



# **SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

## **MSW PROGRAM GUIDE**

## Table of Contents

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Non-Discrimination and Accessibility Policy.....                             | 4    |
| Introduction.....  | 5    |
| Mission and Goals of the School of Social Work.....                          | 6    |
| Overview of MSW Curriculum.....  | 9    |
| Core Social Work Competencies & Practice Behaviors.....                      | 12   |
| MSW Generalist Year Curriculum.....  | 16   |
| Human Behavior and the Social Environment.....                               | 16   |
| Social Welfare Policy and Services.....                                      | 17   |
| Social Work Practice.....  | 18   |
| Social Work Research.....  | 19   |
| Electives.....   | 20   |
| Internship education.....  | 21   |
| Academic Advising.....   | 22   |
| Registration for Classes.....  | 22   |
| Enrollment in online courses for on campus students.....                     | 22   |
| Transfer of Credit and Course Waivers.....                                   | 22   |
| Request for Course Waivers and Exemptions.....                               | 23   |
| Requesting an Exemption in Course Sequencing.....                            | 24   |
| Student Awards.....  | 25   |
| Accreditation.....   | 25   |
| State Licensure.....   | 25   |
| Financial Assistance.....  | 27   |
| MSW Program Retention Policy.....  | 28   |
| Interruption of Graduate Program.....  | 29   |
| Academic Probation.....  | 29   |
| Incompletes.....   | 29   |
| Leaves of Absence.....   | 30   |
| Withdrawal from the Program.....   | 30   |
| Community Practices and Professional Standards for Social Work Students..... | 31   |
| Master’s Academic and Professional Success (MAPS).....                       | 34   |
| Student Rights and Responsibilities.....                                     | 36   |
| Grievances.....  | 37   |
| References.....  | 39   |

Table 1 Regular, Full MSW Program: Credit Hours, Number of Courses and Content Areas.....11

Table 2 Advanced Standing MSW Program: Credit Hours, Number of Courses and Content Areas.....12

## **Non-Discrimination**

In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, familial status, ancestry, age, disability physical or mental, genetic information, or veterans or military status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Director of Equal Opportunity, 5713 Chadbourne Hall, Room 412, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5713, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

## **Accessibility**

The School of Social Work is committed to providing access to the School for people with disabilities. A person with a disability is anyone who has, or is treated as having, a physical or mental impairment that substantially affects a major life activity such as seeing, walking or working. A qualified person with a disability is someone whose experience, education, and training enable the person to meet essential course or program requirements with or without a reasonable accommodation. An accommodation is any change in the work or learning environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables a person with a disability to have equal opportunities.

People with disabilities have a right to request accommodations, and are encouraged to talk directly with staff at Student Accessibility Services. If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Student Accessibility Services, 139 Rangeley Rd, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term. Students who have already been approved for accommodations by Student Accessibility Services, and have a current accommodation letter should meet with their course instructors privately as soon as possible

Faculty members and administrators are responsible for responding to requests for accommodation. Some common types of accommodations that may be needed include:

- A note taker or qualified interpreter in class for a student with a hearing impairment
- Additional time for completing an exam needed by a student with a learning disability
- Additional information about University procedures for accommodating individuals with disabilities is available through the Office of Equal Opportunity, 5713 Chadbourne Hall, Room 412, [equal.opportunity@maine.edu](mailto:equal.opportunity@maine.edu); 581-1226.

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Master of Social Work Program at the University of Maine. This guide is intended to help you understand the program, its philosophy, its requirements and its operation. The information in this Guide will assist you in planning your graduate social work education.

Social Work is a distinctive profession, requiring an interest in helping people with a wide range of problems, in a wide range of settings. Social workers practice in preschools, facilities for the aged, schools, hospitals and other health facilities, group homes, half-way houses, mental health facilities, prisons, community centers, lobbying firms, employee assistance programs, adoption agencies, family services, public welfare settings, child and adult protective services, residential settings for children, youth or adults, legislatures, unions, social change organizations, and many others. Within these settings social workers engage in a range of activities and roles. These include: broker, advocate, administrator, supervisor, planner, policy analyst, researcher, community and grass roots organizer, consultant, case manager, clinician, and educator. Social workers work with individuals, families, small groups, communities and organizations.

What binds social workers with such diversity of practice into a common profession? First, social work views people and their environment as integrally intertwined and interactive. Therefore, social workers not only work with individuals toward change, but also share a commitment to institutional and societal change. Second, social work clients are typically drawn from the disadvantaged, vulnerable, and economically deprived segments of the population. Finally, social workers share a common set of professional values and a common set of basic or generic skills that enable them to work with diverse populations and fill diverse roles in diverse settings.

The underlying purpose of all social work practice is to release human power in individuals for personal fulfillment and social good, and to release social power for the creation of the kinds of society, social institutions, and social policy that makes self-realization most possible for all individuals. Two values which are primary in such purposes are respect for the worth and dignity of every individual and concern that she/he has the opportunity to realize her/his potential as an individually-fulfilled socially contributive person (paraphrased from Khinduka, 1987.)

Thus, the profession requires practitioners who are flexible, socially and politically aware, self-motivated, eager to learn over a lifetime, desirous of personal growth, altruistic, comfortable with ambiguity, and interested in changing social conditions that are adverse to healthy human development, self-determination and social justice.

## **VISION, MISSION, AND GOALS OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK** (Revised 2023)

### **Vision**

The SSW envisions racially just, accessible, and equitable social systems leading to sustainable collective freedom.

### **Mission**

Our school develops knowledge for social work practice, policy, and research through an evidence-informed advanced generalist curriculum, liberatory teaching, and community-engaged scholarship. We advance racial, economic, environmental, and social justice in our school, university, community, and state.

### **Goals**

**GOAL 1:** We prepare self-aware, ethically grounded baccalaureate and masters social workers committed to recognizing and dismantling systems of oppression and building liberation.

**GOAL 2:** Students and faculty are innovative leaders who use critical thinking, self-reflection, and participatory intervention skills, and practice at the micro, meso, and macro levels to promote social change.

**GOAL 3:** Students and faculty engage in critical analysis of the social work knowledge base, the profession's history, and future directions.

**GOAL 4:** Students and faculty conduct compelling, impactful, and collaborative research and scholarship.

**GOAL 5:** Our program serves as a state-wide leader in social work development, continuing education, and community capacity-building.

### **Approach**

We are committed to building and maintaining meaningful, reflexive, and connected relationships with our students, faculty, staff, and communities. We teach using reflexive and liberatory methods that support students' holistic development. We partner with rural and diverse communities in Maine to promote full inclusion, address injustices, and advance the practice of social change.

***Goals of the Masters of Social Work Program*** (revised 2018; to be updated)

1. To educate students to be competent and effective at working across service delivery systems utilizing a strengths-based approach and respecting human diversity.
2. To prepare competent and effective students for advanced generalist social work practice for the purposes of enhancing human well-being, preventing and alleviating human suffering, and advancing racial, social, economic and environmental justice.
3. To prepare students to work ethically with clients and client systems across the entire life span.
4. To initiate and promote research and knowledge building activities by faculty and students, for the purpose of improving the quality of social work practice.

