

Alabama A&M University



Master of Social Work Program

**Main Campus &
Lawson State Campus**

**Student Handbook
2017-2018**

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**ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY
MSW PROGRAM**

This handbook was prepared to provide information and does not constitute a contract. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in the Alabama A&M Student Handbook, those who use the Handbook should note that policies and procedures change from time to time and changes may not yet be reflected in this document. In addition, a document of this size cannot include all of the policies and information pertaining to students. If you do not find information you need, contact your advisor, program coordinator, department chair, or other appropriate individuals in the Graduate Social Work Program, or the Department of Social Work, Psychology and Counseling of Alabama A&M University.

The Master's Program in Social Work is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

WELCOME

Dear Students:

On behalf of the AAMU Social Work family, I congratulate you on your selection of Alabama A&M University as your school of choice for earning your MSW Degree. We will make every effort to make your educational experiences meaningful to your development and ensure that when you leave us, you will do so equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to positively impact the lives of your future clients.

Whether you are taking classes with us on the main campus in Huntsville, Alabama or pursuing your degree at our Lawson State Community College (LSCC) location, you have made the right choice. The AAMU Social Work Family is very special. Our highly committed, experienced and credentialed faculty will ensure that when you graduate from the MSW Program, you will do so armed with the competencies needed to engage in advanced generalist, professional social work practice. Additionally, you will emerge with an increased sense of personal insight and a greater understanding of human needs and ways in which you may be responsive to those needs. Our MSW Program is very special. We accept, appreciate and celebrate individual differences and we pride ourselves in fostering a learning environment that is not only challenging but one that is also engaging and student-centered.

The MSW Student Handbook is an invaluable resource. It outlines important policies, procedures, and resources available to students. Each student is responsible for reading the MSW Student Handbook and becoming aware of policies, procedures, regulations, and general information impacting your matriculation through the MSW Program. Please remember, however, that this Manual is a supplement to, and, not a substitute for the AAMU Graduate Handbook, which contains the official policies governing Graduate education at Alabama A&M University.

On behalf of the University administration, and the AAMU Social Work Family, I welcome you and I wish you a meaningful, productive, and successful educational experience.

Sincerely,

Tonya E. Perry

Tonya Perry, Ph.D., LMSW, Chair

Department of Social Work, Psychology and Counseling

GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

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ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

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- Turenza Smith, PhD, LMSW, MSW/BSW Program Coordinator-*Lawson State Campus*
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- Helen Egson, MSW, Coordinator of Field Instruction
- Veronica Ayers, Administrative Secretary
- Janice Holman, Admissions/Administrative Secretary

FACULTY

- Jitendra M. Kapoor - Ph.D., MSW, Associate Professor
- Samson Chama, Ph.D., MSW, Associate Professor
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SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION MISSION

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living (From the NASW Code of Ethics: Approved by the 1996 Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Assembly Code of Ethics, 1999).

ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM GOALS

The Program goals are derived from the Social Work Program's Mission and are consistent with the University and College of Education, Humanities, and Behavioral Sciences, missions and the Social Work profession. The Program goals are to:

1. Prepare students, particularly students from historically oppressed populations, for entry-level generalist social work practice at the baccalaureate level and advanced social work practice at the master's level. These students will have values, knowledge and skills for competent practice with multi-level client systems, and diverse and at-risk populations in rural and urban communities.
2. Graduate beginning and advanced social work practitioners who are responsive to the needs of diverse, and/or at-risk populations in Alabama and who can assist in the development and administration of resources, services and agencies that meet the social welfare needs of area residents.
3. Create a supportive academic environment that promotes students' professional growth and development.
4. Foster within students a commitment to professional growth, continuing education, and life-long learning.

ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM MISSION

The mission of the Alabama A & M University's Social Work Programs is to prepare students, particularly students from historically oppressed populations, for competent, ethical entry-level generalist social work practice at the baccalaureate level and advanced social work practice at the graduate level to provide competent professional social workers for urban and rural areas to strengthen the capacity of all individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities to function effectively, and to enhance the Social Work profession. This mission is consistent with that of Alabama A&M University, its College of Education, Humanities and Behavioral Sciences, Council on Social Work Education, and the values of the profession.

The Social Work Program prepares professional social workers for practice with vulnerable, underserved and oppressed populations in rural and urban communities. Through provision of a scholarly and supportive environment, the Programs teach students the values, ethics, knowledge and skills necessary to successfully challenge social and economic injustice, oppression, and discrimination, and to effectively meet the needs of at-risk and disempowered populations.

In doing so, the Programs seek to provide students with opportunities to:

- understand and apply social work knowledge, theories, and skills with diverse populations;
- develop and apply a commitment to social work values and ethics;
- generate the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational and community skills necessary for professional service; and
- apply social work knowledge and skills in the classroom, field agencies, and through service to the broader community and society.

The Social Work Program is committed to excellence in social work education through provision of a learning milieu that meets the needs of capable students who have experienced limited access to higher education. The Social Work Programs, known for a warm, supportive, and challenging climate, enhances the professional development of its students.

The Social Work Programs accomplishes its mission by:

- Promoting professional values and ethics;
- Preparing professionals at the baccalaureate and master's level who work to enhance the social functioning of individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities;
- Educating professionals who are committed to the worth of all individuals;

- Preparing professionals who can use a variety of roles to enhance the social functioning of diverse populations;
- Preparing professionals who will empower oppressed, vulnerable and underserved populations in rural and urban communities;
- Utilizing a curriculum that is relevant to the needs of the diverse populations served by graduates of the Social Work Programs; and
- Involving faculty and students in community activities, Boards, and committees to advocate for the rights of all people to have equal access to community resources, social services and opportunities.

GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM MISSION/PURPOSE

The mission of the Graduate Social Work Program at Alabama A&M University is to prepare students, particularly students from historically oppressed populations, to become ethical, competent, advanced level professionals capable of assuming a wide range of roles and functions in working with vulnerable individuals, families, groups, public and private organizations and institutions, and rural and urban communities. The concept of the advanced level social work practitioner includes the capability and commitment to address issues of poverty, oppression, discrimination, social, political and economic justice and empowerment within the context of social work knowledge, domains, skills, values and ethics. The Graduate Social Work Program emphasizes effective relationships, as the medium through which personal and societal change occurs. Relationship, based on the values of respect for individual worth and dignity, mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and the responsible handling of conflict, is critical to the effective practice of professional social work. The Graduate Social Work Program is committed to enhancing the quality of life of individuals in the region and the capacity of citizens to identify and address their own social welfare and social justice concerns and needs.

The philosophical base of the Alabama A & M University Graduate Social Work program holds the purpose of social work to be the promotion and/or restoration of mutually beneficial interactions among individuals, families, groups, organizations/institutions, communities, and society which improve the quality of life for all. The dual focus of social work is on the person in-situation, or more broadly, the client system, and its ecological system. Social work brings together and facilitates interactions between clients and their environments (ecological systems); seeks balance between the needs of client systems, available resources and their development; and enhances growth, development, problem-solving capabilities, and the optimal functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations/institutions, and communities.

The philosophical base further emphasizes respect for human dignity, the worth of the individual, and the right to self-determination: belief in the equality of all human beings; recognition of vulnerable and oppressed populations; appreciation of human diversity; recognition of the interdependence of people and of people with their environment; and a belief in the ultimate responsibility of society to meet basic human needs. Social workers are

responsible for the quality of their practice, including ethical conduct, and to seek lifelong education in social work knowledge and skills, and to endeavor to make social institutions more humane and responsive to human needs.

GRADUATE PROGRAM GOALS

The following goals guide the Graduate Social Work Program at Alabama A&M University:

1. Prepare holistically competent, advanced social work practitioners with specialized social work competencies in Children and Families or Community Mental Health who will promote human and community well-being through the ethical application of social work knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes and behaviors to multi-systemic interventions with individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities in rural and urban contexts.
2. Prepare holistically competent, advanced social work practitioners with specialized social work competencies in Children and Families or Community Mental Health who will employ an EPSE (ecological perspective, problem solving model and empowerment perspective) framework and critical thinking skills to apply appropriate theories and evidence-based knowledge to multi-level interventions responsive to the needs of diverse client systems in rural and urban contexts.
3. Prepare students with extended, competency-based, advanced generalist and specialized knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes and behaviors in the domains of values and ethics; diversity and difference; human rights and social, economic and environmental justice; research; policy; multi-systemic engagement, assessment and intervention; and evaluation.
4. Prepare holistically competent, advanced social work practitioners with specialized knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes who demonstrate a respect for all persons, are committed to life-long learning and are knowledgeable of the social context of social work practice, to include the dynamics of community and organizational change, the forms and mechanisms of oppression, and interconnections between social policy, social, economic and environmental justice and vulnerable populations in rural and urban contexts locally, nationally and globally.

GRADUATE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The MSW Program objectives are derived from its goals and CSWE competencies. The objectives are to:

1. Prepare MSW graduates who have internalized social work values and ethics and who demonstrate the application of these standards in their professional practice.
2. Prepare MSW graduates who will utilize (a) the EPPSE (ecological perspective, problem solving process model and the empowerment perspective); (b) conceptual frameworks in direct practice, policy, planning and administration; and who will apply critical thinking skills, synthesize and apply appropriate theories and knowledge to multiple levels of interventions in meeting needs, and addressing problems with a wide range of client systems-including individuals, families, groups, public and private organizations, and rural and urban communities.
3. Prepare MSW graduates who have acquired knowledge, values, ethics and skills of the professional foundation and who will apply the knowledge, skills values and ethics of the generalist social work perspective with systems of all sizes.
4. Prepare MSW graduates who demonstrate critical thinking skills, who have acquired knowledge and who will apply this knowledge, including evidence-based theoretical frameworks in their professional practice.
5. Prepare MSW graduates who understand and can interpret the history and current structures and issues of the social work profession.
6. Prepare MSW graduates who understand and appreciate human diversity and understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination as well as change strategies and skills that advance social and economic justice, and who are committed to practice on behalf of the poor, historically oppressed populations, oppressed and other socially disadvantaged and vulnerable people and who will work toward the elimination of social and economic injustices, including poverty, oppression, discrimination, and stereotyping.
7. Prepare MSW graduates who demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills of social work practice, including the professional use of self, relationship and communication skills, and the differential use of communication skills with a variety of client populations, colleagues and the community at large.
8. Prepare MSW graduates who critically analyze, synthesize and apply knowledge of human behavior in the social environment, including the positive values of diversity, the interrelatedness of the biological, psychological, sociological and cultural systems, and environmental influences on diverse populations.
9. Prepare MSW graduates who apply theoretical frameworks to understand client systems, and the interaction between client systems (individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities).

