

**Master of Social Work Program**  
**School of Social Work and Family Sciences**  
**The University of Akron**

**MSW STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**Akron, Ohio**

**Fall 2025**

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## ***WELCOME***

On behalf of the administration, faculty, and staff of the Master of Social Work program at The University of Akron, we would like to welcome you!

The Master of Social Work program began in 1995, dedicated to training advanced social work practitioners focused on promoting the dignity and worth of the person, human diversity, cultural competence, and social and economic justice. For over 25 years, we've continued that mission with a thriving, fully-accredited MSW program.

Social Work is a noble profession. You are joining a diverse and dedicated group of students and faculty united by their commitment and passion to make a difference. Like all great endeavors, your time in the program will be challenging but also rewarding. We encourage you to make the most of this experience. We can assure you that your efforts will be worthwhile.

Welcome!

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## **Purpose of the Handbook**

### **The purposes of this handbook are:**

- 1) to present the policies and procedures of the Master of Social Work program that guide admissions, completion of program requirements and graduation;
- 2) to describe the Master of Social Work curriculum;
- 3) to communicate other information such as available resources that will assist you in your graduate education;

All students are responsible for becoming familiar with the rules and regulations that affect their education. Throughout this handbook, frequent references are made to the policies and procedures for graduate education. Students are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the University's graduate school/college requirements. The link is below:

The University of Akron Graduate School Bulletin: <https://bulletin.uakron.edu/graduate/>

## **Mission and Goals of the MSW Program**

### **MSW Mission**

*The MSW mission is to prepare competent, ethical advanced social work professionals committed to the dignity and worth of the person, scientific inquiry, the promotion of human and community well-being, human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice.*

*We strive to instill respect for human diversity, and to enhance the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally. We embrace the values of the social work profession, including service, integrity, and competency.*

*Building upon a liberal arts education and grounded in generalist practice, our graduates specializing in micro and macro practice will aspire to address the most pressing social problems, utilizing a range of skills, resources, and the person-in-environment framework. We advance the social work profession through collaboration with the community.*

### **MSW Goals**

- Prepare students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession for competent and effective micro and macro specialized practice with diverse client systems in various practice settings by utilizing best practices and a range of prevention and intervention methods.
- Promote the person-in-environment and strengths perspective that advances the values, ethics, and purposes of the profession while building upon a liberal arts-based education.
- Prepare students to identify the strengths, resiliency, and dignity and worth of diverse client systems to foster empowerment toward social, economic, and environmental justice, human rights, the elimination of poverty, and human and community well-being, from a local to global perspective.
- Prepare students to utilize scientific inquiry, best practices, research informed practice and critical thinking skills for effective and ethical social work practice.
- Partner with health and human service organizations to provide meaningful field experiences and supervision for micro and macro specializations to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, and communities to enhance the quality of life for all persons.

## **Contact Information**

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School of Social Work and Family Sciences  
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## Criteria for Admissions to the MSW Program

### CSWE Accreditation Standard 3.1

The MSW program is committed to diversity in the student body. All degree-seeking MSW students (full-time, part-time, or advanced standing) must fulfill the general admission requirements of the Graduate School and the MSW program prior to admission. The applicant must therefore complete a combined application form for the Graduate School and the MSW program. It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that all required application materials have been received.

#### Academic credit

***No academic credit will be given for previous life or work experience for any social work courses including field.***

## Evaluating Applications to the MSW Program

### CSWE Accreditation Standard M3.1.1

- **Have an undergraduate** major in social work or a related field;
- **Have a minimum grade** point average of 3.0 in all courses taken prior to application for admission and a well-balanced liberal arts curriculum which must include content from areas such as Communication, Math and Humanities, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, Art, English, and Anthropology. ***Applicants with a GPA below a 3.0 can still apply and may be considered for part-time MSW coursework.***
- **Submit four Recommendation forms (links are sent from application portal),** excluding family members and friends, *(including one from immediate supervisor if employed)*.  
Preferred recommendations are those that come from academic instructors or professionals who have supervised you in a social work-related position (paid, volunteer or internship). Personal recommendations are not acceptable.
- **Submit an essay** of 3 to 6 typed pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, addressing:
  1. What motivates you to pursue a career in social work? (Describe the personal, academic, or professional experiences that have inspired you to seek a career in social work). How have these experiences shaped your decision to pursue an MSW degree?
  2. Describe a time you helped someone overcome a challenge or crisis.
  3. Describe a time you worked with people from diverse backgrounds.
  4. What role do you see yourself playing in addressing inequities experienced by marginalized groups?
  5. Select **ONE** of the following and respond:
    - a. What is the role of social workers in addressing mental health crises in today's society? Discuss the rising awareness of mental health challenges and how social workers can advocate for better mental health resources, policies, and services.

- b. How should Social Workers respond to the ongoing opioid crisis? Examine the role of social workers in helping individuals and communities impacted by substance use disorders, especially in the context of the opioid epidemic.
  - c. How can social workers address the disparities in healthcare access and equity? Reflect on the role of social workers in addressing healthcare inequities and advocating for vulnerable populations who experience barriers to accessing care.
  - d. How should social workers approach the issue of mass incarceration and criminal justice reform? Examine the role of social workers in advocating for criminal justice reform, supporting individuals affected by mass incarceration, and addressing issues like rehabilitation, re-entry, and restorative justice.
- **Submit a recent resume**, which highlights social work or human service experience.

### **Notification of Admissions Decisions**

Applicants will be notified of the admission decision in writing by the Admissions Committee. If there are any contingent conditions associated with admissions (e.g. a final transcript), they will be described in the letter of acceptance

### **Admission into Advanced Standing Program CSWE Accreditation Standard M3.1.3**

The MSW program acknowledges the accomplishment of those graduates from an accredited BSW program and recognizes their readiness for advanced standing in the MSW program at UA. The advanced standing status is developed and designed for those students holding a bachelor's degree in social work with a 3.2 cumulative average and a 3.5 grade point average in the major. These students should have demonstrated their having acquired professional development in the social work profession. The advanced standing status indicates that students will have covered and integrated the content in the foundation year.

The Advanced Standing Integrative Seminar begins in the summer and continues for six contact hours per week for ten weeks, which is equivalent to one academic year. The subject matter enhances the content covered in the first year of the MSW program. Students acquire knowledge, skills, and values in the fundamentals of advanced practice. In addition, they participate in a service-learning project, where they enhance their learning and solidify their determination of pursuing micro and macro practice. Upon completion of these credentials, students begin the specialist year either micro or macro and follow the second-year full-time format.

Admission to advanced standing requires completion of an application upon which a request is made. The students demonstrate acquired knowledge of fundamentals of advanced practice through the completion of required program admission requirements in



addition to having a recommendation from the three-to-five page narrative, reference letters, and undergraduate field evaluations. In compliance with the MSW program's Admission Policies and Procedures and the Council on Social Work Education policy M3.1.3, students are admitted into advanced standing placement based on the requirements for regular admission to the MSW Program **plus** these requirements:

1. A baccalaureate degree in social work completed within the last five years from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education
2. A minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.2 in all courses and a minimum GPA in social work courses of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale
3. Submission of undergraduate field evaluations along with other admission materials.
4. One recommendation must come from the undergraduate academic advisor, program coordinator or director, or field coordinator and one must come from a faculty member familiar with the student's academic performance.

Students who are accepted into the advanced standing cohort receive a letter describing the advanced standing curricular requirements. The content of this letter includes an explanation of advanced standing, delineating the requirement of service learning, discussion of cooperative learning groups, and the written assignments. The syllabus is posted on Brightspace for review. If the student determines that he/she would not wish to participate in the advanced standing program, the student must withdraw from this process in writing. Applicants not accepted into advanced standing placement will be notified in writing of their option to enter the pool of regular admissions.

Applicants should be aware that having a prior felony conviction or prior sanctions for unprofessional conduct may impact future potential for obtaining licensure, as well as field placements and social work employment. For more information, please contact the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board at <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/> or (614) 466-0912.