The Master's program goals are consistent with the School mission and goals. Achievement of each of these goals is grounded in the premise that social work values and ethics are integral to and inseparable from practice. The presence of consciously considered values and ethics is a major characteristic that distinguishes professional social work practice from the simple acquisition of applied skills or techniques. Research and knowledge-building activities are central to the land-grant mission of the University, reflected in the School mission and goals, and emphasized in the MSW program. Achievement of each of these goals is guided by a philosophical orientation which synthesizes a liberal arts foundation, an open systems framework, principles of the generalist perspective, and social work values and ethics as set forth by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.

The University of Maine School of Social Work educates social workers from a generalist perspective of social work practice. The baccalaureate program prepares beginning level practitioners and the graduate program prepares advanced practitioners; both the master's and baccalaureate programs are rooted firmly in the generalist perspective. The generalist perspective builds on a liberal arts foundation, and utilizes an open systems framework.

The University of Maine MSW program prepares graduates for advanced practice in one specialization: advanced generalist social work practice. The advanced generalist focus of the University of Maine MSW program was chosen because of the rural locale of the University and faculty interest in trends in social work education and practice. The rural social service delivery systems of Maine continue to need practitioners who can engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with multiple client systems (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) while competently fulfilling a variety of practice roles (e.g., clinician, advocate, administrator,

etc.). Social workers in Maine often find themselves working in settings where they are either the only social worker or one of very few. Moreover, due to the wide geographic dispersion of MSW's in this rural state, many graduates who begin their post-MSW employment in direct practice with individuals, families and small groups, find themselves on a "fast track" to working in organizations and communities as supervisors, program managers and administrators within only a few short years from graduation. Thus, the demands of rural practice in our region require that professional social workers be able to move among different settings, contexts, clients systems, and problem areas, while providing high quality, competent, and evidence-based practice. Moreover, curricular specialization in limited problem situations or methods would severely hamper the effectiveness of our graduates in addressing and alleviating the varied social problems of our region. Landon (1995) noted that MSW programs selecting an advanced generalist curriculum often do so because of contextual issues associated with rural, international, and/or multicultural practice. The State of Maine faces an increasing population of older adults (#1 in the nation), nationally high rates of substance abuse (especially in the most rural counties where opiate addiction is epidemic), and significantly diminished resources for social services. Given these demographic, social and economic contexts for social work practice in Maine, MSW practitioners must be able to bring a broad array of assessment and intervention strategies to all system levels, and with increasing sophistication for the interdependent and global nature of our world.

Geographic demands are only one part of the rationale for an advanced generalist program at the University of Maine. In addition, the School of Social Work faculty believes that the advanced generalist perspective has developed as an appropriate and progressive articulation of the unique nature of social work practice. The advanced generalist perspective embodies the dualistic essence of social work, the legacy of perceiving and addressing personal troubles and public issues concurrently. Historically, the concept of "generalist" has been linked to varied definitions since its entrance into the social work education nomenclature over two decades ago (Landon, 1995; Schatz, Jenkins & Scheafor, 1990). Despite the plethora of diverse approaches to the generalist model, there is overall agreement about the components of a generalist perspective and the elements of generalist knowledge, values and skills. Generalist practitioners apply multi-level, multi-method approaches to the resolution of the problems of persons in their environments. The notion of "advanced generalist" practice has been a more evolving conceptualization. Most recently, work by a cadre of faculty from advanced generalist social work programs has lead to more specific articulation of core dimensions, common frameworks, knowledge base, competencies, and skills for advanced generalist social work practice (e.g., Brittingham & Hammond, 2002; Schatz, 2000; Schatz & Jenkins, 2002; Vecchiolla, Roy, Leser, Wronka, Walsh-Burke, Gianesin, Foster & Negroni, 2001). The following definition of advanced generalist practice expresses the organizing philosophy that underlies the advanced curriculum.



Advanced generalist social work practitioners utilize advanced reasoning, problem solving and ways of organizing knowledge in order to solve diverse problems of persons in their environments. The advanced generalist practitioner is distinguished not by method or level of intervention, but rather by advanced critical thinking and expanded knowledge and skills. At the advanced level, the curriculum focuses on the “extrapolation, synthesis and refinement of generic and generalist competencies” (Schatz, Jenkins and Scheafor, 1990). The advanced generalist practitioner is capable of intervening effectively in complex situations and applying creative problem-solving strategies to multi-level systems. While the generalist level practitioner is capable of applying rules of professional practice to a variety of situations and systems levels, the advanced generalist practitioner integrates rules into more sophisticated and comprehensive practice reasoning. Our curriculum is designed to enable our graduates to undertake diverse and complex social problems and apply multi-level assessment, intervention and evaluation strategies to the problems of persons in their environment. For example, students who work with older adults should be able to assess the differential psychosocial needs of physically healthy and frail elders, utilize diverse strategies to engage and support family caregivers, and communicate and advocate effectively with legislators, other healthcare practitioners, and community agencies for improved services for elders. In another example, graduates employed in community mental health agencies as clinical social workers need to have advanced skills in evidence-based mental health practice models and approaches for effective work with individuals, families and small groups as well as understand how changes in healthcare policy impact clients’ access to mental health services, and be able to advocate for repeal of regressive policies with legislators and other key stakeholders. The advanced generalist curriculum is designed to prepare University of Maine MSW students to meet the complex needs of our rural state with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to address interdependent “personal troubles and public issues” concurrently.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE MSW CURRICULUM**

The University of Maine, School of Social Work organizes the MSW curriculum in two stages consisting of a generalist year and a specialized year. Both the generalist year and the specialized year may be taken on either a full-time or a part-time basis, though all our programs are considered full-time by the Graduate School and Financial Aid. The program offers only one specialization: advanced generalist social work practice. All students must demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge, values, processes, and skills essential to generalist social work practice by either completing the generalist year of the MSW program successfully or by earning a bachelor’s degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education as the basis for receiving advanced standing at the University of Maine.

The full “regular” MSW program is a sixty-three (63) credit hour program and is offered to full-

time (2 years) and part-time (3 or 4 years) students at the University of Maine campus in Orono. The full MSW program is also offered as a three-year Online-Blended MSW program. Students who complete the full MSW program as part-time students may do so over three or four years. Advanced standing students may complete degree requirements in 46 credit hours as either one-year or two-year students.

The full regular program consists of 63 semester credit hours. There are 45 credits of classroom work and 18 credits of supervised internship. The curriculum is designed to be completed in two years of full-time study or in three to four years of part-time study. Students may elect to enter the program on either a full or part-time basis. It is sometimes possible to change from one format to the other, with approval of the student's academic advisor, Internship Director and the MSW Program Coordinator; this will depend to some extent on course enrollment for that particular year. Courses in the program are carefully sequenced, and with rare exception, cannot be taken out of sequence. Because of the sequencing students who choose the part-time option will attend half time for at least two years. Remember, both the full-time and part-time options are considered full time by the Graduate School and Financial Aid, if you are taking at least 6 graduate credits.