10. Prepare MSW graduates who are knowledgeable about the research processes and who use research applications to assess, improve, monitor and evaluate. MSW graduates apply research findings to social work practice, conduct empirical evaluations of their own practices and those of relevant systems--contributing to the development of theory and the social work knowledge base.
11. Prepare MSW graduates who: (a) understand and interpret social welfare history and social welfare policies and services, including the nature and scope of politics, power and bureaucracy; (b) analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies; and (c) demonstrate skills for influencing policy formation and implementing strategies of advocacy.
12. Prepare MSW graduates who have the knowledge, values, ethics, and skills in foundation areas and who synthesize and apply these standards in the social work field.
13. Prepare MSW graduates who use and provide supervision, consultation and state-of-the-art technology appropriate to advanced practice in concentration areas.
14. Prepare MSW graduates who function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.
15. Prepare MSW graduates who critically apply knowledge of rural and urban populations in interventions with vulnerable individuals, groups, families and organizations in rural and urban communities throughout Alabama and across regional, national and international boundaries.
16. Attract, recruit, prepare and graduate MSW students from historically oppressed populations to assume leadership roles in the profession of social work.

GRADUATE PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Upon graduation from the Graduate Social Work Program at Alabama A&M University, students will be able to:

1. Apply knowledge, skills, values and ethics in practice with vulnerable, underserved and oppressed populations at the micro, mezzo and macro levels.
2. Understand the history of social welfare and the development of the profession of social work and appreciate the profession's commitment to social and economic justice.
3. Apply the principles and techniques of generalist social work practice in planning interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
4. Use a problem-solving generalist framework to understand the interactions among and between individuals and social systems for planning appropriate interventions.

5. Demonstrate the abilities to apply logic and reason inductively and deductively, as a means for a world-view perspective based on analytical and critical thinking.
6. Demonstrate competence in applying practice theories, utilizing a professional value base to describe, assess and select interventions with diverse populations.
7. Demonstrate competency in implementing planned change, developing preventive interventions, advocating for underserved, vulnerable populations and oppressed groups, and selecting strategies of change that advance social and economic justice.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual developmental behavior, articulate the interdependence of social systems, resources, capacities, opportunities and diversity from an eco-systems perspective.
9. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to generalist practice for professional development, and practice evaluation.
10. Demonstrate ability to adapt research methodology to understand and evaluate the practitioner's own practice, institutional setting, and field of practice.
11. Demonstrate ethical responsibility in the workplace-to include clients, colleagues, the social work profession, and society as specified by the Professional Social Work Codes of Ethics.
12. Recognize and respond appropriately to the unique characteristics, decisions, strengths and resources of diverse populations.

CSWE COMPETENCIES

2015 EPAS 9 Core Competencies & Component Behaviors

Competency 1- Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Component Behaviors:

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

Competency 2- Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Component Behaviors:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

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

Component Behaviors:

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

Competency 4 –Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Component Behaviors:

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

Competency 5 –Engage in Policy Practice

Component Behaviors:

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

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

Component Behaviors:

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

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

Component Behaviors:

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

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

Component Behaviors:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

Component Behaviors:

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

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for the MSW Program, applicants must submit documents demonstrating they have:

1. A grade point average of 2.75 for the two year program and 3.00 for advanced standing or more (on a 4.0 scale) and fulfillment of the general requirements for admission to the School of Graduate Studies at Alabama A & M University.
2. A Bachelors Degree from an accredited College or University.
3. Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work.
4. Written two essays, not to exceed 500 words each on the following topics:
 - a: Reasons for pursuit of the MSW degree to become a professional social worker.
 - b: Identify a major contemporary social problem that is of central concern of the profession of social work. State why, in your opinion, it is a problem for the profession, and how you would intervene to ameliorate and/or eradicate this problem.
5. Provided three letters of reference forms (included in on-line MSW application package) that reflect the applicant's academic, professional potential and ethical and value orientation. At least 1 reference should be from a current or former professor, and another reference should be from a current or former supervisor. If it is not possible to get a reference from a supervisor, the applicant should obtain a reference from a second professor.
6. A broad liberal arts background with a minimum of 24 credits in the social behavioral and natural sciences and humanities. It is recommended that the major undergraduate preparation of applicants should be in one of the following:
 - Social Work
 - Psychology, Sociology, or other Social Sciences
 - Other human service areas (health sciences, teaching, etc.)
 - Liberal arts (e.g., humanities, philosophy, history, literature)

There is no specific undergraduate major required to qualify for graduate study in social work, but applicants are expected to have preparation in the liberal arts, through undergraduate coursework in the social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and life sciences. At least 24 credits are required in these areas, as specified in the application packet and Student Handbook. **Any deficits in these requirements must be made up prior to admission.**

Students whose native language is not English are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and **score a minimum of passing 500** points to be accepted into the

program. This policy applies to students residing where English is not the native language, even if English has been the medium of instruction.

Character and Personal Fitness for the Profession

The Admissions Committee requires that candidates submit two essays and three references, used to gauge their fitness for the program and profession. The essays should provide information about the candidate's background, qualification, experience, reasons for choosing social work, perceptions of the profession, and perceptions of self as a social worker. The essays and the personal interview (when requested) help the Admission Committee gain insights into the motivation, self-awareness, and value assumptions of the candidate, as well as the candidate's ability to plan, organize, and conceptualize oral and written communications.

Candidates must also submit references from three individuals with their application. These individuals may be former professors, supervisors, colleagues, or others who are, or have been, in a position to evaluate the candidate's personal and intellectual capabilities (for example, completing academic and work assignments, dedication, sensitivity, emotional maturity, self-reliance, flexibility, leadership ability, capability to develop positive relationships, and other professional responsibilities). At least one reference must be from a current or former professor. A second reference should be from a current or former supervisor; if a reference from a supervisor is not possible, then the applicant should obtain a reference from another professor.

Work and Volunteer Experience

Work experience (either paid or volunteer) and prior field practice are also considered in the student's application. It is strongly preferred that applicants have some work or volunteer experience in human services.

The Graduate Program does not grant social work course credit for life or work experiences.

ANNUAL APPLICATION PREFERRED DEADLINES

SUMMER ADMISSIONS - FEBRUARY 15

FALL ADMISSIONS – MARCH 1

SPRING ADMISSIONS-SEPTEMBER 15

Please Note: Admission to the Graduate Program will occur annually in summer, fall and spring.

Students are admitted in the spring and summer for Advanced Standing and Weekend Programs, and in the fall and spring for regular full-time and part-time programs.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Program Concentrations

The Graduate Social Work Program provides an integrated curriculum that leads to the Master of Social Work. Students will have a solid base in the professional foundation courses: social welfare policy; human behavior and the social environment; social work practice; research; and field instruction. Students will have the opportunity to select an advanced concentrations/specializations:

- 1: Family & Child Welfare
- 2: Community Mental Health

The field instruction component of the program will complement the student's concentration.

Sixty Hour (Two Year Full Time and Three and Four Year Part-Time) Program

The Master of Social Work (MSW) degree requires 60 semester hours over a two year period of full-time study. For part-time students, there is an extended three or four year program. There is also a Weekend Program that allows students to complete the first 24 credit hours of the program over three consecutive semesters on Saturdays (beginning in the summer); students next complete a summer field practicum during regular business hours and take another Saturday class; and then complete the remaining 30 credit hours in the regular weekday program. The 60 hours involves 48 hours of classroom instruction and 12 hours of field instruction in community-based social welfare agencies. Students may be admitted to the main campus or Lawson State Community College Satellite Program.

Advanced Standing

Applicants with a B.S.W. degree from a CSWE-accredited program earned within the past five years and a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA may apply for advanced standing. Qualified applicants will be required to take 39 semester hours, instead of the 60 hours required for the two-year program. Of these 39 hours, 8 are required in field instruction. **The Advanced Standing Program requires that students complete the 39 credit hours during three**

consecutive semesters. Students may be admitted to the main campus or Lawson State Community College Satellite Program.

In order to complete the degree in the spring semester, the students should enroll in three bridging courses (SWK 522, SWK 523, SWK 587: eight credits) in the summer, prior to the regular fall semester.

CURRICULUM FOR THE MSW PROGRAM

Course credit for life experience is not granted. In addition to the successful completion of classroom and field instruction, students are required to pass a written comprehensive examination, or students have the option to write a thesis instead.

REQUIRED FOUNDATION COURSES: REGULAR AND WEEKEND PROGRAMS

SWK 500: Social Work Practice I	3 sem. hours
SWK 501: Social Work Practice II	3 sem. hours
SWK 510: Social Welfare Policy & Services I	3 sem. hours
SWK 511: Social Welfare Policy & Services II	2 sem. hours
SWK 520: HBSE I	3 sem. hours
SWK 521: HBSE II	3 sem. hours
SWK 522: Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Diversity	3 sem. hours
SWK 523: Rural - Urban Social Welfare & Social Work	2 sem. hours
SWK 530: Applied Social Work Research	3 sem. hours
SWK 581: Field Practicum & Seminar I	<u>4 sem. hours</u>
Total Hours Foundation	29 sem. hours

The weekend program is designed for students to take only foundation year courses on Saturday—with the exception of SWK 581-Field Practicum.

REQUIRED FOUNDATION COURSES: ADVANCED STANDING PROGRAM**

SWK 522: Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Diversity	3 sem. hours
SWK 523: Rural - Urban Social Welfare & Social Work	2 sem. hours
SWK 587: Social Work Empowerment	<u>3 sem. hours</u>
Total Hours Foundation Bridge Courses	8 sem. hours

(**Advanced Standing students enroll in these courses summer or spring semesters—depending upon enrollment period.)

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION AND THESIS: SUMMARY

Students are required to take and pass a written comprehensive examination during the semester in which they expect to graduate, and the examination should be taken concurrent with SWK 681 (Field III) and SWK 689 (Integrative Seminar). Any exceptions **must** be approved a semester in advance of the exam via written permission of the student's Advisor and the MSW Program Coordinator. Advanced Standing students must have 24 credit hours completed to take the examination; all other students must have 42 credit hours completed. Students must pass the comprehensive examination with a 70% or higher.

Students may write a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive examination. Thesis policies and procedures may be obtained from the student's advisor and the School of Graduate Studies. Thesis information may also be found in course descriptions for SWK 631 and SKW 632.

