

**Marshall University College of Health
Professions**

Social Work Department

**BSW Student
Handbook**



Faculty

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Welcome to the Marshall University Social Work Department!

Social Work is an exciting, rewarding, and fast-growing profession.

With contemporary social issues such as child abuse, homelessness, A.I.D.S., poverty, aging, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, violence against women, and juvenile delinquency, there has never been a more important need for social workers.

Graduates from the Marshall University Social Work Department have an excellent record of accomplishment in terms of finding jobs in the Social Work field. Alumni work in hospitals, mental health centers, child welfare agencies, domestic violence shelters, and numerous other human service agencies. There continues to be a growing need for social workers in the Tri-State area and nationwide. The BSW degree is the entry level into the profession.

We hope you will enjoy your course of study and take advantage of the many diverse experiences of campus life. If you have any ideas, questions, or concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Social Work faculty.

MISSION:

The mission of the Marshall University Baccalaureate Social Work Program is to prepare students for the beginning level of practice as social work generalists grounded in the core professional values and competencies with an understanding and appreciation of the populations and institutions of Appalachia.

ACCREDITATION STATUS:

The Marshall University BSW Program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

ADMINISTRATION OF DEGREE:

The Social Work Department is housed in the College of Health Professions.

GOALS:

The program has identified five goals which flow from the mission statement and are consistent with the purpose and value base of the profession. The goals are as follows:

1. To prepare students for generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities with a special emphasis on working with populations and institutions of Appalachia.
2. To prepare students to recognize, respect, and integrate social work ethics and values in practice.
3. To prepare students to alleviate oppression and to recognize and respect the dignity and worth of diverse client systems with special attention to oppressed and vulnerable populations including Appalachians as well as populations distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religions, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.
4. To prepare students who understand social contexts of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, the behavior of organizations, and the dynamics of change.
5. To prepare students to obtain the habits and discipline for continuing pursuit of knowledge and lifelong development of skills necessary for social work practice.

The program's mission specifies **generalist** practice and emphasizes the core professional values and competencies. The program's definition of generalist:

The application of the planned change process from an eco-systems perspective which recognizes the interrelationships between various sized systems. Generalist practice includes the knowledge and skills to assume a wide range of professional roles and engage in professional relationships, gather information, assess, plan, implement, and evaluate change with all sized systems. Social work practice incorporates social work values and ethics including a strengths perspective and sensitivity to and appreciation for diversity. Generalist knowledge, values, and skills are transferable across systems of various types and sizes.

EXPECTED STUDENT COMPETENCIES:

The Social Work program is designed to help students achieve the following competencies.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and

macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

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

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

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

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

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

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and

human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

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

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

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

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

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

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

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

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate

engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

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

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

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

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

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the

importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

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

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups,

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

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

ADMISSION:

Students may declare a major in Social Work as early as freshman year. In order to become formally accepted into the program, however, students must complete Social Work 203 (Introduction to Social Work) with a grade of C or above and at least 24 hours of general academic requirements with an overall grade point average of 2.0 or above. At that time, a student may complete an application and interview for acceptance into the program. An admission committee made up of Social Work faculty reviews applications and conducts interviews. The committee may recommend accepting students into the program, conditional acceptance, or non-acceptance based on the following criteria:

A. Acceptance

1. Academic requirements: GPA of 2.0 or above and completion of Social Work 203 (Introduction to Social Work) with a grade of C or above.
 2. Ability to maintain positive and constructive interpersonal relationships.
 3. Evidence of communication skill.
 4. Demonstration of self-awareness, ethical behavior and willingness to learn.
- B. Conditional Acceptance: based on taking remedial action regarding one or more of the above.
- C. Non-Acceptance – with referral – based on:
1. The student’s application and academic requirements.
 2. Information from faculty knowledgeable about the student.
 3. The interview process.

Students who are not satisfied with a decision may appeal in writing, within 10 days of notification, to the program director who will reconvene the committee to re-evaluate the recommendation. Further appeal may be made in accordance with university procedure as designated in The Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students policy which is published in the Marshall University Undergraduate Catalog.

CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCE

The social work program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or for previous work experiences.

CONTINUATION IN THE PROGRAM:

It is expected that once a student is accepted into the program, academic requirements and standards will be maintained. As a professional program, continuance in Social Work depends on continuing progress toward a professional level of performance. The BSW degree is reserved for students who have demonstrated that level of competence. In addition to mastering a body of knowledge, a social worker must possess professional attitudes, skills, values and ethics. Academic performance in the BSW program includes classroom performance, class attendance, ethical behavior, communication skills, and psychological well-being sufficient to maintain positive and constructive relationships with clients.

Occasionally, it is determined that a student in the program may not be suited for the field of Social Work. In that case, the advisor may recommend remedial action or may counsel the student out of the

program. When withdrawal from the program is recommended, the student may appeal that decision to the program director. If not satisfied, the student may appeal in accordance with university procedure as designated in The Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students as published in the Marshall University Undergraduate Catalog.

ADVISEMENT:

Upon declaration of Social Work as a major, each student is assigned an advisor from the Social Work faculty. Students should meet with their advisor prior to registering for classes.

CURRICULUM:

For more information on our curriculum and to view a four-year plan for the BSW Program please visit <http://www.marshall.edu/social-work/students/>

Professional Program:

It is expected that once a student is accepted into the BSW program, academic requirements and standards will be maintained. As a professional program, social work expects students to progress toward a professional level of performance. The BSW degree is reserved for students who have demonstrated that level of competence. In addition to mastering a body of knowledge, a social worker must possess professional attitudes, skills, values, and ethics. Academic performance in the program includes classroom performance, class attendance, ethical behavior, communication skills, and psychological well-being sufficient to maintain positive and constructive relationships with clients.

Continual evaluation of the student includes not only periodic objective evaluations, such as grades and performance in field placements, but also professional faculty appraisal of the student's progress and potential. Continuation in the program is contingent upon positive ongoing faculty evaluation of the student's grades, professional attributes, and performance in real or simulated professional situations. A student may be suspended or terminated from the program for deficiencies in grades or violation of the Professional Standards as indicated below. The list below contains professional standards with areas of concern that may indicate that a student is unable or unwilling to follow the NASW Code of Ethics and/or standards set forth by the social work program. The list has been adapted (with permission) from standards developed by Lock

Haven University after careful review and revision by Marshall University faculty, students, and Advisory Board members. It is not intended to be all-inclusive and may be amended by faculty.

Professional Standards

Performance Standards

- Plans and organizes work effectively
- Turns in assignments complete and on time
- Makes arrangements for his/her special needs
- Attends class regularly

Indicators of Concern

- Continually unprepared for class
- Excessive requests for extensions on assignments and exams
- Excessive turning in assignments late or incomplete
- Multiple absences from class (as defined in the course syllabus) or field placement

Conduct/Behavior

Standards

- Demonstrates ability to work cooperatively with others
- Actively participates in class discussion groups/role plays
- Shows respect for others' opinions and is open to feedback from peers/faculty/field
- Is able to form positive, constructive relationships with clients
- Demonstrates a willingness to understand diversity in people regarding race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, sexual orientation and identity, religion, and populations at risk
- Conducts him/herself according to NASW Code of Ethics

Indicators of Concern

- Classroom behavior which impedes learning and/or building effective relationships
- Consistently late for class, or leaves class early unless otherwise arranged with professor
- Consistently late for field placement
- Sleeps during class periods
- Disrupts class process by talking to others
- Uses derogatory language or demeaning remarks or gestures
- Appears unwilling/unable to accept feedback
- Unable to form positive, constructive relationships with clients
- Monopolizes class discussions
- Consistently complains about class workload to the point of impeding class process

- Discriminatory behavior or harassment towards others on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, etc.
- Engages in academic misconduct

Self Disclosure/Self Awareness Standards

- Uses self-disclosure appropriately
- Appears to be able to handle discussion of uncomfortable topics
- Deals appropriately in class with issues which arouse emotions
- Demonstrates an awareness of one's behavior toward others