## **Transfer of Credits**

### **CSWE Accreditation Standards 3.1.4 /3.1.5**

An applicant who wishes to transfer from another MSW program must complete the same admissions process and meet the same admission requirements as other degree candidates. A formal written request for transfer must be made at the time of application for admission. A maximum of 20 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred from other graduate social work programs accredited by the Council of Social Work Education. The credits must fall within the six-year time limit to complete degree requirements. Acceptance of graduate transfer credit is determined by the program's Admissions Committee, which assesses potential transfer courses and the adequacy of the applicant's performance in these courses. A grade of less than "B" in any course will disqualify that course from consideration for transfer. If requesting credit for field education, transfer students must submit field work evaluations at the time of application for admission. No academic credit will be given for previous life or work experience for any social work courses including field practicum.

## **New Student Orientation**

All incoming MSW advanced standing, part-time, and full-time students are required to attend a program orientation session before they begin the MSW program. Incoming students will be notified of the date for the orientation in their letter of acceptance to the program. The orientation also includes important information about field education requirements.

## **NASW Code of Ethics**

Students in the MSW program are responsible for conducting themselves according to guidelines set forth in the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) *Code of Ethics*. This code identifies a worker's ethical commitments to (a) his or her clients and (b) colleagues, as well as the worker's responsibilities (c) in practice settings, (d) to the social work profession and (e) to society. All MSW students must be knowledgeable of this code and behave in a manner consistent with its principles. A link to the NASW *Code of Ethics* is below: <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

## **Other Student Responsibilities**

Students are also expected to assume personal responsibility for their social work education by:

- ☐ Attending class according to expectations described in the course syllabus;
- ☐ Being prepared for class and field;
- ☐ Meeting obligations for required coursework as indicated in the course syllabus;
- ☐ Meeting obligations for field practicums as outlined in the course syllabus, by the field instructor or agency policy;
- ☐ Seeking appropriate assistance from faculty, field instructor or other appropriate agency staff when caring for clients;
- ☐ Maintaining a professional demeanor and appearance in all courses including field practicum.

While not required, students are encouraged to participate in program governance including such activities as serving on program committees, participating in the Master of Social Work Student Association and other student organizations, and providing feedback for

faculty searches.

**In accordance with the Council on Social Work Education Accreditation Standard 3.1.5: the MSW program does not grant any social work course credit for any previous life or work experience.**

## **Student Professional Behaviors**

MSW students are expected to follow all program and university guidelines. Students in a social work program are also expected to grow and develop in their professional self. The following are the professional behaviors students are expected to maintain during their time in the program:

### **Competency #1: Ethical and Professional Behavior**

***1a. Apply ethical decision-making by integrating the NASW Code of Ethics, applicable laws and regulations, recognized models for ethical reasoning, and other relevant professional codes appropriate to specific practice settings.***

<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Concern</b>
<p>Applies ethical decision-making across diverse settings (e.g., practicum, classroom, community-based activities). The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies structured ethical decision-making models (e.g., Reamer’s or the ETHIC model) to analyze and respond to complex ethical situations.</li><li>• <b>Receives and responds to constructive feedback</b> with openness, integrating guidance to improve ethical awareness and professional conduct.</li><li>• <b>Takes responsibility for errors</b> by acknowledging mistakes, reflecting on their impact, and actively working to correct them.</li><li>• <b>Clearly articulates relevant ethical standards and values</b> during class discussions, supervision sessions, or team meetings, demonstrating integration of professional ethics into reasoning.</li><li>• <b>Accurately documents ethical considerations</b> in case notes, process recordings, or assignments, showing awareness of ethical implications in practice.</li></ul>	<p>Ethical decisions are made inconsistently, without reflection, or without using a structured process appropriate to the context. The following are examples — though not an exhaustive list — of behaviors that may raise concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Fails to consistently apply core ethical principles</b> from the NASW Code of Ethics in academic, practicum, or interpersonal situations.</li><li>• Avoids, neglects or refuses to follow consultation or supervision when facing ethical concerns, even when guidance is readily available or required.</li><li>• <b>Demonstrates limited or no awareness of the broader implications</b> of ethical decisions on clients, communities, or the profession.</li><li>• <b>Has continued difficulty or refuses to acknowledge errors in ethical reasoning</b> or refuses to take responsibility for poor judgment. acknowledge errors in reasoning.</li></ul>

<p><b>Demonstrates adherence to relevant laws, regulations, institutional policies, and the NASW Code of Ethics, applying these appropriately to each context.</b> The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Identifies and references applicable ethical codes</b> when navigating ethical dilemmas in coursework, practicum, or community settings.</li> <li>• <b>Applies relevant ethical principles</b> (e.g., client self-determination, confidentiality, professional boundaries) to guide actions and decision-making.</li> <li>• <b>Completes required documentation</b> (e.g., case notes, reports, assessments) accurately and within designated timeframes.</li> <li>• <b>Follows mandated reporting laws and institutional policies</b>, including proper reporting of suspected abuse, neglect, or threats to safety, in accordance with state law and agency procedures.</li> </ul>	<p>Failure to adhere with relevant laws, regulations, and/or procedures as outlined by the NASW code of ethics in at least one or more situations. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Does not reference or consider ethical codes</b> when presented with ethical dilemmas, resulting in inconsistent or inappropriate responses.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates difficulty identifying or applying core ethical principles</b>, such as client dignity, informed consent, or professional boundaries.</li> <li>• <b>Fails to comply with applicable state laws or institutional policies</b>, including but not limited to mandated reporting requirements, confidentiality protocols, or informed consent procedures.</li> </ul>
<p>Compliance with the university and program specific policy and procedures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UA SOWFS MSW Student Handbook</li> <li>• UA SOWFS BASW Student Handbook</li> <li>• UA SOWFS MSW Field Manual</li> <li>• UA SOWFS BASW Field Manual</li> <li>• UA Student Conduct and Community Standards</li> </ul>	<p>Non-compliance with university and program specific policy and procedures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fails to maintain civility and respect in</b> interactions with peers, faculty, field instructors, clients, or community partners.</li> <li>• <b>Does not meet expectations or requirements</b> outlined in the Social Work Student Handbook, Field Manual, or other official program documents.</li> </ul>

***1b. Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication***

Acceptable	Concern
<p><b>Demonstrates the ability to work collaboratively and adapt communication style to suit the goal, audience, context, and situation.</b> The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Actively listens</b> to others with attention, empathy, and an open mind.</li> <li>• <b>Uses appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication cues</b> to support clarity, engagement, and rapport.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Demonstrates difficulty collaborating with others and struggles to adapt verbal and nonverbal communication to suit the goal, audience, or context.</b> The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Displays inappropriate or unprofessional nonverbal communication</b>, such as facial expressions, gestures, tone, pitch, or body language, in academic or practicum settings.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communicates ideas in a way that is sensitive to the knowledge, experience, and cultural background</b> of others.</li> <li>• <b>Employs clear, respectful, and professional language</b> in both written and verbal communication across academic and practicum settings.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates respect for diverse perspectives, identities, and roles</b> in group, classroom, and field environments.</li> <li>• <b>Uses humor appropriately</b>, with awareness of context, boundaries, and cultural sensitivity.</li> <li>• <b>Adjusts tone and language appropriately</b> based on the situation and audience, including clients, peers, faculty, and supervisors.</li> <li>• <b>Protects confidential and sensitive information</b> shared in the classroom, practicum, or other professional settings, in accordance with ethical and legal standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstrates difficulty with active listening</b>, such as interrupting, showing disinterest, or failing to respond appropriately to others.</li> <li>• <b>Engages in frequent miscommunication</b>, leading to confusion, conflict, or disruption of group or client interactions.</li> <li>• <b>Shows a lack of respect for others</b>, including dismissive language, exclusionary behavior, or failure to acknowledge diverse perspectives.</li> <li>• <b>Fails to contribute meaningfully to group work</b>, discussions, or collaborative tasks, either through lack of engagement or unwillingness to participate.</li> <li>• <b>Uses inappropriate humor or sarcasm</b>, particularly in ways that may be offensive, dismissive, or unprofessional.</li> <li>• <b>Inappropriately discloses confidential or sensitive information</b>, including sharing protected client information or private details from class or practicum settings, whether in-person or virtual.</li> </ul>
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***1c. Use technology ethically and appropriately***