**Table 1: Regular, Full MSW Program: Credit Hours, Number of Courses and Content Areas**

| Credit Hours | Number of Courses | Content Area   |
|--------------|-------------------|--|
| 18 credits   | 6                 | Social Work Practice   |
| 6 credits    | 2                 | Human Behavior and the Social Environment  |
| 6 credits    | 2                 | Social Work Research   |
| 6 credits    | 2                 | Social Welfare Policy and Services   |
| 8 credits    | 2                 | MSW Generalist Internship & seminar  |
| 10 credits   | 1                 | MSW Specialization Internship & seminar  |
| 9 credits    | 3                 | Elective courses (Most electives are 3 credits, but we do offer some 1-credit electives; generally students take three 1-credit electives to equal a 3-credit elective.) |

**Table 2: Advanced Standing MSW Program:  
Credit Hours, Number of Courses and Content Areas**

| Credit Hours | Number of Courses | Content Area   |
|--------------|-------------------|--|
| 12 credits   | 4                 | Social Work Practice   |
| 6 credits    | 2                 | Social Work Research   |
| 3 credits    | 1                 | Social Welfare Policy and Services   |
| 10 credits   | 1                 | MSW Specialization Internship & seminar  |
| 9 credits    | 3                 | Elective courses   |
| 6 credits    | 3                 | Summer Bridging Courses: Policy, Practice, Human Behavior & the Social Environment |

Please note that the Graduate School of the University considers students taking six credits or more a semester as "full-time." What may be confusing is that within the School of Social Work, we consider "full-time" students to be those who complete the program within two years, taking four courses (14-15 credits) a semester. Students who complete the program in four years (the extended program) or three years (the Online-Blended option), taking two courses a semester, are considered by the School to be "part-time." (Similarly, for advanced standing students, we sometimes call students in the two-year program "part-time" students.) Although these differences in definition are somewhat confusing, students who are part-time in the Program are still eligible for benefits, such as financial aid that accrue to full-time students by the Graduate School definition. We discourage students from extending their program over more than four years.

Students need to be aware that if they are participating in a scholarship program or another university program that requires a different number of minimum credit hours, they must monitor and assure compliance.

Students who have a Baccalaureate Degree from a Council on Social Work Education accredited social work program may qualify for advanced standing if they apply for admission within seven years after they have graduated. This enables these students to complete the program in less than two years full-time, if they choose to.

### **Saturday Attendance for Online Blended**

The online blended MSW program is intentionally designed to incorporate an in-person class component consisting of two Saturday meetings per semester. These meetings are integral to the program's curriculum and provide essential opportunities for community building, skills development, and faculty-student interaction. Therefore, attendance at all scheduled Saturday meetings is mandatory for students enrolled in the online blended MSW program.

While occasional absences due to illness, pre-planned travel, or other unavoidable circumstances are understood, consistent attendance at Saturday meetings is expected. Absences should be the exception, not the norm. Any modification to the required in-person Saturday meeting format, for occasional absences, such as attendance via Zoom or the provision of alternative or make-up activities, is at the discretion of the individual course instructor. Students should consult with their instructors regarding any potential accommodation.

This online blended program is currently open to residents of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Students residing in these states are eligible to apply and enroll. Should a student relocate outside of these states during their tenure in the program, the student may make arrangements to continue their required Saturday attendance to successfully finish out the program. The program cannot guarantee continued enrollment for students who relocate outside of the approved region and are unable to attend Saturday meetings. In addition, relocating outside of the designated program area may impact the program's ability to provide internship oversight which may further impact successful completion of the internship component.

### **CORE SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCIES**

Upon completion of the MSW Program, students will be able to meet the following Social Work Competencies from the 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

| <b>MSW Generalist Year</b>  | <b>MSW Specialized Year</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Competency 1: Demonstrate ethical professional behavior</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context</li> <li>● demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Apply ethical principles and decision-making skills to resolve complex ethical dilemmas in advanced generalist social work practice with clients and constituencies</li> <li>● Employ strategies of ethical reasoning to address emerging practice issues</li> <li>● Continually improve practice through use of supervision and consultation</li> </ul> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes</li> <li>● use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commit to lifelong learning to enhance individual professional growth and development</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels</li> <li>● engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use knowledge of the effects of oppression, discrimination, and historical trauma to guide advanced generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</li> <li>● Demonstrate the ability to work with and on behalf of systematically minoritized/marginalized groups to support their voices in developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services that promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice</li> </ul> |
| <b>Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organization, community, research, and policy levels</li> <li>● demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflections, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts in their own lived experiences</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrate ongoing commitment to anti-racist and anti-oppressive advanced generalist practice with clients and constituencies in a variety of settings</li> <li>● Continually improve practice and deepen cultural humility through critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influences of bias, power, privilege and values in working with diverse clients and constituents</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice</b>  |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs</li> <li>● identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilize research findings to identify, evaluate and select effective anti-racist, anti-oppressive strategies for advanced generalist practice with clients and constituencies in a variety of settings</li> <li>● Design and conduct anti-racist, anti-oppressive research/evaluation that addresses inherent biases of practice</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services</li> <li>● apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrate leadership skills in policy/practice anti-racist, anti-oppressive advocacy efforts with clients and constituencies in a variety of settings</li> <li>● Apply effective anti-racist, anti-oppressive policy/practice legislative strategies to influence policies that affect clients and constituencies</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies</li> <li>● use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Synthesize and differentially apply theories of human behavior and the social environment to engage with clients and constituencies in a variety of settings</li> <li>● Use empathy and sensitive interviewing skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies in identifying their strengths and problems, establishing rapport, and maintaining effective working relationships</li> </ul> |
| <b>Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies</li> <li>● demonstrate respect for client self-</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adapt, modify, and use anti-oppressive multidimensional assessment tools and approaches for advanced generalist practice with clients and constituencies in a variety of settings</li> </ul>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Synthesize and differentially apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other culturally responsive and interprofessional theoretical frameworks in the assessment of data from clients and constituencies</li> <li>● Conduct culturally responsive needs assessment for advanced generalist practice with clients and constituencies in a variety of settings</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals</li> <li>● incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify, evaluate, and select effective, culturally responsive, and evidence-informed intervention strategies for advanced generalist practice with clients and constituencies in a variety of settings</li> <li>● use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve client and constituency goals in advanced generalist social work practice</li> <li>● Identify, evaluate, and select effective strategies to negotiate, mediate, and advocate on behalf of clients and constituencies</li> <li>● Identify, evaluate, and select effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes</li> <li>● critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Apply research skills in evaluating culturally responsive advanced generalist practice outcomes with clients and constituencies</li> </ul>   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and use anti-oppressive evaluation tools to critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate advanced generalist practice intervention processes and outcomes a variety of settings with clients and constituencies</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

### **MSW PROGRAM GENERALIST YEAR**

The generalist level of the graduate program incorporates the generic foundation for social work practice and introduces the student to generalist practice. The generic foundation for social work is the common base of knowledge and skills associated with all social work practice and differentiates social work from other professions (Leighninger, 1980). In addition, the generic foundation encompasses the core values and philosophy of social work, including the profession's commitment to achieving social justice and eliminating oppression.

The generalist perspective builds upon that generic foundation. It is based primarily in an open systems framework, utilizing strengths-based perspectives for identifying and solving problems. An open systems framework recognizes the interrelatedness of human life situations and social conditions, resulting in a broad approach to problem definition and intervention. This open, multi-level framework is not limited to any single theoretical or interventive approach; the point of intervention and methods of intervention are determined after careful assessment of the problem. Generalist social workers possess a knowledge, values, and skill base that are readily transferable among diverse contexts, locations and problem situations. Students develop skills in working with individuals, families, small groups, organizations and communities. The generalist repertoire also includes skills applicable to the tasks of lifelong learning, and to adaptation of the generalist foundation to specialized situations and contexts.

### **HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

The purpose of the HBSE sequence and content, consistent with the School mission statement, is to provide the student with depth of knowledge about people in their environments as a basis for understanding the diversity of human experience and the contexts which frame that experience, and for promoting quality of life and human achievement for all groups of people. The HBSE content is viewed as a fundamental part of the generic foundation, which underpins generalist



practice.