Indicators of Concern

- When engaged in self-disclosure, the student appears to overreact to or resent feedback (e.g, takes it personally)
- Appears unable/unwilling to control emotional reactions
- Abuses alcohol/drug, has emotional problems that interfere with relationships/learning process
- Makes verbal threats directed at clients, faculty, staff, or students
- Demonstrates poor judgment, decision-making, or problem solving skills
- Consistent failure to demonstrate ability to form effective client/social worker relationships (e.g., shows judgmental attitude)

Communication Skills Standards (written communication)

- Shows consistency in written communications – grammar, spelling, punctuation, clear structure, organization, logical sequence
- Demonstrates proper documentation of sources and citations
- Demonstrates ability to write effectively in records
- Abides by university standards regarding plagiarism
- Demonstrates use of critical thinking skills

Indicators of Concern

- Written works are frequently vague, shows difficulty expressing ideas clearly and concisely
- Excessive errors in spelling, punctuation, structure, etc., and does not make an effort to improve
- Consistently fails to adhere to guidelines for written assignments

Standards (oral communication)

- Is able to clearly articulate ideas, thoughts, concepts, etc.
- Communicates clearly

Indicators of Concern

- Ideas, thoughts, concepts are not clearly articulated

- Fails to demonstrate ability to communicate empathy, positive regard, and respect for clients
- Communication/language skills are inadequate to effectively interact with clients and in class

DISCIPLINARY DISQUALIFICATION

The social work department of Marshall University defines student misconduct as student behavior that is in violation of regulations established by the Board of Trustees, college/university regulations or rules governing residence on college/university property.

Social work majors, as citizens, are subject to all federal, state and local laws in addition to all college/university regulations governing student conduct and responsibility. A student may be suspended or terminated from the social work major for violating laws, rules, or regulations.

In addition, social work majors are bound by the NASW Code of Ethics. Students may be suspended or dismissed from the social work major for violation of the professional code of ethics.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The program engages in assessment in order to assure continuous program improvement. Assessment data includes field instructor evaluations of practicum students and practicum students' self-evaluation based on the achievement of the 9 competencies. Assessment data can be obtained from the program director.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION

The organization called the Marshall University Association of Student Social Workers is open to all students interested in the human services field. The purposes of the organization are:

- A. To aid in the further development of educational, vocational, and social atmospheres and facilitates on campus and within the community.
- B. To interpret and disseminate information which bears upon our students or individuals or groups within the community.
- C. To take action deemed necessary by our organization to aid in the maintenance, development, or seeking of change; both, within our organization, or for our affiliate groups and organizations in accordance with the laws of the state of West Virginia.

- D. To be change agents when our organization deems it necessary to correct some wrong aimed at our students, campus, faculty, or affiliate organizations, in compliance with the laws of the state of West Virginia.
- E. To increase social and civic interests in domestic and international issues by seeking the involvement of the student body or community.
- F. To promote the profession of social work at Marshall University and educate the campus and community in reference to the professional role and functions of social workers and their potential contributions to society.

In the past, the organization has participated in activities such as voter registration, sponsoring forums and workshops, attending conferences, commodities distribution for the Division of Human Services, fundraising, study groups, and social events.

FACULTY

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Program and Field Director

Kelli M. Larsen, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

SOCIAL WORK VALUES

Social workers hold that people should have equal access to resources, services, and opportunities for the accomplishment of life tasks, the alleviation of distress, and the realization of their aspirations and values in relation to themselves, the rights of others, the general welfare, and social justice.

Social Workers' professional relationships are built on their regard for individual worth and human dignity and are furthered by mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and responsible handling of conflict.

Social Workers respect people's rights to choose, to contract for services, and to participate in the helping process.

Social Workers contribute to making social institutions more humane and responsive to human needs.

Social Workers demonstrate respect for and acceptance of the unique characteristics of diverse populations.

Social Workers are responsible for their own ethical conduct, for the quality of their practice, and for maintaining growth in the knowledge and skills of their profession.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL
WORKERS CODE OF ETHICS:**

<http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>