<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Concern</b>
<p>Demonstrates ethical and professional use of technology, email, and social media, with particular attention to confidentiality, tone, and appropriate communication. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adheres to the NASW, ASWB, CSWE, and CSWA Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice</b>, including responsible use of digital tools in academic and field settings.</li> <li>• <b>Protects client confidentiality and privacy</b> when using electronic communication (e.g., email, messaging, documentation platforms).</li> <li>• <b>Follows agency and university policies</b> regarding technology use, data sharing, and communication protocols.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates secure handling of client or sensitive information</b>, including using encrypted files, password protection, and locking devices when not in use.</li> <li>• <b>Communicates accurate and ethical information</b>, ensuring digital content aligns with</li> </ul>	<p><b>Engages in unprofessional or unethical use of technology, including violations of confidentiality, inappropriate communication, or failure to follow established standards.</b> The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fails to adhere to the NASW, ASWB, CSWE, and CSWA Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice</b>, including misuse of digital platforms or communication tools.</li> <li>• <b>Uses aggressive or inappropriate online communication</b>, such as "flaming" (e.g., all-caps messages, hostile tone) in emails, forums, or messages.</li> <li>• <b>Shares inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate content</b> through digital communication or online platforms.</li> <li>• <b>Does not uphold the NASW Code of Ethics</b> when using technology to</li> </ul>

<p>the values and standards outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Uses AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, or other generators) ethically and transparently</b>, including proper citation or disclosure when used for assignments, documentation, or professional activities, as indicated in APA.</li> </ul>	<p>communicate or provide services, including breaches in professional conduct.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Crosses or does not recognize professional boundaries in virtual communication</b>, including inappropriate familiarity, informal language, or unprofessional interaction with clients, peers, or supervisors.</li> <li>• <b>Uses AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, writing assistants) unethically</b>, such as submitting AI-generated work without citation or using it to bypass learning or documentation requirements.</li> </ul>
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*1d. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior*

Acceptable	Concern
<p><b>Actively seeks and applies supervision and consultation to enhance professional judgment, behavior, and overall practice. Accepts and utilizes constructive feedback from peers, instructors, field supervisors, and clients, engaging in ongoing reflection and self-correction.</b> The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Proactively seeks supervision and consultation</b> to inform decision-making, address challenges, and strengthen ethical practice.</li> <li>• <b>Prepares thoughtfully for supervision sessions</b>, including setting agendas, reflecting on practice, and identifying areas for growth.</li> <li>• <b>Raises relevant ethical concerns, boundary issues, or complex cases</b> for collaborative discussion and guidance.</li> <li>• <b>Integrates feedback from supervision or consultation</b> to modify behavior, enhance skills, and promote professional development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Demonstrates difficulty accepting and applying constructive feedback from peers, instructors, field supervisors, or clients, and struggles to engage in reflection or self-correction to improve professional judgment, behavior, or practice.</b> The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fails to actively seek out supervision or consultation</b> when faced with ethical dilemmas, uncertainty, or challenging professional situations.</li> <li>• <b>Responds defensively, with anger, or dismissiveness</b> when offered constructive feedback intended to support learning and growth.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates a pattern of behaviors</b> that negatively impact relationships with clients, peers, faculty, or field supervisors, despite previous feedback or intervention.</li> </ul>

### Competency #3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

#### 3a. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels

Acceptable	Concern
<p>Demonstrates the ability to appreciate the perspective of others in developing an in-depth understanding of the situation. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Asks respectful and thoughtful clarifying questions</b> to deepen understanding of others' perspectives and experiences.</li> <li>• <b>Identifies and considers historical, social, and structural factors</b> that influence clients' lived experiences and access to resources.</li> <li>• <b>Uses others' perspectives to cultivate empathy and strengthen cultural humility</b>, especially when engaging with individuals from marginalized or underserved communities.</li> <li>• <b>Acknowledges and critically reflects on the role of systemic oppression, discrimination, and historical trauma</b> in shaping individual and community well-being.</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrates an unwillingness or lack of engagement in the perspective of others when developing an in-depth understanding of the situation. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Avoids or resists asking clarifying questions</b> to better understand diverse perspectives, particularly when engaging with individuals from backgrounds different than their own</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates limited empathy or cultural humility</b> and fails to integrate the perspectives of marginalized individuals into understanding or case formulation.</li> <li>• Abruptly interrupts with counter arguments.</li> <li>• Does not listen to perspective of others.</li> <li>• Uses discouraging communication.</li> <li>• <b>Shows difficulty acknowledging or reflecting on systemic oppression, discrimination, or historical trauma</b>, and may dismiss or invalidate their impact on individuals, families, or communities.</li> </ul>
<p>Demonstrates a commitment to recognizing and reducing implicit biases through ongoing education, critical self-reflection, and respectful dialogue. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Advocates for social justice and the protection of human rights</b>, especially on behalf of individuals and communities impacted by systemic inequities.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates self-awareness of personal biases, values, and beliefs</b>, and actively works to prevent them from influencing professional judgment, decision-making, or client interactions.</li> <li>• <b>Consistently uses inclusive and affirming language</b>, while avoiding assumptions or stereotypes related to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, religion, or other aspects of identity.</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to actively work to recognize and reduce implicit biases through education, reflection, or open dialogue. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Perpetuates stereotypes, biased assumptions, or discriminatory practices</b>, whether implicitly or explicitly, in interactions with clients, peers, or colleagues.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates limited self-awareness or resistance to self-reflection</b>, resulting in the continued influence of personal biases or beliefs on professional judgment.</li> <li>• <b>Dismisses the relevance or impact of implicit bias</b>, cultural differences, or systemic inequities in social work settings.</li> </ul>

#### 3b. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, 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 of their own lived experiences.*

Acceptable	Concern
<p>Demonstrates the ability to self-regulate by monitoring and managing emotions, attitudes, and personal beliefs, especially related to human diversity (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion) in a manner consistent with the responsibilities of working with diverse clients, peers, and communities. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refrains from imposing personal values, beliefs, or judgments</b> on clients, peers, or colleagues in academic and field settings.</li> <li>• <b>Communicates in a manner that is respectful and culturally sensitive</b>, showing awareness of the diverse backgrounds and experiences of others.</li> <li>• <b>Uses self-disclosure appropriately and intentionally</b>, ensuring that disclosures are purposeful, relevant, and in the best interest of the client or group.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates insight and self-awareness</b> when sharing personal experiences, indicating that the issue has been sufficiently resolved and will not interfere with professional responsibilities.</li> <li>• <b>Engages openly and respectfully in discussions about uncomfortable or sensitive topics</b>, including those related to identity, power, and oppression.</li> <li>• <b>Recognizes and takes responsibility for the impact of their words and behavior</b> on others, and adjusts as needed to maintain professionalism.</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrates difficulty or inability in regulating emotions, attitudes, or personal beliefs, particularly regarding aspects of human diversity such as race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or religion, in a manner inconsistent with the demands of professional social work practice with diverse clients and constituencies. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Imposes personal values or beliefs</b> on clients, peers, or colleagues, rather than maintaining professional neutrality and respect.</li> <li>• <b>Prioritizes personal viewpoints or "agendas"</b> over the needs, goals, or autonomy of the client.</li> <li>• <b>Makes discriminatory, insensitive, or inappropriate remarks</b> toward clients, peers, faculty, or community members.</li> <li>• <b>Uses self-disclosure inappropriately</b>, including sharing unresolved personal issues or deflecting attention away from client concerns.</li> <li>• <b>Responds defensively or emotionally to feedback</b>, taking it personally rather than viewing it as an opportunity for growth.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates difficulty managing emotional responses</b>, such as anger, frustration, or withdrawal, in professional settings.</li> <li>• <b>Avoids or resists engaging in conversations about difficult or uncomfortable topics</b>, such as race, power, privilege, or oppression, even when such discussions are relevant and necessary.</li> </ul>
<p>Demonstrates respect for clients as experts of their own lived experiences and actively works to empower individuals, families, and communities throughout the helping process. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Engages in ongoing learning and development</b>, including seeking out opportunities to deepen knowledge and improve practice skills.</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to recognize others as experts of their own lived experience, which may hinder the development of collaborative and empowering helping relationships. The following are illustrative—not exhaustive—examples of this behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Disregards or minimizes input from clients, peers, or colleagues</b>,</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstrates self-awareness by recognizing personal and professional limitations</b>, and shows openness to feedback, new perspectives, and differing viewpoints.</li> <li>• <b>Seeks out culturally relevant information</b> about communities or populations unfamiliar to them and integrates this knowledge respectfully and thoughtfully into practice.</li> </ul>	<p>failing to engage in collaborative decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Displays indifference or lack of empathy</b> toward the experiences, identities, or needs of others.</li> <li>• <b>Withholds relevant information</b> that may be necessary for effective communication, teamwork, or service delivery.</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrates difficulty recognizing personal or professional limitations</b>, and resists accepting new ideas, constructive feedback, or contradictory information.</li> </ul>
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<sup>1</sup> \*The UA SOWFS Student Professional Behaviors are adapted from the West Chester University Department of Social Work's Professional Behaviors and Expectations manual and the University of Southern Mississippi School of Social Work's Social Work Professional & Technical Standards.