ADVANCED CONCENTRATION COURSES

SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY & SERVICES

SWK 610: Family & Child Welfare Policy.	3 sem. hours
SWK 616: Issues & Policies in Community Mental Health	3 sem. hours
SWK 652: Social Work & the Law	2 sem. hours
SWK 658: International Social Welfare & Social Work	2 sem. hours

HUMAN BEHAVIOR & THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

SWK 663: Substance Abuse	2 sem. hours
SWK 667: Social Work Practice and Aging	2 sem. hours

RESEARCH

SWK 630: Needs Assessment & Program Evaluation	3 sem. hours
SWK 631: Research Project	1-3 sem. hours
SWK 632: Thesis	1-3 sem. hours

DIRECT PRACTICE

SWK 600: Social Work Interventions with Vulnerable Clients	3 sem. hours
SWK 601: Social Work Practice with Groups	3 sem. hours
SWK 602: Social Work Practice Interventions in Mental Health	3 sem. hours
SWK 621: Family Theories and Process	3 sem. hours
SWK 641: Crisis Intervention & Short Term Psychotherapy	2 sem. hours
SWK 642: Sexual Abuse Assessment & Treatment	2 sem. hours
SWK 643: Social Work Practice with Children & Adolescents	2 sem. hours
SWK 644: HIV/AIDS: Critical Issues	2 sem. hours
SWK 660: Assessment of Individuals in Social Work Practice	3 sem. hours

FIELD PRACTICUM

SWK 680: Field Practicum & Seminar II	4 sem. hours
SWK 681: Field Practicum & Seminar III	4 sem. hours

INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR
SWK 689: Integrative Seminar

3 sem. hours

INDEPENDENT STUDY
SWK 698: Independent Study

1-3 sem. hours

FULL-TIME PROGRAM FOUNDATION YEAR

Regular Program

FALL:

SWK 500: Social Work Practice I	3 sem. hours
SWK 510: Social Welfare Policies & Services I	3 sem. hours
SWK 520: Human Behavior & the Social Environment	3 sem. hours
SWK 522: Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Diversity	3 sem. hours
SWK 530: Applied Social Work Research	3 sem. hours

SPRING:

SWK 501: Social Work Practice II	3 sem. hours
SWK 511: Social Welfare Policies & Services II	2 sem. hours
SWK 521: Human Behavior & the Social Environment	3 sem. hours
SWK 523: Rural Urban Social Work	2 sem. hours
SWK 581: Field Practicum & Seminar I	4 sem. hours

WEEKEND PROGRAM - (SATURDAY COURSES)

SUMMER:

SWK 500: Social Work Practice II	3 sem. hours
SWK 520: HBSE I	3 sem. hours

FALL:

SWK 501: Social Work Practice II	3 sem. hours
SWK 521: HBSE II	3 sem. hours
SWK 530: Applied Social Work Research	3 sem. hours

SPRING:

SWK 510: Social Welfare Policy & Services I	2 sem. hours
SWK 522: Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Diversity	3 sem. hours
SWK 523: Rural Urban Social Work	2 sem. hours

SUMMER:

SWK 511: Social Welfare Policies & Services II	2 sem. hours
SWK 581: Field Practicum & Seminar I	4 sem. hours

FULL-TIME PROGRAMS: CONCENTRATION YEAR

FAMILY AND CHILD WELFARE

FALL:

SWK 600: Social Work Interventions with Vulnerable Clients	3 sem. hours
SWK 610: Family & Child Welfare Policy and Services	3 sem. hours
SWK 621: Family Theories & Processes	3 sem. hours
SWK 660: Assessment of Individuals in SW Practice	3 sem. hours
SWK 680: Field Practicum & Seminar II	4 sem. hours

SPRING:

SWK 601: Social Work Practice with Groups	3 sem. hours
SWK 630: Needs Assessment & Program Evaluation	3 sem. hours
SWK 681: Field Practicum & Seminar II	4 sem. hours
SWK 689: Integrative Seminar	3 sem. hours
SWK __ : Elective	2 sem. hours

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

FALL:

SWK 602: SWK Practice Interventions in Mental Health	3 sem. hours
SWK 616: Issues & Policies in Community Mental Health	3 sem. hours
SWK 621: Family Theories & Processes	3 sem. hours
SWK 660: Assessment of Individuals in SW Practice	3 sem. hours
SWK 680: Field Practicum & Seminar II	4 sem. hours

SPRING:

SWK 601: Social Work Practice with Groups	3 sem. hours
SWK 630: Needs Assessment & Program Evaluation	3 sem. hours
SWK 681: Field Practicum & Seminar III	4 sem. hours
SWK 689: Integrative Seminar	3 sem. hours
SWK __ : Elective	2 sem. hours

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

SWK 500: Social Work Practice I - Three semester hours. This course focuses on the history, foundation, domains and roles of social work practice. It introduces the generalist social work practice model with emphasis on an overview of the social work profession, discussion of social work values and ethics, and application of the generalist perspective to systems of all sizes. This course emphasizes micro-level social work practice with individuals and families. This course is required for all students in the 60 hour degree program. (Prerequisites: Admission to the Program)

SWK 501: Social Work Practice II - Three semester hours. Continuation of SWK 500. Explores further the roles, domains, philosophy and roles of social work practice. Basic theory, values, ethics and methods generic to social work practice at various system levels are presented with an emphasis on practice with mezzo and macro systems (e.g., families, groups organizations and communities). This course is required for all students in the 60- hour degree program. (Prerequisites: SWK 500)

SWK 510: Social Welfare Policy & Services I - Three semester hours. Examines the historical evolution of social welfare institutions; political, economic, religious, social and ideological perspectives will be analyzed. This course is required for all students in the 60- hour degree program. (Prerequisites: Admission to the Program)

SWK 511: Social Welfare Policy & Services II - Two semester hours. Continuation of SWK 510 - Social Welfare Policy & Services I. Emphasizes analytic models of welfare policies and lays framework for decision making. Contemporary issues will be discussed and international policies examined. This course is required for all students in the 60- hour program. (Prerequisites: SWK 510 or consent of Instructor)

SWK 520: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I - Three semester hours. Theories, concepts, and knowledge about human development and behavior within the context of the social environment through the study of life cycle development in the ecological system. Emphasis is on the life cycle through adolescence. Major social and cultural institutions and their impact on diverse individuals, families, groups and organizations will be examined. A multi-system conceptual framework is introduced: the ecological, problem-solving and empowerment perspectives (“EPPSE” framework). This course is required for all students in the 60-hour program. (Prerequisites: Admission to the Program)

SWK 521: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II - Three semester hours. This is the second of a two-course sequence dealing with theories, concepts and knowledge about human development, with emphasis on adult development, including old age and death. The societal impact of families, groups, and organizations on the elderly and the elderly interaction with these systems and their diverse impacts will also be discussed. This course continues to build student knowledge related to the ecological, problem-solving and empowerment perspectives. This course is required for all students in the 60- hour degree program. (Prerequisites: SWK 520, 500,510; co-requisites SWK 501, 511)

SWK 522: Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Diversity - Three semester hours. This course will introduce and sensitize students to the major concepts of culture, sub-culture, race, ethnicity and gender, cultural diversity, and pluralism and conflicts caused ethnocentrism, discrimination and prejudice. Further, it will emphasize public policies as well as interpersonal responses and the relationship between race, ethnicity, gender, diversity and social work practice. Emphasis is placed on the examination of major ethnic sub-cultures as well as sub-cultural groupings based on such factors as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities and other differences in human populations. The common elements of oppressions are emphasized and prejudicial and discriminatory practices are evaluated from both micro - and macro theoretical frames of reference. This course is required for all students. (Prerequisites: Admission to the Program)

SWK 523: Rural-Urban Social Welfare & Social Work - Two semester hours. This course develops and applies theoretical knowledge and skills used in urban and rural social work. This course builds knowledge of concepts related to rural and urban social problems, policies, community organizations, administration, service delivery systems, resource allocation. Students assess the needs of rural and urban communities and suggest intervention strategies. Group and individual assignments will be used to develop teamwork, practice skills, and competencies in evaluating practice. A project involving rural-urban issues and problems, policy formation, planning, implementation, and evaluation is required. This course is required for all students. (Prerequisites: SWK 500, 510, 520, or Advanced Standing Status or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 530: Applied Social Work Research - Three semester hours. This is the first of two research courses that build knowledge and skills related to the implementation and utilization of research in social work practice. For most students this course represents an introduction to research so key concepts related to scientific inquiry and types of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative, are highlighted. Social work ethics and values applied to research are emphasized. This course is required for all students in the 60-hour program. (Prerequisites: Admission to the Program)

SWK 581: Field Practicum & Seminar I - Four semester hours. This is the first practicum course in the three-part practicum sequence. The purpose of this sequence is to expose students to the professional application of theory practice in community-based human service organizations. This course can be taken concurrent with or subsequent to classroom instruction. The field practicum courses must be taken in sequence and is a requirement for all students. Fees are required for the following: (1) A background check (2) Professional liability insurance, and (3) National Association of Social Workers-student membership. This course requires completion of the Field Practicum Application, and other documents. (Prerequisites: SWK 500, 510, 520, 522 and 530; co-requisites SWK 501, 511, 521 and 523)

SWK 587: Social Work Empowerment - Three semester hours. This is a bridge course for Advanced Standing students to strengthen and ensure a common core of professional knowledge prior to concentration coursework. It explores the foundations, domains, values, ethics, philosophy, and roles of generalist social work, and it examines human behavior in the social environment, practice, policy, research, and field. The relationship of foundation areas to each other, and their impact on social work practice is addressed. Empowerment and strengths

perspectives are highlighted along with diversity issues (e.g. ethnicity, gender, class). Advanced Standing students must complete this course before progressing to 600-level courses. Non-advanced standing students may not take this course.