### **Course Sequence**

Focused curricular attention to Human Behavior in the Social Environment occurs in a two-course sequence required of MSW students (SWK 550 and SWK 650 for students without BSW degrees and SWK 533 for Advanced Standing students). The HBSE courses are:

- SWK 550: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I
- SWK 650: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II
- SWK 533: Adv. Standing Bridge in Human Behavior in the Social Environment

SWK 550, Human Behavior in the Social Environment I, is taken in the first semester of study. SWK 650, Human Behavior in the Social Environment II, is taken in the second semester. Advanced standing students who have completed related BSW courses are admitted to the Advanced Standing Summer Bridge courses and complete SWK 533, Advanced Standing Bridging Course in HBSE. Other aspects of the curriculum that integrate understanding of human behavior in the social context supplement the in-depth study of HBSE in SWK 550 and 650 and assist students in applying this knowledge to social work practice and the generation of new knowledge for practice. The generalist year of the HBSE sequence is designed to provide opportunities and learning situations that enable students to examine and understand normative human development using a life-span perspective within a systems framework.

## **SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY AND SERVICES**

The purpose of the Social Welfare Policy and Services (SWPS) sequence is to guide the student from an understanding of the elements of policy formulation and implementation to the capacity for critical analysis of the inter-relatedness of social problems, social policy, social services, and social work practice, and application of such analyses in advanced generalist social work practice. The chosen analytical frameworks draw on historical, philosophical, and economic knowledge in addition to social understandings, and practice comparative analysis cross-culturally and historically.

### **Course Sequence**

Focused curricular attention to Social Welfare Policy and Services occurs in a two-course sequence required of MSW students (SWK 540 and SWK 640 for students without BSWs and SWK 530 and SWK 640 for Advanced Standing students). The SWPS courses are:

- SWK 540: Social Welfare Policy and Issues for Generalist Practitioners

SWK 530: Advanced Standing Bridge Course in Social Welfare Policy

SWK 640: Advanced Social Policy

*SWK 540, Social Welfare Policy and Issues for Generalist Practitioners*, is taken in the first year of study. In the specialized year of the program students take the policy practice course, *SWK 640, Advanced Social Policy*. Advanced Standing students who have completed related BSW policy courses are admitted to the Advanced Standing summer bridge courses, and complete *SWK 530: Advanced Standing Bridge Course in Social Welfare Policy*, followed by SWK 640 in their specialized year. The Social Welfare Policies and Services generalist year is designed to provide opportunities and learning situations that will enable students to critically analyze the historical context of the social work profession and social welfare policy and to become familiar with current social policy and programs.

### **SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

The purpose of the Social Work Practice sequence is to move the student from a basic understanding of the elements of generalist practice to the application of this knowledge to advanced generalist practice. The generalist and specialized year social work practice courses emphasize empowerment of client systems, assessment of client strengths, capacities and resources, and analysis and implementation of empirically based interventions.

#### **Course Sequence**

Four sequential and two concurrent social work practice courses comprise this sequence. Students enroll in the generalist year social work practice courses (SWK 560, *Practice in Generalist Social Work I* and SWK 563, *Practice in Generalist Social Work II*) concurrently with the generalist year internship (SWK 595). In the specialized year, students take SWK 661, *Advanced Generalist Social Work Practice with Individuals* and SWK 665, *Advanced Generalist Social Work Practice II with Communities and Organizations*. In their final semester all students enroll in SWK 600, *Professional Integrative Seminar* and SWK 664, *Advanced Generalist Practice III with Families and Small Groups*. Students enroll in the specialized year social work practice courses either: 1) concurrently with the specialized year internship (SWK 695), or 2) in the year prior to completing a Summer Block Internship placement.

The social work practice courses are:

SWK 560: Practice in Generalist Social Work I

SWK 563: Practice in Generalist Social Work II

SWK 531: Advanced Standing Bridging Course in Generalist Social Work Practice

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| SWK 661: | Advanced Generalist Practice I with Individuals Across the Lifespan  |
| SWK 665: | Adv. Gen. Social Work Practice II with Communities and Organizations |
| SWK 664: | Adv. Gen. Social Work Practice III with Families and Small Groups    |
| SWK 600: | MSW Professional Integrative Seminar                                 |

### **SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH**

The faculty views social work research as the use of systematic inquiry:

1. to understand and advance social work knowledge, theory, and practice;
2. to define and clarify social problems and what is needed to resolve them;
3. to evaluate the way in which and extent to which problems have been resolved by social work practice;
4. to use systematic inquiry as a tool to promote social justice and eradicate oppression.

From this perspective, research is taught as a set of processes that are fundamental to all arenas of social work practice. These arenas include: 1) retrieving, organizing and critically evaluating knowledge for use in social work practice and 2) using systematic, logically grounded reasoning to:

1. engage in identifying and assessing social problems
2. determine the nature of need for social work intervention
3. characterize social work practice and
4. examine social work practice outcomes.

In addition, the value of research is emphasized as a tool for evaluating one's efficacy as a social work practitioner, analyzing social policy as a basis for supporting social change and using systematic inquiry to advance the values, mission and ethics of social work.

Consistent with the mission and philosophy of the School, social work research requires diverse approaches to knowledge assessment, development and application. These include a full spectrum of quantitative and qualitative strategies from true experimental design through naturalistic, integrated, emancipatory, and constructivist approaches. Moreover, social work research considers the context in which knowledge is generated, applied and evaluated. To actualize the mission, values and ethics of social work, social workers are responsible for examining the potential for oppression in existing theory, knowledge and practice, and to generate inquiry which promotes social justice and elimination of oppression.

### Course Sequence

Attention to social work research occurs in a two-course sequence required of “regular” MSW students.

SWK 691: Advanced Social Work Research I  
SWK 692: Advanced Social Work Research II

In the specialized year of the program students take SWK 691 and SWK 692, *Advanced Social Work Research I and II*. The research curriculum consists of SWK 691, *Advanced Social Work Methods I* and SWK 692, *Advanced Social Work Methods II*. The research sequence in the specialized year is designed to provide the opportunity and learning environment to enable students to use skills of systematic inquiry to pose and answer questions about social work practice.

A prerequisite for SWK 691 is required. This can be met through undergraduate course in research or statistics, or a graduate course in research methods or statistics (which may also count as an elective though not as a social work practice elective).

### **ELECTIVES**

Electives may be taken in the School of Social Work, or other graduate departments of the University. Electives may be taken at any time in the program. All choices of electives outside the School of Social Work must have the approval of the student’s academic advisor and the MSW Program Coordinator. The objective that governs advising and choices of appropriate electives for students states that the role of electives in the MSW Program is to provide students with the opportunity to expand knowledge and/or skill in areas appropriate to the individual student’s progress toward the MSW Program outcomes. Students are required to take nine credits of electives. This can be done with three 3-credit courses, or a combination of 3-credit and 1-credit electives.

A graduate course may be accepted for degree credit as fulfilling the requirement of a social work practice elective, if the course:

1. Examines social work models of practice, intervening with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities;
2. Is taught by faculty having experience in the form of practice being studied, and having either a social work identification or substantial exposure to and respect for social work approaches;

3. And is designated as a social work practice course by the MSW Program Coordinator.

The list of electives varies each year, but the following are electives that have recently been offered:

[N.B. “Advanced Topics” courses are numbered SWK 597].