## UA Graduate School

The University of Akron Graduate School: <https://www.uakron.edu/gradsch/>

### Program Completion Requirements

Requirements for the Master of Social Work degree include the completion of 60 hours of course work with an average grade of “B” or better in all classroom courses and satisfactory grades in all field courses. Students will be registered only for 600 level courses. Graduate courses taken at the 500 level are not applicable for the MSW degree. Other general requirements for the Master of Social Work degree are the same as those established by the UA Graduate School and are in accordance with accreditation standards established by the Council on Social Work Education. There is no foreign language requirement, and the GRE is not required.

The MSW program consists of 60 credits taken over two academic years by full-time students, and four academic years by part-time students on the main campus. The online intensive format covers the 60 credits over four consecutive semesters (spring, summer, fall, spring) by full-time students and eight consecutive semesters by part-time students. Students entering the specialist year through the advanced standing option take the Advanced Standing Integrative Seminar (six {6} credits) during the summer preceding their specialist year. Advanced Standing classes begin in June and continue for ten weeks. Upon successful completion of these credits, students will begin the specialist year and follow the full-time format.

Generalist year students take all of the courses offered in the first year, including 400 hours of field education. The part-time program consists of four consecutive years of coursework instruction. Students will be enrolled in the two scheduled courses the first two semesters and then three courses the final two generalist semesters. They adhere to the schedule as outlined to ensure progress toward graduation.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The University of Akron does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, age, disability, status as a veteran, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loans programs, or other school-administered programs. The University also affirms that judgments about admissions, education and personnel evaluations at The University of Akron are based on merit, qualifications and performance and not on personal attributes or convictions unrelated to academic or job performance, such as political views, marital status, sexual orientation, or happenstance of birth <https://www.uakron.edu/ogc/legal-policies-and-procedures/nondiscrimination-policy.dot>.

## **Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of The University of Akron that no member of the university community shall engage in sexual harassment. The university community will not tolerate sexual harassment because it creates an unacceptable or injurious working or educational environment. Members of the university community who believe that they have been sexually harassed should seek resolution of the problem through the UA informal and formal grievance procedures.

The University of Akron Office of Student Affairs:  
Dean of Students

(330) 972-6048

<https://www.uakron.edu/deanofstudents/>

<https://www.uakron.edu/ogc/UniversityRules/pdf/11-13.pdf>

## **MSW Program Competencies**

### **Generalist Social Work Core Competencies**

The MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). We support and abide by the CSWE Commission on Accreditation's Educational Policies for social work education, including an approach that is competency-based.

The University of Akron MSW program lists these competencies in each syllabus to emphasize their importance in social work education. Each MSW graduate is expected to demonstrate mastery of these competencies. While not all competencies are addressed in each course, all are listed in each syllabus. By the time students complete the MSW degree, they will be assessed on each of the competencies. This process is part of the overall assessment plan of the MSW program. [CSWE Core Competencies 2022](#)

### **Generalist MSW**

#### **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners function as social work professionals who engage in ethical*

*decision making via applying NASW Code of Ethics. They:*

- \* Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development;
- \* Attend to professional roles and boundaries;
- \* Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication;
- \* Engage in career-long learning;
- \* Use supervision and consultation;
- \* Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics;
- \* Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

## **Competency 2 Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners recognize how individuals are marginalized based on differences and work towards eliminating injustice. They:*

- \* Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination;
- \* Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and
- \* Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

## **Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice**

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners utilize critical consciousness to recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of differences in shaping life experiences. They:*

- \* Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;
- \* Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups;
- \* Recognize practicing cultural humility and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and
- \* View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

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

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners understand the value of documentation that leads to evidence-based practice. They:*

- \* Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry and
- \* Use research evidence to inform practice.

## **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners understand how the federal, international, and specifically Ohio Revised Code governs the function of agency-based practice and engage in policy practice. They:*

- \* Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and
- \* Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

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

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners utilize knowledge, skills, and values to engage clients in an effective manner that creates and maintains clients' participation in the problem-solving process. They:*

- \* Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and

communities;

- \* Use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and
- \* Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

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

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners utilize the problem-solving process to facilitate the clients sharing appropriate information relative to their human condition. They:*

- \* Collect, organize, and interpret client data;
- \* Assess client strengths and limitations;
- \* Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and
- \* Select appropriate intervention strategies.

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

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners utilize unconditional positive regard in prevention and intervention with clients in a collaborative process. They:*

- \* Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;
- \* Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;
- \* Help clients resolve problems;
- \* Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and
- \* Facilitate transitions and endings.

### **Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

*At the generalist level, advanced practitioners build evidence-based practice through evaluating clients' goal attainment and the outcome of the intervention:*

- \* Social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

## **Macro Specialization Social Work Core Competencies**

The MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). We support and abide by the CSWE Commission on Accreditation's Educational Policies for social work education, including an approach that is competency-based.

The University of Akron MSW program lists these competencies in each macro specialization syllabus to emphasize their importance in social work education. Each macro specialization MSW graduate is expected to demonstrate mastery of these competencies. While not all competencies are addressed in each course, all are listed in each syllabus. By the time students complete the MSW degree, they will be assessed on each of the macro specialization competencies. This process is part of the overall assessment plan of the MSW program.

## **Macro Specialization**

### **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners recognize and embrace the unique role of social work in developing and implementing a variety of roles that contribute to the health and well-being of others.*

*Advanced practitioners are knowledgeable about ethical principles/issues related to various concepts including technology in practice. Advanced practitioners in small and large systems:*

- \* Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work.

Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice.

Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice

*At the macro specialization level,*

- \* Apply the NASW Code of Ethics when making ethical decisions and resolving ethical dilemmas;

- \* Demonstrate and apply a professional understanding of personal and societal values in ethical decision-making with individuals, families and groups.

## **Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners will critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. They will advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.*

*At the macro specialization level,*

- \* Demonstrate abilities to critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all;

- \* Advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably;

- \* Advocate for social and economic justice on behalf of clients and to create social change.

- \* Ensure civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

## **Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice**

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners demonstrate understanding the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Identify understanding of cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.*

*At the macro specialization level,*

- \* Demonstrate abilities to promote strengths and competence in individuals, families and small groups;

- \* Empower agencies/organizations/systems to overcome oppression and advocate social and economic justice by developing strategies to promote human and civil rights;

- \* Advocate for social and economic justice on behalf of systems of clients and to create social change.

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

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners are knowledgeable about evidence-based prevention models, programs, policies, and interventions related to problems-in-living encountered by individuals, families and small groups. They understand how to evaluate their own practice. At the macro specialization level:*

- \* Review practice research and select models appropriate to various client populations;
- \* Apply research methods and skills in the critical examination and evaluation of their own practice;
- \* Document practice experiences to provide data that reflects and builds upon evidence-based intervention.

### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners in small systems understand, appreciate, and engage colleagues and clients in advocating for policy to address human needs and optimize human functioning. They:*

- \* Stay current with political, economical, social, and environmental trends that create policies that may have a negative impact on client systems;
- \* Collaborate with stakeholders who engage in policy making that affect program designs, program funding and service delivery;
- \* Choose appropriate methods for advocating on behalf of individuals, families and small groups.

