist social work practice; [B5.7.1; Goals 1, 3, 4 & 5]

2a. Understand and practice the values and ethics of the social work profession and demonstrate identification with the profession;

b. Practice without discrimination and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity; [B5.7.2; Goals 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6]

3. Demonstrate self-awareness and understand how personal issues, values, beliefs, and behaviors may affect professional social work practice; [B5.7.3; Goals 1, 2 & 4]

4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply the strategies and skills of change that advance social and economic justice; [B5.7.4; Goals 1, 2 & 3]

5. Understand the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues; [B5.7.5; Goals 1, 2 & 5]

6. Apply the knowledge, values, and skills of generalist social work practice with micro, mezzo, and macro systems; [B5.7.6; Goals 1, 2 & 6]

7. Apply knowledge of how bio-psycho-social variables affect individual development and behavior across the life span, and use evidence-based theoretical frameworks and models to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e. families, groups, organizations and communities); [B5.7.7; Goals 1 & 4]

8. Analyze the impact of social policies on social systems, staff, and agencies, and influence policy formulation; [B5.7.8; Goals 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6]

9. Evaluate research studies and apply findings to practice, and, under supervision, evaluate their practice interventions and engage in program evaluation; [B5.7.9; Goals 1, 4, 5 & 6]

10. Use communication skills effectively with varied and diverse client populations, colleagues, and members of the community; [B5.7.10; Goals 1 & 3]

11. Use supervision and consultation appropriately for generalist social work practice; [B5.7.11; Goals 1, 2 & 4]

12. Function within the structure of organizations and delivery systems, and, under supervision, seek necessary organizational and social change. [B5.7.12; Goals 1, 3 & 6]