SWK 600: Social Work Intervention Strategies with Vulnerable Clients - Three semester hours. This advanced practice course focuses on relationship-building, assessment and interventions with vulnerable individuals and families from diverse backgrounds. This course examines practice theories, empowerment strategies and interventions useful with vulnerable clients (e.g., persons living in poverty, survivors of violence, trauma and natural disasters, and survivors of abuse and neglect). This course is required for all students in the Family & Child Welfare Concentration. (Prerequisites: Concentration Year Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 601: Social Work Practice with Groups - Three semester hours. Methods and skills for engaging, assessing and intervening with both task and treatment groups are explored. Concepts and ethics applied to group work are emphasized. Also discussed are therapeutic interventions and theories appropriate for use with groups. Planning, evaluating and termination issues in group work are examined. This course is required for all Direct Practice Concentration students. (Prerequisites: SWK 600 or 602, or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 602: Social Work Practice Interventions in Mental Health - Three semester hours. This advanced practice course examines critical issues faced by social workers in mental health settings. This course builds knowledge and skills related to relationship-building, assessment and interventions in mental health settings. It emphasizes practice theories and evidence-based intervention strategies with individuals. Social work values, ethics and policies applicable to mental health practice are highlighted. This course is required for all students in the Mental Health Concentration. (Prerequisites: Concentration Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 610: Family & Child Welfare Policy - Three semester hours. The predominant focus of this course is to identify, discuss and integrate family and child welfare issues and policies into the concentration of Family and Child Welfare. Although discussions will be on child welfare policies affecting children in general, emphasis will be on children with special needs, e.g. protective services, foster care and adoption. The concept of “best interest of the child” will be analyzed in depth. This course builds on the professional foundation and traces the historical development of child welfare services in the U.S. from the beginning of the 20th century until the present. Services, programs and policies will be discussed, including adoption, teen pregnancy and parenthood, children with special needs (e.g., mental illness, delinquency), foster care, and protective services for abused/neglected children. Social work values and ethics will be infused in the course and, where appropriate, examples from Alabama will be used. This course is required for all students in the Family and Child Welfare concentration. (Prerequisites: Concentration Year Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 615: Grant writing -Two semester hours. Explores various grant writing theories and skills and demonstrates practical application of the process. Students will assist agencies and organizations to apply for local, state, federal, and international grants for their programs or projects. An elective course for students in the Direct Practice Concentrations. (Prerequisites: Concentration Year Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 616: Issues & Policies in Community Mental Health - Three semester hours. Highlights social work practice issues and social welfare policy in mental health and health settings. This course emphasizes local, state, agency and national policies from which services are derived. Also examines the differential impact of race, ethnicity, gender and other dimensions of human diversity on policy formulation and service delivery. This course is required for all students in the Community Mental Health concentration. (Prerequisites: Concentration Year Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 621: Family Theories and Processes - Three semester hours. This advanced practice course explores sociological concepts of marriages and families in contemporary society; vulnerable families; family preservation; and the assessment and treatment of marriages and families. Treatment models, techniques, and strategies are studied. Social work values and ethics, research on marriages and families and the treatment thereof, and cultural diversity issues are emphasized. This course is required for all students in Direct Practice Concentrations. (Prerequisites: Concentration Year Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 630: Needs Assessment and Program Evaluation - Three semester hours. This course builds on the professional foundation courses and their need for scientific problem-solving, decision-making skills and accountability in professional social work practice. Generalist knowledge of the social work research process is the foundation upon which students will develop needs assessment and program evaluation skills. Generalist understanding of the knowledge, values, skills, ethics and issues that are associated with social work practice, policy, and human behavior perspectives will be articulated in the student's conceptualization and development of either a need assessment or a program evaluation. Additionally, these skills will be applied to a variety of social systems, conditions and interventions for the purposes of promoting, sustaining, and enhancing individuals, families, social work groups, communities, and societal well-being. Student projects will be responsive to the programmatic and evaluative needs of their current job, field placement or the profession. This course is required for all students. (Prerequisites: SWK 510, 511, 530, or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 631 and 632: Research Project/Thesis - Two to six semester hours. These courses offer students the opportunity to prepare an empirically based thesis derived from a practice problem and which evidences a significant contribution to an area of interest within their concentrations. The research problem is identified, and a plan for its investigation is developed. Upon approval by the student's Thesis Committee, and acceptance by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (see Graduate Catalog), students complete their research under the guidance of a graduate faculty member. Upon completion of the research project, the thesis is prepared and defended before the student's thesis committee for approval. (Prerequisites: Completion of all foundation courses, or Advanced Standing status, and Registration for SWK 631: Research Project). In the concentration year, all MSW students are required to register for thesis or thesis substitute, (SWK 632) or complete a comprehensive examination. A minimum of one semester must be devoted to the research project, while thesis research and development must span at least two semesters. (Prerequisites: SWK 530 or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 641: Crisis Intervention and Short Term Psychotherapy - Two semester hours. In-depth exploration of history and theory of crisis intervention in social work practice. Time-limited forms of treatment are also identified. Course content emphasizes basic crisis intervention theories, models and techniques. Application of this knowledge to assessment and treatment of individuals and families experiencing a wide variety of crises are examined, including disaster relief with diverse populations. This course also examines social work values, ethics, policies and legal issues related to crisis intervention and brief treatment. It is an elective for Direct Practice students. (Prerequisites: Concentration Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 642: Sexual Abuse: Assessment & Intervention - Two semester hours. Highlights issues of sexual abuse and rape. Emphasizes childhood sexual abuse and its effects on the developing child and the adult survivor. Protective service and treatment issues will be addressed. Content includes: assessment of sexual abuse; treatment of children and adult survivors (including individual, family and group therapy); offender treatment; and social work roles related to sexual abuse, including protective services worker, therapist, and expert witness. Building on the knowledge of human behavior and diversity, social work practice, and social welfare policy acquired in the foundation year, this course emphasizes the application of this knowledge in the area of childhood sexual abuse and rape. It is an elective for Direct Practice students. (Prerequisites: Concentration Year or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 643: Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents - Two semester hours. Provides a historical and theoretical overview of social work practice with children. Emphasizes physical, psychological, and social characteristics unique to children and adolescents. This course also explores intervention strategies and practice skills with children and adolescents in family, group, and institutional settings. It is an elective for Direct Practice students. (Prerequisites: Concentration Year Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 644: HIV/AIDS: Critical Issues - Two semester hours. Focuses on the biological, social and psychological dynamics of HIV/AIDS. It provides in-depth intervention strategies related to enhancing psychosocial functions. Students will develop a fundamental understanding of HIV/AIDS science including origins, pathogenesis, transmission, diagnosis and management of HIV/AIDS. Students will develop a firm grasp of principles and strategies of HIV/AIDS prevention, including risky behaviors. This Direct Practice elective course includes an agency visit component. (Prerequisites: Concentration Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 652: Social Work and Law - Two semester hours. Examines the judicial system and its relevancy to social welfare and social work. The focus is on skills and knowledge needed for effective participation in the legal process as a social work professional. An elective. Prerequisites: Concentration Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 658: International Social Welfare and Social Work - Two semester hours. Sensitizes students to the knowledge required in international social welfare and social work practice and international social work education. Emphasizes traditional and modern methods of social work practice in developed and developing countries. Examines macro, mezzo and micro social systems as well as the relationship between traditional technologies based on such factors as individuals, families, groups, organizations/institutions and communities; diversity and ethnicity;

research, policy formulation, and program design and implementation; evaluation and feedback, and social work practice methods. Also examines: demography, social issues/problems, community development, technology, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governmental organizations (GOs). An elective course. (Prerequisites: SWK 510, 511, 520, 521 or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 660: Assessment of Individuals in Social Work Practice - Three semester hours. This advanced practice course focuses in-depth on social work assessment of individuals, including assessment of psychopathology. Use of DSM is introduced and studied in-depth, including critical examination of its advantages and disadvantages when used by social workers. Information on etiology and treatment of psychosocial problems and mental illnesses is also presented, including concepts from several classic personality theories. Required for all students in Direct Practice Concentrations (Prerequisites: Concentration Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 663: Substance Abuse – Two semester hours. Examines the impact of substance abuse on individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Focuses on psychosocial problems of the substance abuser and those in his/her immediate environment. Also emphasized are societal responses, contributing factors, social problems, policies, programs, interventions, and needed resources. An elective course. (Prerequisites: Concentration Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 667: Social Work Practice with Aging - Two semester hours. Research and theories related to aging are discussed. Demographic issues and problems related to aging will be infused in this course, including Alzheimer's. Impact of physical and mental illness on the aged and the role of the health and mental health systems and social worker are examined. Examines engagement, assessment and intervention strategies related to practice with older adults. Elective course for Direct Practice students. (Prerequisites: Concentration Standing or Consent of Instructor)

SWK 680: Field Practicum & Seminar II - Four semester hours. This is the second course in the three-part field sequence. Fees are required for the following: (1) A background check (2) Professional liability insurance, and (3) National Association of Social Workers-student membership. This course requires completion of the Field Practicum Application, and other documents. Required for all students (Prerequisites: 581 & Concentration Standing; co-requisites SWK 621; SWK 600 or SWK 602; SWK 610 or 616)

SWK 681: Field Practicum & Seminar III - Four semester hours. This is the final course in the three-part practicum sequence. Fees are required for the following: (1) A background check (2) Professional liability insurance, and (3) National Association of Social Workers-student membership. This course requires completion of the Field Practicum Application, and other documents. Required for all students (Prerequisites: SWK 680)

SWK 689: Integrative Seminar - Three semester hours. Focuses on social work as a profession; integrates the five curriculum sequences of advanced and generalist social work practice. Emphasizes various aspects of professional practice including methods, knowledge, skills,

theories, values, ethics, research, policy, and legal issues. Required for all students. Student should enroll the semester of graduation.

SWK 698: Independent Study - One to three semester hours. Students may register for 1-3 hours of independent study with a professor competent in the area of student interest.

FIELD INSTRUCTION

Purpose:

Field instruction is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. The purpose is to teach students to apply professional knowledge, skills, and values in understanding the client delivery system and to perform the varied functions and roles of the professional social worker. The field practicum experience offers educationally-directed opportunities for students to learn by participating in the actual delivery of services to individuals, families, groups, organizations/institutions and communities. The graduate social work program offers placements in both public and private agencies in diverse areas of social work practice.

The field work models used by the Graduate Social Work Program are the concurrent and block placement. The concurrent placement is available during fall and spring semesters and the block placement is available during the summer semester only. The concurrent placement requires that 2 year students complete twenty hours per week of field practicum over three semesters for a total of nine hundred (900) clock hours, while completing required core courses. Advanced standing students complete 16 hours per week for two semesters totaling 450 clock hours, which completing required second year core courses. Summer block placement requires that students complete thirty-eight (38) hours per week of field practicum during the eight weeks of the semester for three semesters for a total of nine-hundred (900) hours.

Eligibility:

Students are eligible for foundation field placement beginning in the second semester of their first year after successful completion of the regular first semester courses: SWK 500, Social Work Practice I; SWK 510, Social Welfare Policy and Services I; SWK 520, Human Behavior and the Social Environment I; SWK 522, Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Diversity; and SWK 530, Applied Social Work Research. The rationale for only one semester of **foundation** field practicum is that students need the first semester to make the adjustment to graduate school, to become oriented to the curriculum and the other aspects of the program. Every effort is made by the field coordinator to ensure that students are placed in settings that afford opportunity to integrate micro, mezzo and macro experiences, integrate knowledge, values, ethics and skills from the classroom, and to provide as broad a range of expertise as possible.

Upon successful completion of the first year of graduate study, students are eligible for concentration field practicum which is based upon the educational objectives and learning needs of the student. All second year placements must be in the area of specialization concentration. Field practicum locations are available primarily in north Alabama, City of Birmingham, and other geographic areas. The Graduate Social Work Program has the full responsibility for

assigning students to placements according to established standards of quality field practicum. Every effort is made to accommodate student preferences; however, in some instances, this is not possible.

SWK 581, Field Practicum I focus on the development of professional foundation practice skills and is required of all regular two-year students. Student spends 20 hours per week in the field for one semester for a total of 300 clock hours.

SWK 680, Field Practicum II, and SWK 681, Field Practicum III focus on the development of advanced practice skills in each student's area of concentration. Concentration courses must be taken concurrently with the field placement or before the block placement occurs. Students spend 20 hours per week for fifteen weeks during each of two semesters for a total of 600 clock hours. Advanced standing students are required to spend 16 hours per week for a total of 450 clock hours. They will have satisfactorily completed, during their undergraduate programs, at least 450 clock hours of field practicum which the Graduate Social Work Program recognizes as a partial fulfillment of the required 900 hours.

Every effort is made to assign students to the geographical location of their choice. While personal factors will be taken into account, the primary objective of placement is the matching of the student learning needs with educational opportunities which have the best potential for promoting learning and professional development.

Full-time regular two-year students, foundation and concentration, are scheduled for Field Practicum SWK 581,680 or 681 for a total of twenty hours per week each semester. Currently, they are required to report to their field agencies on Tuesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Friday from 8-12, and/or the scheduled full work day hours of the designated agencies.

Part-time students are expected to conform to the Course Requirements Outline when requesting field practicum placement. The submission timeline requirements are the same for the foundation and concentration requests from regular two year and advanced standing students. All students must be enrolled in the designated courses, per the course requirement outline, concurrently with the field practicum. Block placements do not have a concurrent core course requirement; however, core requirements must be completed before block placements are authorized.

Summer block placements are available for students in all practicum courses. The block placements are primarily designed for part-time students who must leave from their employment to be able to satisfy field practicum curriculum requirement. Students requesting summer block placements are required to complete a total of 300 hours during an eight- week summer semester or 38 hours per week during the summer session. Students are required to report to the field agencies on Monday through Friday.