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

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners prepare for client intervention by becoming knowledgeable of commonalities of client problem situations, cultural factors, and review evidence-based practice while seeking necessary supervision and consultation. They:*

- \* Prepare for initial client contact by integrating their knowledge, skills and values with their preliminary understanding of the client's human conditions.
- \* Develop an awareness of ethical dilemmas that may exist in preparation for client interaction;
- \* Identify with the client's anxiety inherent in initial interaction and purposefully use the professional self to demonstrate empathy, respect for worth and dignity of the client to facilitate the client's sharing his/her human condition.

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

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners use knowledge, empathy and other interpersonal skills to communicate effectively with all client systems. They:*

- \* Communicate effectively with all client systems to obtain and analyze in-depth data to provide answers to issues, problems, needs, resources, client strengths and assets and collaboratively involve the client system in determining intervention strategies and goals;
- \* Conduct a developmental interview that enables the client to share his/her human condition and participate in determining the effectiveness of their support network that can be utilized to implement the planned change process;
- \* Determine collaboratively a course of action which identifies those achievement and/or barriers to successful outcomes.

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

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners utilize knowledge, skills, and values to select and apply appropriate intervention models. They:*

- \* Enlist the client in the development of appropriate and mutually agreed-on intervention plan;
- \* Implement collaborative intervention strategies that enhance client social functioning utilizing referral sources when indicated;
- \* Utilize the client's human condition to facilitate change through negotiation, mediation and advocacy;
- \* Seek supervision, consultation and literature review to enhance the client's goal achievement;
- \* Facilitate the client in developing and maintaining adaptive behaviors that provide stability within their

environment.

### **Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

*At the macro specialization level, advanced practitioners utilize evidence-based practice to assess goal achievement of individuals, families, and small groups. They:*

- \* Monitor and evaluate interventions in collaboration with client systems;
- \* Utilize research skills to ensure best practices of evidence-based intervention;
- \* Facilitate termination and separation of the client-worker relationship by assessing the goal attainment results, and the client's readiness;
- \* Develop strategies for feedback on client's maintaining adaptive functioning;
- \* Work collaboratively with evaluators/researchers to assess intervention efficacy and effectiveness.

## **Micro Specialization Social Work Core Competencies**

The MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). We support and abide by the CSWE Commission on Accreditation's Educational Policies for social work education, including an approach that is competency-based.

The University of Akron MSW program lists these competencies in each micro specialization syllabus to emphasize their importance in social work education. Each micro specialization MSW graduate is expected to demonstrate mastery of these competencies. While not all competencies are addressed in each course, all are listed in each syllabus. By the time students complete the MSW degree, they will be assessed on each of the micro specialization competencies. This process is part of the overall assessment plan of the MSW program.

### **Micro Specialization**

#### **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners recognize and embrace the unique role of social work in developing and implementing a variety of roles that contribute to the health and well-being of others. Advanced practitioners are knowledgeable about ethical principles/issues specific to individuals, families, and groups in context. Advanced practitioners in small systems:*

- \* Demonstrate the professional use of self and critical consciousness in multiple micro practice context;
- \* Seek supervision and consultation appropriately and stay abreast of changes in social work practice through life long learning;
- \* Communicate the purpose of social work practice with other professionals, clients and the community.

*At the micro specialization level,*

- \* Apply the NASW Code of Ethics when making ethical decisions and resolving ethical dilemmas;
- \* Demonstrate and apply a professional understanding of personal and societal values in ethical decision-making with individuals, families and groups.

#### **Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners recognize barriers such as stigma, shame, stereotyping, and discrimination, that clients encounter in their access to and utilization of services that affect their quality of life. Advanced practitioners in small systems:*

- \* Demonstrate abilities to promote strengths and competence in individuals, families and small groups;
- \* Empower clients to overcome oppression and appreciate social and economic justice by developing client awareness of theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights;
- \* Advocate for social and economic justice on behalf of clients and to create social change.

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners promote and advocate for the inclusion of diversity in the development of social policy programs, benefits, services and practices for individuals, families and small groups. They are familiar with variations in the nature and course of difficulties clients encounter across the life span. Advanced practitioners in small systems:*

- \* Utilize knowledge and skills to address social structure and cultural values that may oppress, marginalize, and alienate some, while creating privilege and power for others;
- \* Demonstrate an understanding and valuing of one's own culture that influences personal biases and values that may create prejudices in working with diverse groups;
- \* Integrate effectively into practice knowledge and skills of differences and similarities, as well as dimensions of diversity.

### **Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice**

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners recognize barriers such as stigma, shame, stereotyping, and discrimination, that clients encounter in their access to and utilization of services that affect their quality of life. Advanced practitioners in small systems:*

- \* Demonstrate abilities to promote strengths and competence in individuals, families and small groups;
- \* Empower clients to overcome oppression and appreciate social and economic justice by developing client awareness of theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights;
- \* Advocate for social and economic justice on behalf of clients and to create social change.

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

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners are knowledgeable about evidence-based prevention models, programs, policies, and interventions related to problems-in-living encountered by individuals, families and small groups. They understand how to evaluate their own practice. Advanced practitioners in small systems:*

- \* Review practice research and select models appropriate to various client populations;
- \* Apply research methods and skills in the critical examination and evaluation of their own practice;
- \* Document practice experiences to provide data that reflects and builds upon evidence-based intervention.

### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners in small systems understand, appreciate, and engage colleagues and clients in advocating for policy to address human needs and optimize human functioning. They:*

- \* Stay current with political, economical, social, and environmental trends that create policies that may have a negative impact on client systems;
- \* Collaborate with stakeholders who engage in policy making that affect program designs, program funding and service delivery;



- \* Choose appropriate methods for advocating on behalf of individuals, families and small groups.

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

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners prepare for client intervention by becoming knowledgeable of commonalities of client problem situations, cultural factors, review evidence-based practice while seeking necessary supervision and consultation. They:*

- \* Prepare for initial client contact by integrating their knowledge, skills and values with their preliminary understanding of the client's human conditions;
- \* Develop an awareness of ethical dilemmas that may exist in preparation for client interaction;
- \* Identify with the client's anxiety inherent in initial interaction and purposefully use the professional self to demonstrate empathy, respect for worth and dignity of the client to facilitate the client's sharing his/her human condition.

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

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners use knowledge, empathy and other interpersonal skills to communicate effectively with all client systems. They:*

- \* Communicate effectively with all client systems to obtain and analyze in-depth data to provide answers to issues, problems, needs, resources, client strengths and assets and collaboratively involve the client system in determining intervention strategies and goals;
- \* Conduct a developmental interview that enables the client to share his/her human condition and participate in determining the effectiveness of their support network that can be utilized to implement the planned change process;
- \* Determine collaboratively a course of action which identifies those achievement and/or barriers to successful outcomes.

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

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners utilize knowledge, skills, and values to select and apply appropriate intervention models. They:*

- \* Enlist the client in the development of appropriate and mutually agreed-on intervention plan;
- \* Implement collaborative intervention strategies that enhance client social functioning utilizing referral sources when indicated;
- \* Utilize the client's human condition to facilitate change through negotiation, mediation and advocacy;
- \* Seek supervision, consultation and literature review to enhance the client's goal achievement;
- \* Facilitate the client in developing and maintaining adaptive behaviors that provide stability within their environment.

### **Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

*At the micro specialization level, advanced practitioners utilize evidence-based practice to assess goal achievement of individuals, families, and small groups. They:*

- \* Monitor and evaluate interventions in collaboration with client systems;
- \* Utilize research skills to ensure best practices of evidence-based intervention;
- \* Facilitate termination and separation of the client-worker relationship by assessing the goal attainment results, and the client's readiness;

- \* Develop strategies for feedback on client's maintaining adaptive functioning;
- \* Work collaboratively with evaluators/researchers to assess intervention efficacy and effectiveness.