SWK 577 Group Strategies in Health/Mental Health Settings (3 credits)

SWK 580 Adult and Child Psychopathology (3 credits)

SWK 585 Assessment and Intervention in Substance Use and Abuse (3 credits)

SWK 586 Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice in Integrated Healthcare (3 credits)

SWK 597 Spirituality and Social Work Practice (3 credits)

SWK 587 PTSD/Toxic Stress, Neuroplasticity, Mood Disorders, and Clinical Interventions (3 credits)

SWK 597 Social Work Practice with Children and Youth (1 credit)

SWK 597 Maintaining Empathy and Skills with Challenging Clients (1 credit)

SWK 597 Social Work Practice and Intimate Partner Violence (1 credit)

GRN 500 Overview of the Opportunities and Challenges of Aging (3 credits)

GRN 501 Life Transitions and Health in Aging (3 credits)

GRN 502 Interprofessional Care of Older Adults in Diverse Settings (3 credits)

DIS 530 Disability Policy

### **INTERNSHIP EDUCATION**

Internship education at the University of Maine, School of Social Work provides students with an opportunity to assimilate, integrate, apply, and connect conceptual knowledge, theories and constructs that they have learned in the classroom to generalist and advanced generalist social work practice. The goal of MSW internship education is to provide practice experiences specifically created to present generalist and advanced generalist social work practice opportunities for students to demonstrate the Core Competencies. The internship curriculum supports the values of the profession and seeks to assist students to incorporate the values and the mission of social work through ethical practice. Attention is paid to providing exposure to a socially, culturally, ethnically, spiritually, and economically diverse range of clients in diverse social service settings.

More information about the internship education component of the MSW program can be found in the [MSW Internship Manual](#) is available on the School of Social Work website.

### **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor from among the full-time faculty. The advisor will be available to meet with the student to work out issues around course scheduling and choice of field of practice, to develop greater understanding of the program and the profession, and to provide consultation about other issues that may arise related to the student's participation in the program. Students are encouraged to meet with advisors at least once a semester, more frequently if desired. Advisors are happy to meeting person, by phone, or over zoom at a time mutually agreeable to the student and advisor.

### **REGISTRATION FOR CLASSES**

Registration for first semester classes is completed prior to orientation. Space in required classes is guaranteed for matriculated social work students. Thereafter, for classes for the following semester, registration takes place over a several week period of time designated by the university. Students are encouraged to register themselves online, via Maine Street, once they have consulted with their advisor or MSW Coordinator regarding their course selections.

#### **Enrollment in Online Courses for On Campus Students**

With the exception of elective courses, online courses within the MSW program are reserved for students enrolled in the online blended program. Students admitted to the on-campus MSW program are expected to register for on-campus course sections. Students registering for online sections without express permission may be moved into on campus sections at the discretion of the MSW Program Coordinator.

Exceptions to this policy may be considered under extenuating circumstances. Requests for exceptions must be submitted in writing to the MSW Program Coordinator and include a rationale for the exception. Such requests will be reviewed and require approval by the MSW Program Coordinator in consultation with members of the Academic Standing Committee.

### **TRANSFER OF CREDIT AND COURSE WAIVERS**

Students may request transfer of up to 6 credits for courses taken in another graduate program. Courses may have been taken no longer than six years prior to the request. Transfers of credits or waivers may be requested for required or elective courses. Under unusual circumstances, a student may request transfer of up to 30 credits from another accredited MSW program. This must have the approval of the MSW Coordinator, and the student must file a waiver of conditions with the Graduate School. Course credits or course waivers are never granted for life or work experience.

**To obtain a transfer of credit or course waiver:**

1. Students should discuss the request with their advisors;
2. Students should write a memo requesting the transfer or waiver and submit it to their advisors, along with a course syllabus or at least a catalog course description; advisors will forward this request to the MSW program coordinator;
3. Students should make sure the school has a copy of the transcript for the courses;
4. The request is reviewed by the MSW program coordinator and by the instructor responsible for teaching the analogous course(s) at UM;
5. The MSW program coordinator will give written notification regarding course waiver and transfer decisions to the student, and the student's advisor; and
6. The coordinator of the MSW program will forward the request to the Graduate School for transfer credits.

**To obtain transfer or course waiver of more than a total of 6 credits:**

1. Students should fill out a form entitled, "An Exception to Graduate School Regulations." The form may be obtained from the Graduate School or from the Graduate Office in the School of Social Work;
2. Students submit the form to the MSW Program Coordinator
3. Students make sure the University has a copy of all transcripts;
4. The request will be discussed by the MSW Coordinator and the student will be advised of the final recommendation; and
5. The MSW Coordinator will submit the request to the Graduate School.

**REQUEST FOR COURSE WAIVERS AND EXEMPTIONS**

While the School of Social Work does not give credit for life experience or work experience, there

are a few situations in which a student may apply for a waiver or exemption. A *waiver* means that the student may waive a particular course for which he or she has demonstrated mastery of the course content, but must replace that course with an alternative course with the same number of credits. An *exemption* means the student may exempt a particular course for which he or she has demonstrated mastery of the course content, and does not need to replace the credits.

Students may consider applying to waive or exempt the following courses if they have met the criteria outlined below. It is strongly suggested that students discuss these options with their advisors if they believe they are eligible. Decisions need to be made prior to the deadline for registration for the particular courses waived or exempted.

- o **SWK 595, MSW Generalist Year Internship.** A student who graduated from an accredited BSW program over six years prior to entry into the MSW program (and thus ineligible for advanced standing status) may contact the Internship Director to explore being exempt from Generalist Internship. The Internship Director will assess whether the student has mastered the course content Core Competencies, and practice behaviors for generalist year internship through a written and/or oral examination.
- o **SWK 560, Generalist Practice in Social Work I.  
SWK 563, Generalist Practice in Social Work II.**  
A student who graduated from an accredited BSW program over seven years prior to entry into the MSW program (and thus ineligible for advanced standing status) may contact the MSW Program Coordinator and the faculty chair of the Social Work Practice Curriculum Sequence to explore waiving SWK 560 and/or SWK 563. The student is advised to review the syllabus from SWK 560 and/or SWK 563 to determine if he or she has mastered the course content. If the student believes that the course would be a redundant review of concepts and skills with which he or she is already competent, the student should request an examination of course content from the faculty chair of the Social Work Practice Sequence. This may include written and/or oral examination. If waived from either or both classes, the student will need to replace those classes with electives.

### **REQUESTING AN EXEMPTION IN COURSE SEQUENCING**

Students with special circumstances which make it difficult to follow the required course sequencing and who wish to request an exemption in the sequence policy should discuss their situations with their advisors. If the advisor agrees that the student's request has merit, the student should complete a "Request for Change in Sequence Policy" form that will be signed by the student



and advisor. This request will be reviewed by the Academic Standing Committee, the MSW Coordinator, or the School Director (which ever is most available) for final approval.

### **STUDENT AWARDS**

Upon graduation, students will be invited to a celebratory event at which we will honor all graduates and present several student awards. Student Service Awards are given to students who have participated in the Student Social Work Organization or who have been members of School committees (e.g., Curriculum Committee, Search Committee, MSW Admissions Committee). Academic achievement awards are given to the students with the highest GPAs. Each year we ask the graduating class to elect one of their classmates to say some words at the Award event. In addition, the Graduate School asks each unit to select an “outstanding” student who is then recognized in the program of the Hooding ceremony.