Field Seminar:

Field Seminar is a required component of all field practicum courses. It is held for one hour each week during the regular semester and two hours per week during the summer block placement.

Required Application Process:

All students are required to complete an Application for Field Placement by the appropriate deadline. This application for the foundation placement, SWK 581, Field Practicum I, must be submitted to the Coordinator of Field Instruction by September 1st during the fall semester prior to the anticipated field practicum experience. Second year students must submit their applications for SWK 680, Field Practicum and SWK 681 Field Practicum III by February 1st during the Spring semester prior to the anticipated fall semester practicum. Students desiring summer block placements must submit their applications for field practicum by February 1st, prior to the anticipated summer placement. Applications not conforming to this schedule may not be accepted. Please note the application deadlines for both Main campus and the Lawson State site.

Application Deadlines:

SWK 581 (for Spring)	September 1st
SWK 581 or SWK 680 (for Summer)	February 1st
SWK 680/ 681 (for Fall)	February 1st
SWK 581 (for Fall)-Lawson State Site	June 5th
SWK 680/681-advanced standing - All Sites	June 5th

Field Background Check:

All graduate social work students are required to complete and pass a criminal background check the semester prior to entering field placement. The background check must be secured at the expense of the student. The Coordinator of Field Instruction has further information, including applications.

Liability Insurance:

All graduate social work students are required to secure professional liability coverage prior to entering the actual field placement. This coverage must be secured at the expense of the student through the NASW Student Professional Liability Insurance Program. The Coordinator of Field Instruction has applications available. Membership in NASW is required for this all students enrolled in field instruction.

Students need to be aware that the practice of social work involves an element of personal risk. Concerns about safety of self and others should be discussed with the agency field instructor to determine effective and appropriate actions which reduce or eliminate this

concern. The faculty field liaison or Coordinator of Field Instruction should also be informed. All students are required to have a background check before an agency **interns** for field placement is scheduled. The background check information is included in the field application packet. Transportation is also required for Field Placement. A copy of the student's auto insurance and driver's license is required.

Grievance Procedures for Field Practicum:

The Department of Field Education works with behavioral or performance issues. In some cases, a student may be referred to The Professional Standards Committee for Social Work Programs. This Committee convenes as necessary to review field practicum issues where student performance or behavior may suggest non-continuance of the placement. The Department of Field Education can recommend several courses of action:

1. Continuance in the current site with specific modifications;
2. Continuation in the current site with specific modifications, specified performance standards, and a probationary time frame with specified monitoring;
3. Switching to another practicum site;
4. Changing to another practicum site with specific conditions, including specific performance standards, a specific probationary time frame and specific monitoring;
5. Non-placement of the student until the student takes specific remedial steps; and
6. Taking appropriate steps to dismiss the student from the MSW degree program.

The recommendations are addressed by the Director of Field Education or forwarded to the Coordinator of the MSW Program and Department Chair for a recommendation to the University. Student's rights are protected by the University Appeal System.

Evaluation of Students in Field Instruction:

Agency field instructors are responsible for evaluating the student's performance in the Field Practicum. Agency Field Instructors recommend satisfactory or unsatisfactory for the work done by the student during the semester. The final grade is determined by the student field performance and student practicum evaluation.

Performance criteria for students in the Field Practicum combine learning objectives derived from the program's curriculum and those which are relevant to the specific agency. Educational contracts are negotiated between the student and agency field instructor at the beginning of the field practicum. For example, required learning objectives include those related to the Professional Foundation area of the MSW curriculum and the student's chosen concentration, while other specific criteria vary from placement to placement. Students are evaluated in terms of progress made toward achievement of the learning objectives identified in their educational

contracts. The learning objectives identified in educational contracts incorporate learning activities and outcomes consistent with the requirements for the MSW program, the professional foundation, and the CSWE 2015 Educational Policies and Standards (EPAS).

ACADEMIC STANDARDS OF THE MSW PROGRAM

Evaluation of Students' Academic Performance:

Evaluation of a student's academic performance is accomplished through the assessment of work in the classroom and cumulative grade point average. Faculty members are responsible for developing their own grading standards and clearly communicating those standards to students orally and in writing. Students who are not meeting expectations are informed by the instructor. Faculty members submit grades at mid-term and the end of each semester.

All students are expected to maintain a 3.0 semester average. A student who does not achieve this grade will be placed on academic probation by the Graduate School for the following semester. Once the student achieves a 3.0 grade point average, the probationary status is removed. If the grade average falls below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters, the student may be dismissed from the program. A student is allowed to graduate with one (1) C grade on their final transcript.

Grades:

Awarding of Grades - Grades are awarded based on the following system in the Graduate Social Work Program:

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 65-69

F = Below 64

W = No grade value (withdrawal)

I = No grade value; must be completed by end of following semester

Incompletes:

The grade of "I" indicates that the student was **performing satisfactorily** in the course, but due to circumstances beyond his/her control, the student could not complete all the requirements for the course by the established deadline. To be eligible for an incomplete, the University requires that the student have satisfactorily completed 75% of the work in the course. A student who receives an "I" in a course which is the first half of a sequenced course may not register for the second half of the sequence. For example, a student who receives an incomplete in SWK 500, may not register for SWK 501 until the incomplete has been satisfied. **Failure to comply with this policy will result in the incomplete grade becoming an "F" as a final grade. The grade IP (in progress) refers to students who are working on their thesis or dissertation.**

The removal of an incomplete grade in the master's program is governed by Graduate School policy and the Graduate Social Work Program policy regarding an incomplete grade(s). Graduate School policy is as follows:

1. "An "I" grade given for courses other than thesis or dissertation research is to be removed within one semester after the end of the term of registration for the course.
2. A course of which an "I" or "IP" is recorded is not included in the calculation of the GPA, and no credit is awarded until the course is completed with a quality grade.
3. Removal of an "I" must be authorized by the instructor and approved by the School Dean on a Grade Change Authorization Form.
4. A student may not graduate without removing "I" or "IP" grades from his/her record."

In addition to this policy, the MSW program requires that:

1. A student must resolve all incomplete assignments no later than the end of the following semester or earlier at the instructor's discretion
2. A student will not be allowed to begin field education with a grade of "I". Students who register for SWK 581, 680, or 681 who have received a grade of "I" must have the "I" removed and be in good standing prior to the initiation of the field education experience.

Grades: Field Practicum

Unlike the other courses in the curriculum, field practicum (SWK 581, 680 and 681) is graded as pass/fail. A student who receives a satisfactory grade in field instruction has satisfactorily met all the requirements for this course and has officially passed the course. Similarly, a student who receives an unsatisfactory grade has not met all the requirements for this course and has failed the course. Therefore, the course must be repeated.

It is anticipated that prior to the assignment of an unsatisfactory grade, the final agency field instructor will work closely with the student to point out areas in which the student is not achieving the required expectations. In addition, the faculty liaison assigned to the field instruction agency also works closely with the agency field instructor and the student to ensure that all deficits and areas of failed expectations can be made up prior to the assignment of a grade.

After receiving a grade, a student has ten days from the assignment of that grade to challenge the grade, if he/she disagrees with the grade. This process is a grievance process and follows that procedure which is outlined elsewhere in this document.

Proficiency Examination:

A BSW student who is admitted to the 2-year program, may indicate his/her interest in taking a proficiency exam within the MSW curriculum. If the applicant is successful in the examination(s), the applicant will be given appropriate credit toward those courses. Challenge examinations may be offered only for SWK 500, SWK 510, SWK 520 and SWK 530 courses at this time. The applicant must demonstrate that he/she has mastered the equivalent course curriculum content. Credit for the proficiency examinations will be posted at the end of the semester in which the student took the examination.

Independent Study (SWK 698):

Students may pursue independent study in a content area not offered in the curriculum, for one, two or three credit hours. Independent study demands vigorous academic discipline. Application for Independent Study must be obtained during the semester of enrollment in SWK 698 in the order signified on the proposal form. Furthermore, in order to qualify for independent study, students must:

1. Identify an area of study.
2. Obtain agreement from a professor to sponsor the independent study.
3. Obtain signature of sponsoring professor on registration
4. Write a course syllabus with the professor's guidance.

Requests for completing an Independent Study project should be completed, including all approval's at the time of registration for the semester or term when the project to be completed.

Academic Warning:

The School of Graduate Studies at Alabama A&M University has an academic warning process to alert students and their advisors that a student is in academic difficulty. A warning is used to indicate poor academic performance, excessive absences, or a general concern on the part of one or more faculty. A warning notice is given when actual failure is indicated (a grade of "C", "D", or "F") or when Graduate School is concerned about potential failure and when a student has a grade of less than a "B" in an academic class or failure in field education at midterm.

A student receiving a warning will be notified by the Graduate School's advisor in writing regarding the nature of the deficiency or concern. The warning system is intended to be a helpful device that encourages communication between instructor and student and student and advisor, at a point early enough in the semester to effect a positive outcome. A student receiving a warning for any reason is expected to consult his/her advisor and, subsequently, the instructor(s) to ascertain the manner in which the deficiency can be corrected. Following that meeting, the student is expected to meet again with his/her advisor to review the steps being taken to correct the deficiency.

If the consultation subsequent to a warning; does not result in a plan to correct deficiencies, or if a plan appears not to be working at any time, the advisor may institute the procedures for handling difficulties as discussed earlier.

The MSW Program's Faculty Advisors work with students to implement recommendations from the School of Graduate Studies.

Academic Probation and Dismissal:

A graduate student who fails to maintain an overall GPA of 3.00 for more than 2 semesters (per University Graduate School Policy) or to make satisfactory progress in a degree program will be dismissed from graduate study at the University. Prior to dismissal a period on academic probation (normally one term of full-time graduate study or its equivalent) will be granted which provides opportunity to demonstrate an ability to meet degree requirements and to complete a degree within an approved time limit. Students on academic probation are not eligible for appointment to assistantships. When a student's overall GPA falls below 3.00, the student is automatically on probation and subject to dismissal.

Quality of Work:

The candidates must do work of high quality and must earn a cumulative average of "B" or better in courses for which credit is given towards the master's degree. No grade below "C" is acceptable for graduate credit; the maximum number of "C"s that will be accepted for graduate credit is one. A student who earns more than one "C" will be subject to suspension.

ADVISING

Academic Advising:

On entering the Graduate Social Work Program, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Advisors are responsible for assisting students in integrating the total academic experience and facilitating progress toward obtaining the goal of the MSW degree. Students are assigned advisors upon program admittance. Students may request in writing a change of advisor at any time. This request is made to the Program Coordinator. The number of contacts/meetings between a student and the advisor will be determined on a case by case basis. However, it is the expectation that there will be a minimum of two contacts per semester.

Roles and Responsibilities of Advisors:

1. Helps the student plan an educational program during the registration period, including selection of appropriate courses, acquainting the student with content areas and expectations;
2. Helps the student complete the official Program of Study Form which plans the student's academic program. The original form goes to the graduate office. Copies go to the student file, the advisor's file and to the student.
3. Provides academic counseling when a student is experiencing difficulties in the learning process;
4. Helps in the resolution of conflicts with academic or field instructors;
5. Provides appropriate written information in student records pertaining to the academic process;
6. Meet with students to discuss contemplated changes, such as from full-time to part-time status, leave of absence or withdrawal from school.
7. Mediates on behalf of the student to find appropriate solutions to problem situations involving any aspect of the educational process or system.