## MSW Course Structure

### First Year Full-Time Generalist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 601	Generalist Field Practicum I	3	SOWK 602	Foundation Field Practicum II	3
SOWK 605	SWK Practice with Small Systems	3	SOWK 606	SWK Practice with Large Systems	3
SOWK 620	Field Sem. I	1	SOWK 627	Science of Social Work	3
SOWK 628	HBSE	3	SOWK 611	Dynamics of Racism & Discrimination	3
SOWK 626	Adv. Hum. Rights/Social Policy	3	SOWK 6XX	Elective	3
SOWK 624	Ethics & Professional Behavior	2			

### First Year Part-Time Generalist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 628	HBSE	3	SOWK 627	Science of Social Work	3
SOWK 626	Adv. Human Rights & Social Policy	3	SOWK 611	Dynamics of Racism & Discrimination	3

### Second Year Part-Time Generalist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 601	Generalist Field Practicum	3	SOWK 602	Generalist Field Practicum II	3
SOWK 605	7750: Practice with Small Systems	3	SOWK 606	SWK Practice with Large Systems	3
SOWK 620	Field I Seminar	1	SOWK 6XX	Elective	2
SOWK 624	Ethics & Professional Behavior	3			

## Generalist Course Descriptions

### **601 FOUNDATION FIELD PRACTICUM 3 credits**

Prerequisite: first of two field practicum courses to be taken in the first year of the MSW program. A two semester, 400 clock hour, supervised internship at a social service agency. Credit/noncredit.

### **602 FOUNDATION FIELD PRACTICUM 3 credits**

Prerequisite: second of two field practicum courses to be taken in the first year of the MSW program. A two-semester, 400 clock hour, supervised internship at a social service agency. Credit/noncredit.

### **620 Field 1 Seminar 1 credit**

### **605 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH SMALL SYSTEMS 3 credits**

Prerequisite: graduate status or permission of instructor. Provides the basic knowledge, skills, professional ethics and values necessary for beginning social work practice with small client systems.

### **606 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH LARGE SYSTEMS 3 credits**

Prerequisite: 605 or permission of instructor. Provides the basic knowledge, skills, and strategies of social work practice with task groups, organizations and communities.

### **624 ETHICS & PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR 2 credits**

### **627 Science of Social Work 3 credits**

Prerequisite: graduate status or permission of instructor. This course provides an introduction to the logic of scientific inquiry, the research process, and the relationship between research and social work practice.

### **628 HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT 3 credits**

Prerequisite: graduate status or permission of instructor. This course focuses on understanding the human behavior and life cycle development of people as individuals, as members of families and other small group as well as larger social systems including formal and informal organizations, communities, and institutions.

### **6266 ADVANCIN HUMAN RIGHTS & SOCIAL POLICY 3 credits**

Prerequisite: graduate status or permission of instructor. Examines the historical, philosophical and value bases of social welfare as well as the relationship between social work practice, policy, and service delivery.

## Full-Time Micro Specialist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 603	Advanced Field Practicum III	3	SOWK 604	Advanced Field Practicum IV	3
SOWK 607	Advanced Practice with Small Systems I	3	SOWK 608	Advanced Practice with Small Systems II	3
SOWK 621	Adv. Field Sem. II	1	SOWK 675	Program Evaluation	3
SOWK 663	Psychopathology and Social Work	3	SOWK 6XX	One Elective	3
SOWK 6xx	Electives	3	SOWK 6xx	Second Elective	2

## Third Year Part-Time Micro Specialist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 607	Advanced Practice with Small Systems I	3	SOWK 6XX	One Elective	3

SOWK 663	Psychopathology and Social Work	3	SOWK 6xx	One Elective	3
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#### Fourth Year Part-Time Micro Specialist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 603	Advanced Field Practicum	3	SOWK 604	Advanced Field Practicum	3
SOWK 628	Adv. Field Sem. II	1	SOWK 608	Advanced Practice with Small Systems II	3
SOWK 6XX	Elective	3	SOWK 675	Program Evaluation	3

#### Micro Specialist Course Descriptions

##### **603 ADVANCED FIELD PRACTICUM 3 credits**

Prerequisite: first of two field practicum courses to be taken in the second year of the MSW program. A two-semester, 500 clock hour, supervised internship in a social service agency, based on the student's concentration and specialization. Credit/noncredit. (Offered only Fall Semester.)

##### **604 ADVANCED FIELD PRACTICUM 3 credits**

Prerequisite: second of two field practicum courses to be taken in the second year of the MSW program. A two-semester, 500 clock hour, supervised internship in a social service agency, based on the student's concentration and specialization. Credit/noncredit. (Offered only Spring Semester.)

##### **607 ADVANCED PRACTICE WITH SMALL SYSTEMS I 3 credits**

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. This course focuses on the differential assessment of individuals, families and small groups and the application of a range of theory bases.

##### **608 ADVANCED PRACTICE WITH SMALL SYSTEMS II 3 credits**

Prerequisite: 607 or permission of instructor. As a continuation of Advanced Practice I, this course focuses on the development and implementation of intervention strategies with and on behalf of small systems.

##### **611 DYNAMICS OF RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION 3 credits**

Prerequisite: graduate status or permission of instructor. Provides knowledge of analyzing and understanding the factors leading to and sustaining racism, sexism, homophobia, and the like, at micro and macro levels.

##### **663 PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK 3 credits**

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. An examination of the symptoms, theories, and psychosocial aspects of mental illness, and the role of the social worker in the treatment of mental disorders.

##### **675 PROGRAM EVALUATION 3 credits**

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. This course provides students with methods of evaluating programs in agencies, including approaches, measurement, design, data collection and analyses employed in program outcome research.

### Full-Time Macro Specialist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 603	Advanced Field Practicum	3	SOWK 604	Advanced Field Practicum	3
SOWK 621	Adv. Field Seminar I	1	SOWK 671	Social Work Administration	3
SOWK 671	Social Work Administration	3	SOWK 676	Fiscal Management of Social Agencies	3
SOWK 671	Supervision & Staff Development	3	SOWK 675	Program Evaluation	3
SOWK 6XX	One Elective	3	SOWK 6xx	Electives	5

### Third Year Part-Time Macro Specialist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 671	Social Work Administration	3	SOWK 6XX	One Elective	3
SOWK 665	Supervision & Staff Development	3	SOWK 6xx	One Elective	3

### Fourth Year Part-Time Macro Specialist

		Credits			Credits
SOWK 603	Advanced Field Practicum	3	SOWK 604	Advanced Field Practicum	3
SOWK 621	Adv. Field Seminar	1	SOWK 676	Fiscal Management of Social Agencies	3
SOWK 6xx	Electives	2	SOWK 675	Program Evaluation	3

## Macro Course Descriptions

#### **603 ADVANCED FIELD PRACTICUM** 3 credits

Prerequisite: first of two field practicum courses to be taken in the second year of the MSW program. A two-semester, 500 clock hour, supervised internship in a social service agency, based on the student's concentration and specialization. Credit/noncredit. (Offered only Fall Semester.)

#### **604 ADVANCED FIELD PRACTICUM** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second of two field practicum courses to be taken in the second year of the MSW program.

A two-semester, 500 clock hour, supervised internship in a social service agency, based on the student's concentration and specialization. Credit/noncredit. (Offered only Spring Semester.)

**611 DYNAMICS OF RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION** 3 credits

Prerequisite: graduate status or permission of instructor. Provides knowledge of analyzing and understanding the factors leading to and sustaining racism, sexism, homophobia, and the like, at micro and macro levels.

**671 SOCIAL WORK ADMINISTRATION** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. This course focuses on supervisory and managerial roles and functions as they are carried out at different hierarchical levels in human service organizations.

**672 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING** 3 credits

Prerequisite: must have completed first year of master's program. Required for all second year students concentrating on Macro Practice sequence. Prepares students to work in communities and in public and private agencies.

**673 STRATEGIES OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. Emphasizes the historical development and application of several community strategies used to identify community problems, and how to organize and empower diverse community groups.

**674 COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC SYSTEMS AND SOCIAL POLICY ANALYSIS** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. This course provides a base for understanding economic systems and analyzing the political framework at federal, state, and local levels and their impact on communities.

**675 PROGRAM EVALUATION** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. This course provides students with methods of evaluating programs in agencies, including approaches, measurement, design, data collection and analyses employed in program outcome research.

## **MSW Program Electives**

**651 FOUNDATION IN ADDICTION STUDIES** 3 credits

This introductory course provides a broader understanding of theories and issues in the addictions field. The course explores the theories of addiction related to: legal and ethical issues; diversity and cultural competence; and the role of addictions in the current health care delivery system.

