Program Description M.S.W.

The MSW program has two tracks – Generalist (social work foundation) and Area of

Specialization. Generalist are required to complete 2 calendar years to include summers. Those

admitted to the one-year Advanced Standing program will be required to complete 1 calendar

year to include 1 summer. MSW students will graduate in August of each year and will attend

the Marshall University December graduation. Generalist Curriculum: Those who enter the

MSW program with other than a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree are eligible to enter the

Generalist 2 calendar year program. The 2-year curriculum (66 credit hours – 30 credit hours generalist and 36 credit hours in the area of specialization) perspective in which the simultaneous

impact of many systemic levels (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities)

on clients’ lives is critically analyzed and recognized. The foundation builds upon a liberal arts

base that fosters an understanding of society as a complex organization of diverse people and

ideas. Social problems are understood as occurring within the nexus of culture, conflict,

development, ecology, and systems and as such, efforts to help or intervene must include

consideration of these forces. Students will be able to critically identify and assess social

problems, specifically attending to 1) how such problems are maintained; 2) how they impact the

quality of people’s lives; 3) cultural sensitivity and appreciation of marginalized people; and 4)

how to actively promote social and economic justice. In the foundation year, the focus is on the

development of critical thinking skills in all the areas mentioned. M.S.W. Advanced Curriculum-

Advanced Social Work Practice: The advanced practice curriculum seeks to develop the

utilization and application of critical thinking, relative to behavioral health, on all levels - in

reading professional writing and research, in students’ practice, in the classroom, and in the

students’ own thinking. Consistently monitoring practice ethically, evaluating theoretical

principles and epistemologies, and utilizing technological advances become basic practice

patterns. Specific skill sets developed include: 1) Creating, organizing and integrating ideas and

action on engaging diverse client systems effectively in change; 2) Assessing, conceptualizing

and analyzing theoretical, practice and research problems from multiple perspectives and utilize

critical thinking skills to formulate impressions based upon the data; 3) Analyzing, synthesizing

and evaluating the evidence available to guide advanced social work practice; 4) Synthesizing,

formulating and implementing a plan of action for social work practice that addresses complex

issues and problems, builds consensus and incorporates multiple-level forces on client systems;

5) Analyzing and evaluating data of client progress and outcomes and sees implications and

consequences of this progress and outcomes; 6) Synthesizing, creating, and organizing ideas

from theory, research and practice for social justice; 7) Demonstrating the ability to integrate

culturally competent skills into all aspects of social work practice; 8) Demonstrating the

knowledge of the roles of behavioral health providers working in primary care settings, theories

and models of care, and cross-cultural issues; and 9) Demonstrating skills in engagement,

assessment, intervention planning and implementation, and practice evaluation in the primary

and behavioral health care setting.

M.S.W. Practicum Education: All Generalist students admitted to the 66 credit hour program

are required to satisfactorily complete 900 clock hours (18 credit hours) at approved practicum

sites. Advanced Standing students are required to satisfactorily complete 450 clock hours (9

credit hours). If employed in a human services agency meeting the department’s criteria as a

placement site, the student may apply to undertake the practicum at her/his place of employment.

This may be accomplished when the agency is willing to shift the student’s work role and

supervision in such a manner as necessary to meet the school’s educational objectives for

practicum instruction.

M.S.W. Electives: The Marshall University Department of Social Work provides electives as

enrichment to the specialized learning in the advanced year. MSW students are required to take

2-3 credit hour electives in their Generalist year and 2 -3 credit hour electives in the

Specialization year. For example, behavioral health care workers are asked to know

psychopathology, substance abuse, managed care, AIDS, and a range of other substantive areas.

Many school social workers share the need for the same content. In addition, it is noted that

social workers frequently change jobs, often to another field of practice. Social work education

seeks to teach students to think critically, analyze systematically, and know where to find

information and resources within the context of social work history, development and values. It

is this type of education that best prepares students to function in a rapidly changing society.

Admission Requirements Applicants should follow the admissions process described in this

catalog or at the Graduate Admissions website: www. marshall.edu/graduate. Applications are

received in the Department of Social Work for the M.S.W. between Jan. 15 and March 30.

Students also must provide two recommendations. The letters must be original, must be signed

and be sent directly to Graduate Admissions. These may be e-mailed from an identifiable e-mail

account of the person providing the reference. Reference letters sent via e-mail need to have the

signature of the person providing the reference (signed and scanned). These may be sent to

www.services@marshall.edu and cc’d to Leslie Lucas. Applicants are encouraged to submit at

least one academic recommendation. If the applicant has not enrolled in classes within the past 5

years, this requirement may be waived, and an additional work reference substituted. Evaluations

should be submitted from persons who have been directly responsible for assessing and

supervising your human service-related work/ volunteer experience and academic performance.