### **ACCREDITATION**

Social Work educational programs are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) upon recommendation of its Commission on Accreditation. CSWE certifies that the program meets accreditation standards as specified in the Handbook of Accreditation Standards and Procedures of the CSWE. The UM Master's Program was granted re-accreditation in 2004, 2012, and most recently in 2019. It was initially accredited in 1990.

### **STATE LICENSURE**

Graduating MSW students should review the slideshow providing information on applying for social work licensing at: [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1R\\_mNk9dSTngF-zrZl827SF3ODu9zN8\\_mZErJpZbuNi4/edit#slide=id.gc6f919934\\_0\\_0](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1R_mNk9dSTngF-zrZl827SF3ODu9zN8_mZErJpZbuNi4/edit#slide=id.gc6f919934_0_0)

In order to sit for the LMSW exam students must submit an application for licensure to the Maine Board of Social Work Licensure. Once your application is completed and approved, you will receive notification of your eligibility to sit the exam.

For information about the Maine Board of Social Work Licensure and to complete the applications go to: <https://www.maine.gov/pfr/professionallicensing/professions/state-board-social-worker-licensure/applications-forms>

The State of Maine has three levels of licensure:

- ***Licensed Social Worker (LSW)*** – for Baccalaureate Level Social Workers
- ***Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW)*** – for Master’s prepared Social Workers
- ***Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)*** – for Master’s prepared social workers who meet the requirement for “clinical concentration” and have completed the post-MSW clinical supervision requirements

The University of Maine MSW Program prepares students to qualify for the LMSW level upon graduation. Qualification for the LCSW requires appropriate supervised work experience in a clinical setting for at least two years (full-time) following graduation from our program. MSW students who graduate from the **“regular” MSW program** (i.e., **not advanced standing**) must complete particular courses in order to meet State of Maine Licensing requirements. Please use the chart below to help you in filling out the licensing worksheet at the point of graduation.

Students interested in the pursuing the LCSW must take SWK 580, Adult and Child Psychopathology as one of their two electives. In addition, advanced standing students must be sure that one other elective is a clinical practice course.

**Please Note: When you complete the Clinical Concentration Worksheet for the Licensing Board, you should choose Option A. The courses below should be used to complete the worksheet.**

**Normal Growth & Development --**

SWK 550: Human Behavior and the Social Environment I (first row in licensing worksheet)

**Adult & Child Psychopathology ---**

SWK 580: Adult and Child Psychopathology (second row in licensing worksheet)

**Clinical Methods ----- Social Work Practice Courses:**

SWK 560 Practice in Generalist Social Work I

SWK 661 Advanced Generalist Practice I with Individuals

SWK 600 Advanced Integrative Professional Seminar

SWK 664 Advanced Generalist Practice III with Families and Small Groups

(These four practice courses make up Option A and the third row in the licensing worksheet.)

MSW students who graduate from the **advanced standing program** must complete the following in order to meet State of Maine Licensing requirements related to “Clinical Emphasis”: *Please*

*Note: When you complete the Clinical Concentration Worksheet for the Licensing Board, you should choose Option A. The courses below should be used to complete the worksheet.*

**Normal Growth & Development**

SWK 550 is waived as part of students' admission to the advanced standing program. Advanced Standing students completed this course content in their BSW programs. On your licensing worksheet, note that SWK 550 is waived and you have taken SWK 533, the Bridging Course in Human Behavior and the Social Environment (first row of licensing worksheet).

**Adult and Child Psychopathology**

SWK 580 Adult and Child Psychopathology (second row in licensing worksheet)

**Clinical Methods ----- Social Work Practice Courses:**

SWK 661 Advanced Generalist I Practice with Individuals

SWK 600: Advanced Integrative Professional Seminar

SWK 664: Advanced Generalist Practice III with Families and Small Groups

One Social Work Clinical Micro Practice Electives

(These four practice courses make up Option A and the third row in the licensing worksheet.)

A copy of the licensing legislation and the regulations may be obtained from:

The State Board of Social Work Licensure

Gardiner Annex

State House Station # 35

Augusta, ME 04333      Tel: 624-8603

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial aid, work study and subsidized loans are allocated and administered through the Student Aid Office, Wingate Hall. Students interested in aid should explore the possibilities through that office.

The Graduate School administers Trustee Tuition Scholarship, the International Student Scholarship and the Atlantic Provinces Scholarship. These are very competitive, with decisions made by a committee of the Graduate Board based on nominations made by all Departments or Schools on campus. Typically the School of Social Work receives one to three scholarships per year.

The School of Social Work does not have ongoing guaranteed Graduate Assistantships. Students have found such assistantships elsewhere on campus (e.g., Residential Life, Student Records, or Graduate School) through their own research.

The MSW Program is demanding in time and energy. Faculty recognize that many students have considerable financial responsibility. Therefore, the classes are scheduled so as to demand minimal time on campus. Students have found that it is not possible to work full-time and attend the program full-time. It may be difficult to work even part-time while doing an internship, as the practicum demands two to three days a week in an agency, as well as academic classes on campus.

Opportunities, such as dormitory Resident Directors, exist for work on campus. Some of these jobs are very demanding, and the student should carefully consider work vs. school demands in deciding on work arrangements. Advisors will be glad to discuss these options with their advisees. From time to time the School receives information about work opportunities, and will share this with students as quickly as possible.

### **MSW PROGRAM RETENTION POLICY**

There will inevitably be times when a student has trouble meeting the academic and/or professional standards of the MSW program. Faculty advisors and classroom instructors seek to identify and address such problems quickly. We would like every student to succeed in the program, and believe that such success requires early identification of problems and supportive collaboration in remediating difficulties. The policies regarding student retention are intended to insure that if intervention is necessary it happens early in a student's career in the program; the policies also provide a structure for remediating the difficulty and describe responsibilities of the Academic Review Committee.

#### **Criteria for Maintaining Good Academic Standing**

Continuation in graduate work in the MSW program in good standing requires the following:

1. Academic standards:
  - a. minimum of a B average (3.0)
  - b. minimum grade of B- in each required and elective course applied toward the social work degree

- c. minimum grade of B- in internship
  - d. maintain continuous enrollment in the program or otherwise follow established procedures for requesting academic leave as needed.
  - e. No more than one incomplete that is carried more than one semester.
2. Professional standards:
- a. adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics
  - b. commitment to the values of social work
  - c. demonstrated capacity to engage in professional social work roles
  - d. adherence to the Student Conduct Code of the University of Maine

Students who do not meet good academic standing criteria may be invited to take part in an academic success meeting to discuss supports needed to help them be successful in their academic journey.

For additional policies on academic standing, please refer to the [Graduate School's policy guide](#).

## **Interruption of Graduate Program**

### **Academic Probation**

Students earning a grade below B- in any core or elective course applied toward the MSW degree may repeat the course once without penalty. However, until the course is remediated with a minimum grade of B-, students may not register for subsequent sequential courses or for internship.

### **Incompletes**

Incompletes are given only under compelling circumstances and are arranged by agreement between the course instructor and the student. The agreement will include requirements for completion and the expected date of completion. All incompletes must be completed no later than the end of the following semester in which it was issued (for example an incomplete issued in fall must be completed no later than end of spring semester). At which point, the incomplete will be converted by the instructor to the grade earned. Any other due date exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the instructor.