**652 ADDICTION ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT PLANNING** 3 credits

Examines a broad range of instruments, tools, and strategies available for the identification and assessment of substance abuse problems. Content includes four modules: screening, brief intervention and referral (SBIRT); assessment; diagnosis; and treatment planning.

**651 EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR ADDICTIONS** 4 credits

Focuses on knowledge and skills needed for the development and implementation of prevention strategies, treatment approaches, and recovery maintenance in the addictions field.

Emphasis is placed on selection and utilization of evidence-based practices.

**652 ADDICTION TREATMENT MODALITIES AND MODELS** 3 credits

Emphasis on enhancement of knowledge and development of skills for use of evidence-based group and family therapy practices as they apply to work with people struggling with substance-related problems.

**653 PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY IN ADDICTION TREATMENT** 2 credits

Explores effects of psychoactive drugs of abuse and principles of pharmacology in the treatment of

substance use disorders.

**660 COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL THERAPY I: The Basics** 3 Credits

This course covers Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) conceptual foundations, assessments, developing a case conceptualization and intervention plan, implementing CBT interventions, and termination and relapse prevention. Extensive use of role play and self-evaluation of skill development is a key component.

**661 COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL THERAPY II: Beyond the Basics** 3 Credits

Prerequisite: 7750:660. An introduction to the third generation Cognitive Behavioral Therapies (Mindfulness, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Acceptance Commitment Therapy, etc.). The course includes disorder-specific protocols with an emphasis on psychological mechanisms that apply across a range of disorders, ie. transdiagnostically.

**663 PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. An examination of the symptoms, theories, and psychosocial aspects of mental illness, and the role of the social worker in the treatment of mental disorders.

**665 SUPERVISION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. An examination of the purpose, functions, and theories of supervision; the impact of cultural, ethnic and racial differences in supervision/staff development; and problems encountered.

**671 SOCIAL WORK ADMINISTRATION** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. This course focuses on supervisory and managerial roles and functions as they are carried out at different hierarchical levels in human service organizations.

**680 AGING AND SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. An examination and evaluation of aging programs and policies, demographic trends and the changing role of social work service providers.

**685 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE: FAMILY AND CHILDREN** 3 credits

Prerequisite second level graduate student or permission of instructor. Examines the major problems encountered by children and families in the life cycle and explores intervention strategies and programs to address their needs and strengths

**692 GROUP WORK PRACTICE** 3 credits

Prerequisite: second level graduate student or permission of instructor. Examines the fundamental knowledge and skills required for social work practice with groups across multiple client systems. Dynamics of working with special populations will be emphasized (e.g., the effect of the addictive processes on group therapy, age-appropriate communication with children).

**693 SPECIAL TOPICS FOR ADVANCED SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE** 1-3 credits

Prerequisite: admission to MSW program or permission of program director. Detailed analysis and study of current practice issues and considerations faced by social work practitioners providing services and interventions at advanced levels.

## **Field Education**

The field education component of the MSW program, the signature pedagogy, is the curricular area that socializes the students into the social work profession. It is designed in a structured course of study that integrates the classroom theoretical and philosophical conceptual learning with experiential learning in a variety of practice settings that provide opportunities for students to apply and develop knowledge, skills, and values in core competencies in advanced social work practice.

The integration of the classroom contributions with the field experiential learning begins in the foundation year and continues into the specialization year. In the generalist year, the students are taught/learn explanatory theories that allow them to gain knowledge that will enable them to develop and utilize concepts of human behavior and the social environment which inform social work practice theories, social welfare policy that governs the social service delivery system, and fundamentals of research, which informs evidence-based practice. These explanatory theories are then used to provide students a framework upon which to build engagement, assessments, interventions, and evaluation in the provision of services to clients. The field education component is required of all master level social work students and is designed concurrently with the classroom. As a necessary complement to classroom education, the field practicum provides students with opportunities to use advanced level knowledge, values, and skills through observational, imitative, and experiential learning. It is the field practicum experiences that socialize the students into the social work profession. The purpose of field education is to:

- make the necessary connections between class and field, theory and practice;
- transfer and integrate academic content, including content in social work values, ethics, and human diversity;
- develop the student's capacity and ability for advanced practice and professional growth and development.

The field experience includes a reciprocal integration between classroom learning and practice that facilitates students acquiring social work knowledge, values, and skills. They are given the opportunity to learn more about the fields of practice, as well as how to apply advanced practice in working with client systems and to determine the appropriate intervention strategies that will enable clients to develop and maintain adaptive functioning. The explanatory theories give the students a clear understanding of how problems are generated within diverse and at-risk populations.

## **Micro Specialist Field**

Micro field refers to advanced social work practice with individuals, families, small groups, and relevant collateral persons and organizations. The helping process in micro practice emphasizes the strengths and resources of people within the context of their environments. The subject matter content in the micro courses is developed and designed to enable the students to provide advanced practice to individuals, families, and small groups. The faculty liaisons who work with



students in the micro specialization, maintain a research interesting micro service delivery in various fields of practice, such as health, mental health, corrections, and child welfare. The students are evaluated on the basis of their operationalizing the program competencies in micro practice and professional development.

## **Macro Specialist Field**

Macro field refers to advanced social work practice with neighborhoods, organizations, and communities within the context of political, social, and economic institutions. Macro practice focuses on the management and administration of organizations and on advocacy for system change toward social and economic justice. The helping process in macro practice emphasizes the strengths and resources of neighborhoods, organizations and communities, which can be mobilized for empowering diverse and disenfranchised citizens. In the macro specialization, agencies provide experiences that will enable students to transfer and integrate theoretical concepts in macro practice. The subject matter content in the macro courses is developed and designed to enable those students to provide advocacy for large client systems, create social change, and enhance community development. Students who are in macro practice are assigned to faculty liaisons whose research interest is in the areas of locality development, social planning/policy, administration, and social action. The students are evaluated on the basis of their operationalizing the program competencies in macro practice and professional development.

## **Addictions Certificate – Coming in spring 2025**

### **CBT Certificate**

**The Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Certificate**, offered in conjunction with the MSW degree, affords students an opportunity to master competencies of both traditional and third-generation CBTs. Knowledge and skills learned in the classroom are applied in field practicum under the supervision of CBT-proficient clinicians. Students must be enrolled in the MSW program in the School of Social Work and Family Sciences. The certificate will be granted with the degree.

### **Required Courses**

Code	Title	Hours
SOWK 663	Psychopathology & Social Work	3
SOWK 660	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy I: The Basics	3
SOWK 661	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy II: Beyond the Basics	3
SOWK 603	Advanced Field Practicum	3
SOWK 604	Advanced Field Practicum	3

**University Partnership Program (UPP) - Child Welfare**

Graduate students interested in practicing in public child welfare may be eligible for admission to the Child Welfare University Partnership Program (CWUPP). The program provides financial incentive up to \$5,000 to \$10,000 to social work learners who complete two elective child welfare courses, a field placement in public child welfare, and work for one to two years in a public child welfare agency in the State of Ohio. The mission of the CWUPP is to develop creative child welfare leaders, policy makers, managers, and direct service practitioners who have the capacity for critical thinking and to promote best practice and highest quality service to children, families, and communities. The program accomplishes this through the coordinated and integrated provision of quality social work education and training. Learners interested in applying for the program must complete an application and formal interview with the CWUPP Campus Coordinator.

For additional program, application, and contact information about CWUPP please use the link below:

<https://www.uakron.edu/socialwork/child-welfare-program/>

The MSW Field Education Manual is included with the orientation packet and is available on the University's website:

<https://www.uakron.edu/socialwork/field-education/>

**Academic Advising****CSWE Accreditation Standard 4.1.6**

MSW students are assigned an academic advisor and are notified before they begin the MSW program which faculty member will serve as their advisor.

The advisement process begins with the program orientation prior to the start of classes. Students are provided with information on the MSW program, including the Student Handbook, and field requirements. They are informed regarding the level of performance needed to remain in good standing with the program. They are also informed of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, and a link is included in the Student Handbook.