Avoid personal references (coworkers, advisors, friends, clergy, personal therapists, etc.). The

Marshall University Department of Social Work M.S.W. program requires two recommendation

forms, however, letters accompanying the forms are welcomed and strongly encouraged. It is

highly recommended that applicants who wish to be considered for the 36-hour

Specialist/Advanced Standing program should submit their field evaluations if available, or one

of their two letters of recommendation should be from their Director of Field Education, on-site

Practicum Supervisor, or Practicum/Practice Instructor if the field evaluation is not accessible.

The school reserves the right to request additional supportive material from persons acquainted

with the applicant’s academic and/or practice capabilities. Program Requirements. Conditional

and/or Provisional admissions: The student and advisor will develop a Plan of Study or blueprint

for graduation requirements. The Plan of Study must be on file in the Graduate College office

before the student registers for the 12th semester hour.

Composition of the Master of Social Work Program Generalist/Foundation

Curriculum.......................................................................................................................15 hours

Field.....................................................................................................................................9 hours

Electives…………………………………………………………………………………...6 hours

Total ..................................................................................................................................30 hours

Specialist/Advanced Curriculum

Curriculum.........................................................................................................................21 hours

Field Instruction................................................................................................................. 9 hours

Electives…………………………………………………………………………………..6 hours

Total .................................................................................................................................36 hours

INTO Marshall Students: The Graduate Pathway program will require INTO students who are

matriculating into social work to begin work toward their degree by taking Social Work 203,

Introduction to Social Work.

Generalist The M.S.W. program consists of a foundation-level Generalist curriculum to include

the following:

SWK 501 Foundations of Generalist Practice I (3 credit hours)

SWK 511 Foundations of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3 credit hours)

SWK 521 Foundations of Policy (3 credit hours)

SWK 531 Foundations of Generalist Practice II (3 credit hours)

SWK 541 Foundations of Research (3 credit hours)

SWK 551 Foundation Field Practicum (9 credit hours spread over 3 semesters - 450 work hours).

All Generalist 2-year students must complete 66 credit hours in order to graduate from the

program. All students enrolled in the regular 66 credit program must complete two separate

(2-3 semesters each) academic yearlong field placements.

Advanced Standing in the Program: An applicant for admission to the Master of Social Work

program who holds a baccalaureate degree from an undergraduate social work program

accredited by the Council of Social Work Education may be admitted with advanced standing.

SWK 615 Psychopathology (3 credit hours) SWK 631 Integrated Health Care: Models and

Practice (3 credit hours) SWK 633 Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice in Behavioral Health

Care with Individuals and Families (3 credit hours) The spring semester includes the following

courses: SWK 634 Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice in Behavioral Healthcare with

Groups, Families and Communities (3 credit hours) SWK 670 Advanced Theory and Practice

with Children (3 credit hours) SWK 673 Family and Community Violence in Rural and

Underserved Areas (3 credit hours) SWK 655 The Comorbidity of Mental Health and Physical

Disorders (3 credit hours) SWK 653 Advanced Field Practicum (9 credit hours, 450 work hours)

Electives – 6 credit hours.

Students who enter the program with Advanced Standing (30 credit hours total) complete only

one (1) academic (two semesters) yearlong field placement (9 credit hours, 450 work hours).

Behavioral Health Area of Specialized Practice: The Behavioral Health Area of Specialized

Practice prepares students to conduct clinical social work practice in assessing, treating, and

evaluating mental health, substance abuse, and physical health in relation to one another across

practice settings. A focus throughout the specialization will be on understanding the multiple

factors that influence health disparities and best practices to increase health equity, particularly

for marginalized populations. There will be a special emphasis on effectively serving vulnerable

populations with multiple needs. The Behavioral Health specialization integrates Generalist

practice by enhancing and expanding on Generalist knowledge, values, and skills in the

application of the planned change process across all size systems. The Behavioral Health

specialization extends and enhances the Generalist practice skills of engagement, assessment,

planning, intervention, evaluation and termination across all sized systems by incorporating

clinical courses focused on Advanced Clinical Social Work in Behavioral Health with

Individuals and Families. SWK 673 Family and Community Violence in Rural and Underserved

Areas SWK 631 Integrated Health Care: Models and Practice Generalist macro practice is

enhanced and extended in the Behavioral Health specialization through practice, assessment and

evaluation of integrated health care models and practice in SWK 631. Integrated Healthcare

Models and Practice prepares students to engage in culturally competent behavioral health

practice with diverse client populations with attention to oppressed groups and populations at

risk.