Field Liaison Advising:

Field Liaison for students in field placement when assigned:

1. Serves as a liaison between graduate program; and agency's
2. Consults with student and agency field instructor around assignments, learning contract, evaluation, etc.;
3. Serves as student's advocate in ensuring that Program's expectation of agency are being met;
4. Serves as troubleshooter, problem-solver and mediator in the event that a problem in the field placement experience is identified;
5. Visits the agency once each semester to meet with student and field instructor(s) to assess progress toward goals;
6. Works with students in planning for advanced year placement;

Advisors as General Resource:

Advisors can also serve as sounding board, referral source and general support around personal problems or life issues that arise while the student is in school, e.g., health, family, financial, housing, workload, etc. Each student should meet with his/her advisor during the early part of the semester to assess how his/her program is progressing, and to address any questions or concerns that the student may have.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Introduction:

The Graduate Social Work Program seeks to develop and maintain an atmosphere for students that encourage freedom of expression and scientific inquiry in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of human behavior and human needs. An environment in which students' learning needs and expectations are met is one that frees learners for greater investment in scholarly activities and develops their full potentials.

Student Rights & Responsibilities:

In general, students have the right to expect instruction by qualified individuals, appropriate academic supports and resources, and to be treated with dignity and respect in their educational endeavors on the campus of Alabama A&M University. On the other hand, students are expected to achieve high standards of academic performance, exercise sound judgment, attend classes, be on time, complete all assignments in a timely manner, organize on their own behalf, participate in governance and decision making in the on-going activities of the program, and to adhere to guidelines for conduct as articulated in the Student Handbook, the Graduate Studies Student Handbook, Life on the Hill University Handbook, Alabama A&M University Academic Policies & Procedures Handbook, and the MSW Code of Ethics.

Summary of Student Rights:

The following is a list of student rights and expectations. While in the Graduate Social Work Program at Alabama A&M University, the student has a right to:

1. Receive instruction by qualified instructors;
2. Receive appropriate academic supports and resources in a timely manner;
3. Receive course syllabi, assignments and other course requirements at the beginning of each semester;
4. Receive an explanation of academic expectations and grading criteria for each class;
5. Received fair and consistent grading;
6. Have faculty present in class and on time;

7. Meet with faculty for individual consultation during scheduled office hours;
8. Receive advisement for academic and educational related concerns from an assigned advisor;
9. Have papers and assignments returned in a timely manner with appropriate comments and/or grades;
10. Have privacy in relation to academic records (the university must obtain written consent of the student in order to release educational records);
11. Be treated with dignity and respect in all aspects of the educational process;
12. Participate in the governance of the Graduate Social Work Program through organized student government.

Summary of Student Responsibilities:

Students are responsible for:

1. Respecting the property of others;
2. Respecting the University's property, equipment, and facilities;
3. Respecting the rights of others;
4. Not endangering or contributing to the endangerment of the health, welfare or safety of others at the university;
5. Complying with University rules and policies;
6. Complying with the NASW Code of Ethics; and
7. Complying with federal, state, and local laws.

Problem Resolution:

As a general principle, the Graduate Social Work Program encourages students to deal directly and immediately with others who may be involved in any dispute or problematic situation. Students are strongly encouraged to make every effort to resolve concerns, problems and difficulties prior to their development into major disputes and grievances.

If early efforts fail to resolve the issue, it is recommended that the student follow the chain of command within the Program.

- The first step is talking to the person/faculty directly involved.
- The second step is speaking with the student's advisor.
- The third step is a meeting of the advisor, and the involved faculty.
- The fourth step is a meeting of the student, advisor and involved faculty.
- The fifth step is the student's meeting with the Coordinator. Prior to this meeting, a written summary of the dispute should be given to the Coordinator.

If still not resolved, a meeting with the Chair of the Social Work Program may be requested.

Every effort should be made to carry out the above steps within ten working days.

Should these efforts fail to resolve the situation satisfactorily, the student may exercise his/her right in using established policy and procedures by requesting a meeting with the Dean of College of Education, Humanities, and Behavioral Sciences, and subsequently following the established University problem resolution procedures.

Evaluation/Termination for Non-Academic Reasons:

The faculty of the Graduate Social Work Program has a duty to the social work profession to ensure that its graduates are academically and emotionally prepared for the demands of competent and ethical professional practice. Therefore, any student who exhibits signs of inappropriate, unethical or illegal behavior will be evaluated to determine if he/she should continue in the program and, if so, what additional steps should be taken to ensure that the student is prepared for professional practice.

Whenever an alleged non-academic problem is identified, it must be presented in writing to the program Coordinator and Department Chair. All information relevant to the student's evaluation should be as thorough as possible, including the specification of the sources of the information.

Upon receipt of the written specification of the alleged problem, the Program Coordinator will convene a meeting of the Professional Standards Committee, and will notify the student and his/her advisor in writing that a potential problem has been identified. The committee chair will convene a meeting within 10 working days with the student and his/her advisor to discuss and evaluate the allegation(s) and, if necessary, agree on a resolution of identified difficulty. If the resolution specifies a need for remediation and/or correction, a written plan of remediation and/or correction will be identified and signed by the student (if the student agrees), the advisor, and the committee chair. The plan of actions is placed in the student's confidential file. A plan for remediation/correction must be explicit with stated criteria for judging the success or failure. Compliance with the criteria stated in the plan will be monitored by the committee.

If the resolution specifies a temporary or indefinite withdrawal from the program, a written plan for consideration for reinstatement must be prepared including the period of time which must expire before the student can re-enter the program or can apply for reinstatement. The written plan must be signed by the student, the advisor, and the committee chair and placed in the student confidential file. If the student does not agree that there is a problem or does not agree with the proposed resolution, the student may, within the ten (10) working days, request in writing that the program coordinator convene a faculty meeting to consider the issues raised and recommend a resolution. The meeting shall consist of all faculty members, including the student's advisor, and anyone else whom the student wishes to have present. The meeting will be chaired by the Program Coordinator.

The group will conduct a hearing which addresses factual matters arising from the circumstances which are the foundation of the questions regarding the inappropriate behavior or professional attitude or conduct which jeopardizes the student's educational program or which may be violations of the N.A.S.W. Code of Ethics. The faculty's decision will include one of the following recommendations: (1) the student will be encouraged to continue in the program; (2) the student will be apprised of the specific problem(s) and will be advised concerning their remediation and/or correction; or (3) the student will be required to withdraw either indefinitely or temporarily, from the program for the reasons specified in writing.

The student may appeal the decision of the committee. Up to ten (10) working days will be allowed for the student to prepare his/her argument to be presented to the faculty committee. The student will be notified of the committee's decision in writing within three days of the appeal.

The student has the right to appeal this decision to the Dean of the Graduate School through the Dean of College of Education, Humanities, and Behavioral Sciences. The appeal to the dean must be in writing and must be made within one week of the final decision of the faculty committee. The dean will convene a meeting with the student and the student's advisor within one week of the written request. The dean will notify the student, in writing, of his/her decision within one week of the meeting.

All information relevant to a student's non-academic evaluation will be placed in the student's confidential file established for this purpose. If information is needed from a source outside of the Department and/or University, it will be the responsibility of the panel of judges to obtain a written consent from the student.

The role of the faculty advisor will be to ensure that the student is aware of the process and procedure. Further, the advisor will be expected to be present at the various stages of the evaluation and appeal process and will provide relevant information as requested. The advisor is a consultation source for the student about his/her rights and options.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

Committees:

Most committees in the Graduate Program have faculty, administration and student representatives. These committees include Curriculum, Admissions, Academic Review, Comprehensive Exam, Advisory, Professional Standards, and Field. Students serving on committees should report back to the student organization at the monthly meeting. Student representatives invite feedback from students regarding issues discussed by committees.

GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIAL WORK ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the Graduate Student Social Work Organization is to help students develop meaningful relationships with community organizations through service projects and activities; to serve as a vehicle whereby students are able to provide input regarding the Social Work Program's activities; and to promote academic excellence and professional development of students by encouraging participation in professional meetings, conferences, workshops, and leadership roles.

The Social Work Organization is sponsored by the Social Work Program. It is organized and managed by the students. Students select representatives to assist in the administration of the organization. Two faculty members serve as co-advisors to the organization.

The Social Work Organization extends a personal invitation to each Social Work student to join the organization. Active participation in this organization will enhance professional and academic development. Meaningful and lasting relationships with community organizations can also be developed through participation in the organization. The Social Work Organization is open to all Graduate Students in Social Work. Through the organization students are able to have input collectively into the Graduate Social Work Program.

Students' dues are used in the budget to fund activities. Since graduate students are very busy with families, employment and school, a one-hour meeting is held monthly at a time that does not conflict with other activities. No classes, committees or other department related activities involving students are to be scheduled at that time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

University and Department General Resources:

All universities have human and technical resources available for graduate student use. Students should make it a high priority to visit the Library Resource Center (LRC) and locate the Reference Desk, Reserve Desk, Interlibrary Loan Desk, Periodical Section, Microfilm, and Media Resource Area. There are copying machines, searching systems, and the familiar card catalogs. Ask questions to get the answers you need; a graduate student and a library go hand-in-hand.

Other resources students may find important are the Computer Laboratories. These are located throughout the University in academic areas. These laboratories can offer help with statistical analyses, word processing and computer literacy. Each laboratory has personnel available to assist students.

The Social Work Department has a computer laboratory and resource library in Bibb Graves Hall. Please feel free to use this facility. Also, the graduate faculty have their own personal library resources, and are happy to make these resources available to students. A second computer lab is located on the 1st floor in Bibb Graves Hall. This lab is staffed by a skilled assistant who will help if problems arise when using the computers.

Physical Facilities:

The Graduate Social Work Program is located in Bibb Graves Hall in the heart of the University campus. Faculty offices and classrooms are located in Bibb Graves. The building is accessible for persons with disabilities. In addition to stairs, the building has an elevator which provides mobility for persons with disabilities. The Social Work Resource Library is located on the 3rd floor in Bibb Graves. The building was renovated in 1990.

Registration:

Once admission has been granted, social work students are required to complete registration within the set time period stipulated by the university calendar. Students already enrolled in the University are expected to participate in the registration advisory process. Each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Students must obtain a University email account in order to register.

Identification Card:

The University requires that all students have an identification card with their name and picture. This card is required to utilize University resources. Identification cards are acquired during registration.

Parking Permit:

Appropriate parking permits must be displayed on the vehicles of all students. The permit will allow students to park in areas identified by signs and color. Student parking permits are acquired through Public Safety for a fee at the time of registration. In order to acquire a parking permit, a car registration, current insurance card and driver's license are required.

Mail:

Personal correspondence is mailed to the student's home address of record. Students may place mail for faculty in the faculty mailboxes (located in Bibb Graves, Room 104).