In the case of an incomplete grade for any sequential course, students may not register for subsequent sequential courses or courses concurrent with subsequent sequential courses until the incomplete is satisfied with a grade of B- or better. Students may not register for internship if

they have a grade of incomplete without review by the Internship Director and the student's advisor. An exception to this policy is made for those students who need to take an incomplete over the semester break in order to continue to see clients for their internship.

Sequential courses are:

Policy Sequence – SWK 540, SWK 640

Human Behavior and the Social Environment – SWK 550, SWK 650

Social Work Research –SWK 691, SWK 692

Internships —SWK 595(1), SWK 595(2), SWK 695(1), SWK 695(2)

Social Work Practice – SWK 560, SWK 563, SWK 661, SWK 665, SWK 664 and SWK 600

Advanced Standing students take SWK 530, SWK 531, SWK 533 (Bridging courses) and are not required to take any of the 500 level courses (other than electives) or SWK 650.

By arrangement with the Internship Director and the internship agency, under special circumstances, the internship may extend through semester breaks without penalty. Students may not take advanced practice courses (SWK 661, SWK 665, SWK 664, SWK 600) until SWK 595 is complete.

### **Leaves of Absence**

A student may request a leave of absence. The request is directed to the MSW program coordinator and the student's academic advisor. The student must also file a request with the Graduate School. Approval by the School is dependent upon agreement of a written plan for leave of no longer than one academic year, and timeline not to exceed four academic years for completion of requirements for the degree. Failure to adhere to the agreement will result in the coordinator's request for initiation of a formal review by the Academic Review Committee. If the student exceeds the one year limitation for leave of absence, s/he must apply for readmission.

### **Withdrawal from the Program**

Grounds for a recommendation of withdrawal from the program to the Dean of the Graduate School may include:

1. Unsuccessful remediation of a course in which a grade below B- has been received after one

repetition;

2. Receipt of a grade below B- in any course applied to the MSW degree;
3. Receipt of a grade below B- in internship;
4. Receipt of a grade below B- in more than one course;
5. Violation of the NASW Code of Ethics;
6. Violation of the Student Conduct Code of the University of Maine;
7. Failure to demonstrate the capacity to engage in professional social work roles.

While recommendation of withdrawal may occur as a result of one of the situations delineated above, the Academic and Professional Review Committee, described below, may negotiate alternatives other than withdrawal, depending on the individual circumstances of each case.

## **COMMUNITY PRACTICES AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

### **Color Brave Space (CBS) Community Practices**

In 2023 the School of Social Work (SSW) adopted a set of seven community practices developed by the organization Equity Matters, which we invite all students, staff and faculty to follow in our interactions with one another. These practices are consistent with the SSW's vision, mission and approach:

#### ***Vision***

*The SSW envisions racially just, accessible, and equitable social systems leading to sustainable collective freedom.*

#### ***Mission***

*Our school develops knowledge for social work practice, policy, and research through an evidence-informed advanced generalist curriculum, liberatory teaching, and community-engaged scholarship. We advance racial, economic, environmental, and social justice in our school, university, community, and state.*

### ***Approach***

*We are committed to building and maintaining meaningful, reflexive, and connected relationships with our students, faculty, staff, and communities. We teach using reflexive and liberatory methods that support students' holistic development. We partner with rural and diverse communities in Maine to promote full inclusion, address injustices, and advance the practice of social change.*

The CBS Community Practices are:

- **Put Relationships First:** Work to build community and trust, with an awareness of power dynamics.
- **Keep Focused on Our Common Goal:** The SSW envisions racially just, accessible, and equitable social systems leading to sustainable collective freedom (our mission).
- **Notice Power Dynamics in the Room:** Be aware of how you use your privilege: From taking up too much emotional and airtime space or disengaging.
- **Create a Space for Multiple Truths & Norms:** Speak your truth, and seek understanding of truths that differ from yours, with awareness of power dynamics.
- **Be Kind and Brave:** Remember relationships first, and work to be explicit with your language about race, class, gender, immigration, etc.
- **Practice Examining Racially Biased Systems & Processes:** Individual actions are important, and systems are what are left after all the people in this room leave.
- **Look for Learning:** Show what you're learning (not what you already know).

### **Professional Standards**

In addition to these community practices, social work is committed to responsibly demonstrating interpersonal and ethical behavior. Therefore, the academic and internship curriculum of the University of Maine School of Social Work supports social work students to follow the Color Brave Space Community Practices and to have behavior in accordance with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and the following Professional Standards.

**Communication and Interpersonal Skills:** Students exercise judgment in all communications with students, faculty, staff, clients, and others. Professional competence includes the appropriate use of online communication, responding to electronic communications from others in a timely and appropriate manner. Students have the ability to communicate effectively, both in written word and orally, when working with students, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals from other disciplines in all settings and modalities.

Students demonstrate the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty,



staff, clients, and professionals from other disciplines. Students demonstrate compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and respect for others. Students take appropriate responsibility for their actions and consider the impact of these actions on others. Students work effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. Students advocate in an appropriate, respectful, and responsible manner. Students use proper channels for complaints, conflict resolution, and grievances. Students show a willingness to receive feedback from faculty and internship instructors, administrators, staff and colleagues in a positive and respectful manner.

**Self-awareness:** Students demonstrate the appropriate use of self-disclosure and exhibit knowledge of how personal experiences and values affect practice. Students demonstrate knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. Students accurately assess their own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. Students demonstrate an awareness of self and how they are perceived by others. Students are willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes with working with clients and other professionals.

**Emotional Maturity and Management of Emotions:** Students demonstrate the ability to deal with past and/or current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. Students handle stress effectively by implementing appropriate self-care and supportive relationships with appropriate colleagues, peers, family members, and/or professional caregivers. Students are able to demonstrate emotional and behavioral regulation as well as unimpaired judgment in decision-making.

**Self-Efficacy:** Students take responsibility to seek and effectively use help for physical, medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance, including at their internship. Students are willing to make use of resources within and outside of the University when personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, and/or mental health difficulties:

- Compromise academic and internship education performance
- Interfere with professional judgment and appropriate social work practice behaviors
- Jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work students have a professional responsibility as outlined in the current NASW Code of Ethics and this document.

**Integrity:** Students behave in an honest and trustworthy manner with respect to all duties performed in connection with their classes and internships.

**Confidentiality:** Students comply with all applicable ethical and legal standards for privacy and confidentiality as they relate to any and all communications made in connection with their internship.

**Performance in Internships:** Students actively engage in their internships. This means that they adequately prepare for the internship; attend according to schedule established; consult with, and follow, the directions of their internships; and complete responsibilities consistent with their curricular year in accordance with the specific requirements of their internship. If students have questions regarding their responsibilities, they consult with their assigned internship instructor and/or their faculty liaison.

While a student at the University of Maine School of Social Work, I agree to abide by:

- The Color Brave Space Community Practices
- The UMaine SSW Professional Standards, and
- The [NASW Code of Ethics](#).
- 

## **MASTER'S ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS (MAPS)**

### **Purpose**

To reimagine educational pathways and professional development with the support of student peers, School of Social Work faculty, and University student advocates, and to operationalize the Color Brave Space (CBS) community practices (listed below) in the process of providing student support.

### **Outcomes**

- Student success is promoted for those seeking additional support themselves or who may be at risk of failing grades, unsatisfactory internship performance, ethical violations, and/or University dismissal by:
  - Supporting essential life skills,
  - Building community and mental health resilience through peer relationships,
  - Targeting remedial academic support via specialized advising and classroom facilitation, and/or
  - Investigating alternative pathways
- All participants involved find the process collaborative with power identified and shared.