E-Mail:

Students are provided an e-mail account by the University, making it easy to exchange e-mail messages with faculty and staff members and other students. This account serves as a primary method by which University and Department of Social administrators and professors communicate with you. IT serves as an official means of communication and students are responsible for information provided to them by the school via this communication method. Staff of the Office of Information Technology (ITS) can assist you with email problems. You can email the ITS Service Desk at servicedesk@aamu.edu or call (256) 372-4357. Students must have a University email for financial aid and registration purposes.

Books:

Faculty assigned to courses will provide information regarding the books required for the class. Textbooks may be purchased from the University Bookstore or any vendor, including those found on the World Wide Web. All books listed on the course syllabi should be purchased if informed by the instructor.

Housing:

University housing is available to students on a first come first serve basis. A \$100.00 deposit is required. There are no designated housing units for graduate students. Off campus housing (apartments and houses) are available in the community. If you need assistance call student housing at (256) 372-5797. The housing office is located in the Ernest Knight Center.

Alabama Residency:

For the purpose of assessing tuition fees, Alabama A&M University classifies students as Alabama "resident" or "non-resident" The Offices of Admission and Graduate Studies have the responsibility of classifying a student as an Alabama Resident or non-residents for tuition purposes. Students may be classified as Residents of Alabama if the following criteria are met:

1. For tuition purposes, a student may register as a resident by showing that he/she has been

an Alabama resident for at least 12 months prior to registration.

2. If a person is under 19 years of age and living with parent(s) or guardian, he/she may register as an Alabama resident only after showing that his/her parents have been bona fide residents of Alabama for at least 12 months prior to registration.
3. The spouse and dependent children of a full time faculty member may register for the payment of resident fees even though they have not been a bona fide resident of Alabama for the preceding twelve months.
4. Military personnel and their dependents stationed here have Alabama residency classification for tuition purposes.
5. If a person has not been a resident, but has been employed full-time in Alabama for at least 12 months and has filed an Alabama income tax return, than that student/applicant is entitled to Alabama residency classification for tuition purposes.
6. All international students are classified as non-resident students, except if the student is living in this country under a visa permitting establishment of permanent residency status as a citizen of the United States.

Change of Residence Status:

Students who are classified by Alabama A&M University as nonresidents, but later claim to qualify as residents must file a “Petition for Alabama Residency Classification for Tuition Purposes” form with the Office of Graduate Studies.

Appeals for Residency:

A student wishing to appeal the decision resulting from his/her “Petition” may request a review of that decision before the University Committee on residence. Appeals must be made in writing within 10 working days of the decision of the Director of Admissions.

Counseling Services:

Personal counseling by qualified professionals is available to students at the Wellness Center (4011 Meridian Street, (256) 372-7000).

University Health Center:

The University Health Center is location at the Wellness Center. It operates an out- patient center for all its medical care for minor illnesses, preventive health measures, health education, and referral services for those conditions that cannot be handled in the Health Center.

Computer Labs:

Computer labs are located in the learning resources center, and the Ralph Lee Center, Carver Complex North in addition to other buildings on campus. These labs are open for use by all graduate and undergraduate students.

Career Services:

Career Counseling is available to students through their faculty advisor/and the Career Placement Office in 103 Patton Hall. Personal Counseling (time limited) by qualified confidential professionals is available to students at the Counseling Center in the AAMU Wellness Center. Counseling services are provided in a warm, caring, and supportive atmosphere. Referrals are made to community clinicians when long term therapy or other psychiatric services are needed.

Persons with Disabilities:

“Access to Learning Program” located in the University Center, is the University’s program for providing equal access to all educational programs, and for ensuring compliance with applicable laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the applicable titles of American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The Coordinator of the Access to Learning Program works with faculty, staff and administrators to provide assistance and to seek resolutions for students with handicaps or disabilities. Each syllabus for MSW courses indicates the procedures for students with disabilities to follow so appropriate accommodations can be made.

Personal Information:

Please notify the Graduate Social Work Program Administrative Secretary if you have changes in personal information (address, telephone number, new name). Updated information is important for accurate records and correspondence.

Student Records:

Students may examine their student records/files upon request. The faculty advisor must be present when files are examined. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 requires educational institutions to adopt guidelines allowing students to have access to their own educational records and prohibiting release of educational records to persons who are not entitled to access. Therefore, faculty and staff members are responsible for student records. When examining the record with the faculty advisor, the student is entitled to receive an explanation or interpretation of these records.

Dropping and Adding Courses:

Students may add or drop classes by completing a Drop/Add Form, with permission from their advisor. These forms are available from the Graduate Program office. This form must be signed by the Program administration and faculty members. Because of the way the curriculum is structured, dropping a course often delays a student's progress in the program.

Change of Course Section:

If a student is enrolled in one section of a course and wishes to change to another section of the same course, a drop-add form must be completed and approved by the Program Coordinator or Department Chair.

Withdrawal from the University or Leave of Absence:

To officially withdraw from the University a student must obtain a withdrawal form from the Vice President of Academic Affairs office. This form must be filed within ten (10) days of withdrawal. Absence from classes does not reduce a student's financial obligations nor guarantee that a final grade will not be recorded.

Students who plan to withdraw from school or to take a leave of absence (four year limit) must:

- A. Notify the faculty advisor to discuss reasons and plans;
- B. Complete a withdrawal form and obtain required signatures;
- C. Notify all classroom faculty and agency field instructors; and
- D. Contact the financial aid office regarding eligibility for refunds.

Transfer Credit:

Transfer credit must be acceptable to the Curriculum Committee and be pertinent to the student's planned degree program. Prior commitments cannot be made by the Graduate School concerning the acceptability of transfer credit(s). A petition for transfer of graduate credit and one official transcript upon which the transfer courses with grade "B" or better will be approved. No courses with a "P" grade are acceptable). Twelve credit hours may be transferred, subject to approval of the Graduate Social Work faculty and the School of Graduate Studies.

Statute of Limitations:

Graduate students must complete the requirements for graduation within 6 years from the date of their first enrollment, exclusive of any time spent in the Armed Force of the United States. Students enrolled in programs that require more than 36 credit hours will have 7 years to complete all requirements. Any graduate work completed by extension or transferred from

another institution must have commenced not more than 6 years prior to graduation in order for the credits to be applied toward the graduate degree.

Readmission:

- A. A student who is not registered for at least three (3) credits during a twelve month period will be transferred to inactive status and must file an Application for Readmission to Graduate Study before being permitted to register again. The student must contact the Coordinator of the MSW Program for a conference regarding readmission. The Coordinator will determine whether the student left the University for reasons related to grade point average, personal problems, incomplete, etc. If no problem is found, the student will be allowed to re-enter, and will consult an assigned faculty advisor for program planning. A memo for readmission will be placed in the student's file. If a problem is found, the Coordinator of the Graduate Social Work Program will meet with the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Dean will assume responsibility for the students request for re-entry and will communicate directly with the student.
- B. Readmission is not automatic, nor does it reinstate the student in the status accorded prior to becoming inactive. When readmitted, the student must be prepared to demonstrate proper preparation to meet all current degree requirements.
- C. Students wishing to be readmitted after a lapse of six years should meet with the Coordinator of the Graduate Social Work Program to determine if credits for courses already taken will be valid toward degree requirements. **Course credits are valid for only six years from the date of admission.**

NOTE: Before readmission, students must submit complete requirements to remove incompletes. If this is not done, the course(s) must be repeated.

FINANCIAL AID

Alabama A&M University attempts to provide financial support for as many graduate students as possible. The University has a complete financial aid program composed of the following forms of aid:

- 1. Assistantships
- 2. National Direct Student Loans
- 3. Work-study Jobs
- 4. Guaranteed Student Loans
- 5. Fellowships

Assistantships:

A number of Graduate Assistantships are available in departments which offer graduate degree programs.

Loans and Part-time Employment for students are open to graduate students. Students interested in loans or part-time employment may obtain detailed information by writing to: Director of Financial Aid, Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, Normal, Alabama 35762.

Stipends and Awards - In addition to graduate assistantships, students may qualify for the following stipends/scholarships:

- **Title IV-E** - Students receive \$1,000 per month. If offered employment, student must work for the Department of Human Resources nine months for each semester of funds awarded. Students eligible for this stipend must be in the Family and Child Welfare. Funds are applied to outstanding loan obligations and can only be received in the second year.
- **FEES are subject to change**

For current fees, please refer to www.aamu.edu and/or the Alabama A&M University Office of the Comptroller

Refund of Fees:

Tuition which includes student assessed fees and non-resident fees is refundable in accordance with a specified schedule when students withdraw from the University after completing the registration process. Please review the School of Graduate Studies Catalog for the deadlines for requesting refunds.

Indebtedness to the University:

No student will be permitted to register for a semester until all bills from the previous semester have been paid. Failure to meet financial obligations as scheduled will cause a forfeiture of the students privileges (admittance to classes). Transcripts or records will not be issued for any student who is indebted to the University.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

Students must complete a Program of Study by the end of their first semester. The Program of Study indicates the student's curriculum plan and must be signed by the student, the student's Faculty Advisor, the Department Chair, the Dean of the College of Education, Behavioral Sciences and Humanities, and the Graduate Dean. The Program of Study is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies upon its completion. The Program of Study is used in part to ensure students have completed all coursework when the School of Graduate Studies is approving students for graduation. The Program of Study Form is available on the AAMU website, under the Graduate School, Forms for Current Students.

The Program of Study is divided into two sections: one for required courses and one for electives. Changes in required courses should be requested by the advisor only under **EXTREME** circumstances and with adequate justification with the concurrence of the Chairperson and the Dean of the respective School.

All changes in the planned degree program should be made prior to the student's application for graduation; the **ONLY** exception will be if a course is canceled after the student's application for graduation. Under no circumstances will a change in a planned degree program be created because a student has failed a course.

Writing Proficiency:

Students are expected to demonstrate writing proficiency at a graduate level. Writing proficiency may be evaluated through assignments in foundation or concentration year courses. The American Psychological Association (APA) style is the accepted format of the Department of Social Work.

In every case, the English Writing Proficiency requirement must be fulfilled before the student completes 12 semester hours of graduate work, including transfer credits.

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION

Alabama A&M University establishes deadline dates for graduation. Students must apply for graduation and complete the application for graduation during the first week of the semester prior to graduation. Please examine the University calendar which is available at the University website: aamu.edu. However, if they fail to meet the requirements for the semester applied, they must reapply. Each candidate for the master's degree will receive communication from the Graduate School verifying clearances. The forms for graduation are available on AAMU's Graduate School's forms.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society:

Chi Iota Chapter of Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society was established during fall 1991 semester at AAMU. The Induction ceremony for charter members was held on April 29, 1992. This organization was developed to advance excellence in social work practice and to encourage, stimulate and maintain scholarship of social work undergraduate and graduate students. It also seeks to improve and further the goals and objectives of social work in the community, state, nation and world. Graduate students are encouraged to seek membership. Requirements for membership include a 3.5 GPA. The induction ceremony is held annually in April.

Motto: "Love of Man"

Colors: "Blue and Gold"

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE):

CSWE is a national organization that preserves and enhances the quality of social work education for practice that promotes the goals of individual and community well-being and social justice. CSWE pursues this mission through setting and maintaining policy and program standards, accrediting bachelor's and master's degree programs in social work, promoting research and faculty development, and advocating for social work education.