- Recommendations for next steps are jointly developed and agreed upon.
- Students can identify a group of peers from whom they can seek ongoing support.

### **Process**

Once a student self identifies or is identified by a faculty member or another student as having an academic or professional development concern, the student will be contacted by the MSW/BSW Coordinator and invited to a meeting to discuss the issue. The student will be encouraged to invite student peers, other faculty, and/or a university advocate (for MSW students: the [Assistant Director of Graduate Student Success & Retention](#) [currently Aylah Ireland]). The MSW/BSW Coordinator will also invite pertinent faculty (e.g., advisor, faculty member raising concern, Internship Director, BSW Assistant Internship Coordinator, Distance Program Coordinator) The student and MSW/BSW coordinator, in consultation with others involved, will work to find a mutually agreeable time.

Either the MSW Coordinator, or another identified person, will facilitate the meeting, and communicate with the student and involved faculty prior to the meeting to both describe the purpose, hoped-for outcomes, and process of the MAPS, and to learn of any concerns the student may have. After CBS community practices are reviewed and clarified as needed, the meeting will be structured around generating and discussing the student's strengths and challenges/needs the student may be facing. All members of the MAPS, including the student, will be involved in this. The list will be made visible (e.g., sharing of the screen in zoom meetings) while it is being constructed. After strengths and needs have been fully discussed, a plan for next steps will be outlined, including ways for the student to access faculty and peer support. This will include a process for checking in with the student on their progress in completing planned next steps.

The list of strengths and needs, along with the recommended path forward will be shared with the student and all members of the MAPS at the end of the meeting. A copy of the planned next steps, along with strengths and needs, will be put into the student's file.

These meetings will typically last one hour, though longer sessions can be scheduled, should any party believe that more time would be advantageous. If the first meeting does not afford sufficient time, another meeting can be scheduled.

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Undergraduate or graduate students in the School of Social Work should conduct themselves according to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. Due to the professional and human service function of the social work profession, these behaviors are part of academic requirements and standards. Student misconduct that involves clients on or off campus or student conduct that is potentially dangerous to current or future clients constitutes a violation of the social work academic standards. The faculty shall follow these academic standards and initiate procedures for dismissal or restriction of offending students. For example, selling drugs or engaging in inappropriate sexual behavior with a child shall constitute a violation of NASW Code of Ethics and shall result in dismissal proceedings based on academic standards.

Student misconduct, on or off campus and directed toward other students, faculty, or University staff, will, at the discretion of the dean or the faculty advocate of professional standards, result in either academic or nonacademic procedures for dismissal. When legal or illegal behavior does not affect current or potential clients but the behavior violates the mission, process, or function of the University, proceedings will follow the University's procedures for nonacademic misconduct.

The following behaviors are examples, but not a complete list, of misconduct that may result in dismissal on academic grounds:

1. Forced or coerced sexual behavior.
2. Sexual activity with clients including, but not limited to, kissing, fondling, or sexual intercourse.
3. Physical actions directed at clients, students, faculty, or staff, such as hitting, spanking, or slapping.
4. Physical or emotional threats directed toward clients, students, faculty, or staff.
5. The acceptance of gifts or money from clients that are not considered standard payment for services received on behalf of the student's agency or internship setting; students shall not ask for nor expect gifts from clients.
6. Illegal or unethical behavior that limits or takes away clients' rights or results in financial, material, or emotional loss for clients or gain for social work students.
7. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Please also refer to The University of Maine Student Handbook for a full description of all procedures and additional information: <https://umaine.edu/studentlife/student-handbook/>

Please refer to The University of Maine Graduate Catalog for a full description of all procedures and additional information: <http://gradcatalog.umaine.edu/>

## GRIEVANCES

There are two processes students may follow if they believe they have a grievance.

### **Graduate School Academic Appeals Procedure**

Recognizing the highly individualized nature of graduate programs, a student filing an academic appeal is encouraged to request that his/her thesis [academic] advisor or other faculty member of his/her choice act as a counselor and/or representative at any level of the appeal process.

The student should discuss the concern with the appropriate faculty member(s). If the concern persists:

- The student should consult with the school director. If the complaint remains unresolved:
- The student should write to the Dean of the Graduate School, outlining the situation, and requesting a review. The Dean of the Graduate School will discuss the situation with the Director of the School and/or the faculty member(s) involved. The Dean of the Graduate School will then meet with the student and attempt to resolve the problem. If this resolution is not satisfactory:
- A final appeal, in writing, may be made by the student to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

### **School of Social Work Grievance Procedure**

The following guidelines may be used to address any grievances a student in Social Work may have concerning sexual harassment, practicum placement and experience, classroom procedure, cheating or plagiarism, and the evaluation of work and grades. These guidelines do not replace the University guidelines, but are additional procedures which the student may choose to follow. Therefore, any student wishing to initiate a grievance should first review the following guidelines:

1. The University of Maine Student Handbook states guidelines for the above grievance areas (including the practicum considered as a class) under "Student Administrative Appeals Policy" in the Policies and Regulations section. <https://umaine.edu/studentlife/student-handbook/>

2. Sexual harassment grievances are initiated through the Office of Equal Opportunity, which is located in 5713 Chadbourne Hall. For more information see the University of Maine [Sexual Harassment Brochure](#)

In following the preceding guidelines, a Social Work student may exercise the option of proceeding according to the supplementary guidelines below:

3. The student has the right to have another student accompany him/her at any stage or throughout the entire appeals process, for support and/or to be a witness to the proceedings.
4. If, at any step in the process, the involved faculty member holds more than one position in the appeals process, and has already been approached once with unsatisfactory results, the student may go to the next higher person or committee in the process. For example, if the Faculty Liaison is also the Internship Director, then an unsatisfactory resolution of the problem with the Faculty Liaison should be taken to the MSW Program Coordinator.
5. If there is any sense of intimidation at any level of the process the student should talk to the next highest level and solicit assistance in approaching the issue in the proper way.

**Note:** Any student can access advocacy through the Office of Student Life at any time. <https://umaine.edu/studentlife/>

## REFERENCES

- Brittingham, E. & Hammond, O. (2002). A seven dimensional approach to teaching advanced generalist practice. Presented at *Colloquium 2002: Refining our perspectives on advanced generalist practice*, Kean University, Department of Social Work, Union, NJ, June 22, 2002.
- Landon, P. (1995). Generalist and advanced generalist practice. In R. Edwards and J. Hopps (Eds). *Encyclopedia of Social Work 19<sup>th</sup> Edition*. National Association of Social Workers: Washington, DC.
- Leighninger, Leslie (1980). The generalist-specialist debate in social work. *Social Service Review*, 54, 1-12.
- Schatz, Mona S. (2000). Advanced generalist social work practice: Building from a theoretical base. Presented at *Colloquium 2000: Broadening perspectives on advanced generalist practice*, Kean University, Department of Social Work, Union, NJ, May 19, 2000.
- Schatz, M., Jenkins, L. & Scheafor, B. (1990). Milford redefined: a model of generalist and advanced generalist social work. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 26, 3.
- Schatz, Mona S. and Jenkins, L. E. (2000). Fostering equitable societies: Generalist and Advanced generalist social work: A practice model for international practice. *Proceedings of the Joint Conference of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (on-line)*.