National Association of Social Workers (NASW):

This organization for social workers was established in 1955 to strengthen and unify the profession, promote the development of social work practice, advance sound social policies, and interpret the values of social work to the public. Students are eligible for membership in NASW at a reduced rate. The membership entitles the student to national, state and local NASW publications and NASW personnel information. There are other direct benefits of being a member of the National Association such as reduction of fees for workshops and other special events. March of each year is National Social Work Month and appropriate activities and workshops are held and honors awarded. Applications for NASW membership can be obtained from any Social Work faculty. Students must be NASW members prior to entering Field Practicum and must obtain liability insurance through the NASW Insurance Trust.

ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The University strives to provide a working and educational environment for all employees and students that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment in any form is unacceptable behavior and will NOT be tolerated. It is a form of misconduct that undermines the institutional mission of the University. Sexual harassment may be defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct or written communication of a sexual nature when:

- 1: Submission to such of an individual 's employment or educational experience;
- 2: Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment or educational experience;
- 3: Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for such conduct has the purpose of effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work, academic performance, participation in extracurricular activities, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.

Sexual harassment can take many forms, and the determination of what constitutes sexual harassment will vary according to the particular circumstances. Sexual harassment may be described generally as unwelcome sexual behavior that a reasonable person would find offensive and that adversely affects the working or learning environment. Sexual harassment may involve behavior by a person of either gender against a person of the same or opposite gender. Possible examples may include but are not limited to the following:

- Seeking sexual favors or relationships in return for the promise of a good grade or other academic opportunity;
- Conditioning an employment-related action (such as hiring, promotion, salary increase, or performance appraisal) on a sexual favor or relationship;
- Intentional and abusive conduct or utterance that implies hostility toward others because of their sex and that unreasonably interferes with the work of a staff member, or the academic performance of a student; or
- Intentional and undesired physical contact that adversely affects a person's ability to carry out his or her academic or employment responsibilities.
- Making unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about a person's clothing, body or personal life.
- Using obscene, vulgar or sexually explicit language.
- Pressuring a student for a date or sexual contact.
- Making unwelcome sexual advances or propositions.
- Displaying pornography or sexually explicit pictures or materials, or equipment.
- Staring at a person's body.
- Rubbing, touching, feeling, patting, hugging, pinching, or kissing another person in an overly familiar manner.

- Making sexual innuendoes and telling sexual jokes.
- Using a nickname or pet names that has a sexual meaning or sexual overtone.

Reporting Sexual Harassment:

Student Complaint Against Faculty/Staff- An individual who believes he/she is a victim of sexual harassment should report the incident (s) to the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences who will recommend that the student contact the Vice President of Student Affairs. A Complaint/Grievance form is provided to the student. This form must be completed and signed in order to initiate a formed investigation. A faculty member to whom a student has come with a complaint of sexual harassment should recommend that the student contact the administrative offices above. Reporting of incidents should not be delayed so that accurate facts may be recorded. No student will be subjected to retaliation for complaining about sexual harassment. Any act of reprisals, including threats, coercion, and restraint, by a University employee, violates this policy and is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the University,

Students in agency field practicum should report complaints of sexual harassment to the Coordinator of Field Instructor who will direct the student to the office of the Vice-President of Student Affairs.

Investigating Reported Incidents of Sexual Harassment:

Prior to investigation, the accused person will be notified by the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs regarding the sexual harassment charge and the impending investigation. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will appoint a three (3) member committee to conduct the investigation. The investigation will be non-adversarial and, therefore attorneys for either party will not be permitted to intercede during the investigation.

The committee will interview and obtain relevant testimony from any and all persons who may have knowledge of the matter. On completion of the investigation, the committee will find one of two basic options: (1) no violation of sexual harassment policy or (2) suspected or probably cause of violation of the policy. The committee will report its findings in a formal report to the appointing authority. The appointing authority Vice President of Student Affairs will review the finding of the committee based on those findings, implement sanctions or take no further action against the accused employee. A copy of the committee report and actions taken must be submitted through the Director of Human Resources to the President. The President may approve or disapprove the actions. Presidential disapproval will be based on the lack of documentation in the committee's investigation and findings to support sanctions implemented by the appointing authority. Accordingly, the President may direct the Director of Human Resources to conduct further investigation into the matter, or he/she may impose or delete sanctions based on a review of the committee report of investigation and findings.

Student Complaint Against Student:

If the formal complaint is against a student, the complaint should be directed to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Affirmative Action Policy:

In the University's efforts to develop its affirmative action program, it hereby affirms and formalizes its commitment to the principle of equal employment opportunity.

The University's policy is to ensure equal employment opportunity for all without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or other non-job related characteristics. While this document cannot be considered an employment contract between the University and its employees, the University views the principle of equal employment opportunity as a vital element of the employment process and a hallmark of good management.

In developing its affirmative action program, the University commits itself to:

- 1: Recruiting, hiring, training, and promoting persons in all job classifications without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any other non-job related characteristics.
- 2: Ensuring that promotion decisions are in accordance with equal employment opportunity requirements by imposing only valid, job-related requirements for promotional opportunities.
- 3: Ensuring that all personnel actions relating to compensation, benefits, transfers, terminations, training, and education are administered in a non-discriminatory manner.
- 4: Ensuring that all those employed by the University have legal proof of a right to work in the United States (e.g.) as indicated by an approved VISA or work permit.

In developing the Affirmative Action Plan, the University has established goals and timetables to correct any deficiencies over a reasonable period of time. It is the intent that the combination of measurable goals and directed efforts will make equal employment opportunity a fact of this University.

To ensure that the goals for equal employment opportunity may be achieved through good faith efforts, the University has established various levels of responsibility to both direct and oversee affirmative action efforts.

ALABAMA A & M UNIVERISTY
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMS' NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University - Social Work Programs does not discriminate in its admission policies and procedures, educational programs, policies, scholarship and loan programs, or other activities on the basis of race, color, disability, national, or ethnic origin, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political orientation, or disabled veteran/Vietnam era veteran status. In addition to meeting fully its obligations of nondiscrimination under Federal and State laws, the Department of Social Work strives to maintain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and mutual respect of others regardless of differences in economic status, ethnic background, political views, or other personal characteristics.

ALABAMA A & M UNIVERISTY
GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
POLICY ON PLAGIARISM
AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic Misconduct (Graduate Bulletin 2017-2018):

All students in attendance at Alabama A&M University are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Cheating – using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Plagiarism – representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one’s own in any academic exercise.
3. Fabrication – unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
4. Aiding and abetting academic dishonesty – intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty

Academic Integrity (Graduate Bulletin 2017-2018):

The integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in all aspects of its endeavor. Maintaining academic integrity is therefore the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students at Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of Alabama A&M University. Sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. Cheating – use, or attempted use, of trickery, artifice, deception, breach of confidence, fraud, or misrepresentation of one's academic work. Submission of the same work in its entirety for credit in two courses without obtaining the permission of the instructors constitutes cheating. Collaborating with others when not explicitly allowed by the instructor constitutes cheating.
2. Fabrication – falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise (including the graduate school application process).
3. Plagiarism – representing, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the words or ideas of another as one's own work in any academic exercise.
4. Facilitating dishonesty – helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty, including substituting for another in an examination, misrepresenting oneself, or allowing others to represent as their own one's papers, reports, or academic works.

Academic Policies and Procedures Manual Policy on Academic Conduct:

Furthermore, page 8 of the 2008 [AAMU Academic Policies and Procedures Manual](http://www.aamu.edu/acadaffairs/docs/Policies_and_Procedures_Manual.pdf) ([www.aamu.edu/acadaffairs/docs/Policies and Procedures Manual.pdf](http://www.aamu.edu/acadaffairs/docs/Policies_and_Procedures_Manual.pdf)) states:

Faculty members are encouraged to identify, in each course syllabus, behaviors that constitute acceptable academic conduct. Reference may be made to existing stated rules, such as those in the Student Handbook, *Life on the Hill*, with additional expectations listed that may be particular to that discipline, department faculty member or course. Faculty members have the prerogative to deal with academic misconduct committed by a student in a course by applying an academic penalty within the context of that course.

All students in attendance at Alabama A&M University are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars, respecting themselves, fellow students, and faculty at all times. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitute academic misconduct.

This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. Cheating: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Plagiarism: representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise.
3. Fabrication: unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

4. Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty.
5. Acts of academic misconduct may be punishable by one or more of the following:
 - a. Letter of academic misconduct placed in the student's academic folder.
 - b. Temporary suspension from the University.
 - c. Expulsion from the University.
 - d. Expulsion from a class by the instructor which could possibly result in a failing grade.
 - e. Lowering of a grade.
 - f. Academic discipline resulting in the loss of scholarships, nonparticipation in academic related activities, etc.

Graduate Social Work Program Policy and Academic Conduct and Plagiarism:

The Graduate Social Work Program expects students to know and comply with the policies of the University, including those related to academic conduct, honesty and integrity. A student who violates these University policies and this handbook should expect to be sanctioned in accordance with University policy as delineated above. **Furthermore, graduate social work students at Alabama A & University are expected to maintain the highest levels not only of academic integrity and honesty but also professional integrity and honesty as delineated in the National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics (2008). Students accused of misconduct, including plagiarism are referred to the Professional Standards Committee.**

Responsibility of Students to Know University Policy:

Along with knowing the University's policy on plagiarism, the Graduate Bulletin states that "students are REQUIRED to read and become familiar with the information contained in this Bulletin. Students are RESPONSIBLE for knowing and understanding regulations and policies, and for meeting all deadlines and requirements of admission, registration, and degree programs. FAILURE TO READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL NOT BE AN EXCUSE FOR NONCOMPLIANCE (p. 1, www.aamu.edu/gradstudies/docs/Catalog.pdf)."

NASW CODE OF ETHICS

The National Association of Social Workers Code identifies core values on which social work's mission is based, summarizes ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values, establishes a set of specific ethical standards that guide social work practice, and provides the basis on which the public can hold a practitioner accountable.

Summary of Principles:

1. Social worker's primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.

2. Social workers challenge social injustice.
3. Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.
4. Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.
5. Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.
6. Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

MSW Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form

As a social work student within the Alabama A&M University MSW Social Work Program, I have read the Alabama A&M University MSW Program Handbook which outlines the expectations and requirements for students accepted into the AAMU MSW program. As a Social Work student at AAMU, I agree to:

- Adhere and commit to the NASW Code Ethics in my interactions with peers, faculty, staff and all I come into contact with including my field instruction placement (failure to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and engaging in criminal activity may result in disciplinary action and/or termination from the BSW Social Work Program).
- Follow the academic policies as outlined in the Student Handbook and Graduate Handbook for Alabama A&M University
- Complete the admission requirements and process required for the MSW program and the MSW Field Instruction Program
- Fulfill the requirements of the MSW Program in regards to matriculation and graduation which includes:
 - maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA throughout my tenure in the program
 - Seeking advisement prior to registering for courses and taking courses in sequential order
 - Passing all social work courses with a grade of B or higher

Student's Signature

Printed Name

Date: _____

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