Students are encouraged to meet with their advisors early in their semester to discuss their concerns relative to matriculation and to locate academic and other resources on campus. Students are encouraged to contact their academic advisor when they are experiencing academic difficulties. Workday is an online tool that helps students track progress toward a degree. Workday displays a student's academic record and compares it to the course catalog, showing

which requirements have been fulfilled, which requirements are in progress and what needs to be completed in order to graduate

<https://www.uakron.edu/registrar/>

## **Academic and Professional Performance**

### **CSWE Accreditation Standards 3.3 and 4.1.7**

The criteria for evaluating students' academic and professional performance are made explicit in each course syllabus which includes competencies, practice behaviors, required assignments, the criteria used in determining the course grade, and the procedures used to evaluate academic and professional performance.

In regard to field education, the program's expectations for student performance and policies regarding withdrawal from field placement, change of field placement, and termination of field are described in the Field Education Manual. Students should be aware that having a prior felony conviction or prior sanctions for unprofessional conduct may impact potential for obtaining field placements, as well as licensure and social work employment. At the beginning of the field placement, the student develops a Student Integrative Learning Contract in conjunction with the agency field instructor and the faculty field liaison. The contract specifies the placement assignments and the tasks for which students will be evaluated. The field faculty liaison is responsible for assigning the grade for field in consultation with the agency field instructor.

The general policies on minimum grade requirements are detailed in the UA Graduate Bulletin. Students are expected to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA. If a student's GPA falls below 3.0, the student may be placed on academic probation by the Dean of the Graduate School and the student may be subject to dismissal. The student must have a 3.0 overall GPA in the Program to graduate.

Within the MSW program, the Academic Performance Committee (APC) is responsible for reviewing academic, non-academic, and field performance problems. When such problems arise, the Director refers the matter to the APC. In reviewing students' performance problems, the APC is guided by the standards, policies and procedures set forth in the Graduate Bulletin, the MSW program by-laws, the MSW Field Education Manual, and the NASW Code of Ethics, which are distributed to students during orientation.

In regard to academic performance, review by the APC is required whenever a student receives:

- a) one grade of **F** or
- b) two grades of less than **B** or
- c) two grades of **NC**

Mandatory dismissal by the University occurs when a student receives two "**F**" grades. Academically dismissed students who petition the University for early readmission may also be referred to the APC for review. The APC does not review grade disputes. Students wishing to

dispute a grade should consult the Graduate Bulletin for the appropriate procedures.

In regard to nonacademic performance where the student's classroom and/or field behavior is not in accordance with University policies, the mission of the MSW program, or social work purposes, practices, values, or ethics, the student may be referred to the APC for review. Such students may be terminated from the MSW program for reasons that include:

1. Plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
2. Violations of the *Code of Ethics*, especially in regard to client confidentiality and respect for the dignity and worth of clients.
3. Consistent acts of racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other forms of discrimination toward clients, agency personnel, faculty, staff, and other students.
4. Behavior that is disruptive of classroom teaching and learning, and/or the day-to-day operations of the Program or field agency.

Referral to the APC is made in writing by the Director of the School of Social Work and Family Sciences. Within two weeks of receipt of the referral, the APC will conduct a review and make a recommendation to the Director. At its discretion, the APC may request an interview with the student, the academic advisor, classroom instructors, and/or the faculty field liaison. The student may also request an interview with the APC. This request should be made to the committee chairperson located on the same campus as the student.

Recommendations regarding continuance or dismissal from the MSW program are made in writing and sent to the Director. The Director then makes the final decision and notifies the student in writing. The student may appeal the decision by following the guidelines and procedures specified in the Graduate Bulletin of the appropriate university.

### **University Regulations on Student Conduct, Rights and Grievance Process**

The University of Akron has specific policies regarding student conduct and students' rights, in accordance with CSWE Accreditation Standard 4.1.7.

The University of Akron's regulations on student conduct, rights and grievance process are found in the *Graduate Bulletin* at the following link:  
<https://bulletin.uakron.edu/graduate/important-policies/>

## **Section VII – Student Services & Resources**

### **Time Management for MSW Students**

One of the major tasks associated with graduate education is learning to manage your time. It can be extremely difficult to juggle class time, assignments, field, and employment, as well as your personal life. It is essential that incoming MSW students are aware of the time commitment that a graduate education requires. Two major aspects of time management are developing realistic goals and prioritizing tasks. There are several helpful websites that discuss this important skill for a successful graduate education:

<https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/content/dam/socialwork/home/self-care-kit/exercises/time-management.pdf>

<https://gradschool.about.com/cs/timemanagement/a/time.htm>

Some tips for success are:

- 1) Know your “Why” – keep clear sense of your purpose of why you are here.
- 2) Master time management – use planners, apps, sticky notes. This is a marathon, not a sprint. Pro Tips: Try the Pomodoro technique for study sessions: 25 minutes of focus, 5-minute breaks.
- 3) Read with intention. Grad school is not about reading every word. It’s about understanding key concepts and being able to apply them.
- 4) Self-Care – schedule downtime, sleep, eat something green (once in a while at least), seek therapy if needed.
- 5) Treat field practicum as a job (even in a FAPE). Be a student. Be on time, prepared and proactive. Ask questions. Own mistakes. Build relationships with those supervising you as they are shaping your future MSW level practice.
- 6) Know your theories and how to apply them. Learn how to move from theory to practice.
- 7) Write like a social worker. Be concise, clear and purpose driven. Use the Code of Ethics as a guiding lens in writing.
- 8) Lean into feedback. Your professors and field supervisors are here to build you. Treat feedback as a tool, not a personal attack. It is part of professional development and gaining insight.
- 9) Know the NASW Code of Ethics. This is the ethical compass. It is the roadmap to navigate tough, grey-area decisions.
- 10) Don’t be afraid to say “I don’t know”. No one expects you to have all the answers. The power is your willingness to seek out the answers.
- 11) Use your voice. Practice speaking up. Advocacy starts with learning how to articulate one’s thoughts and observations clearly.
- 12) Stay current. Follow lead journals in your field (*Social Work, Journal of Social Work Education, and Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal, etc.*). Keep an eye on your state’s social work licensure updates, Medicaid changes, and policy reforms.
- 13) Support each other. Build your “crew” of classmates. Form study groups, vent as needed, celebrate each other’s wins and don’t forget to hold each other accountable.

### **Computer Labs**

The MSW program has a row of computers set in the Social Work Student lounge which is open 24/7.

The Computer Lab Services (CLS) maintains several computer labs on campus with similar applications in the Computer Center 141 and Bierce Library rooms 61 and 279. A computer assistant is in the lab during certain hours. CLS also maintains mobile teaching labs in Leigh Hall, and Zook Hall.

The University maintains a Help Desk, open from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM which can be accessed by telephone (330) 972-6888.

### **Laptop checkout**

CLS maintains three Mobile Laptop Checkouts located at the Student Union Information Window, Bierce Library Laptop Checkout, and ASEC Library Laptop Checkout.

### **Libraries**

Bierce Library, (330) 972-8161 (Reference department): <https://www.uakron.edu/libraries/>  
Law Library, School of Law, (330) 972-7330: <https://www.uakron.edu/law/about-us/law-library.dot>

### **The Writing Center**

The university has a Writing Center that is available to all members of the university community, from first-year students to full professors. In addition to tutoring services, there is a library of reference books, handbooks and other resources helpful to writers. Use the MSW program APA Manual for the correct use of APA:

<https://www.uakron.edu/socialwork/docs/APA%20Manual%20School%20of%20Social%20Work%20and%20Family%20Sciences%202024.pdf>

The University of Akron Writing Lab is located in Bierce Library 69, (330) 972-6548:

<https://www.uakron.edu/tutoring/writing-lab.dot> .

### **ID Card/Zip Card**

Student identification cards or Zip Cards are necessary for students, faculty, and staff. The card is the means to building and lab access, testing centers, sporting events, library privileges, Roo Express, meal plans, vending machines, copiers, plus other University activities. The back of your Zip Card provides quick reference for important information including your student ID number, UANetID, and campus phone numbers for the University of Akron Police Department (UAPD), Campus Operator, Campus Escort, and Motorist Assistance. The university supplies an identification card free to students, faculty and staff. On-campus and in-state students can obtain their cards at The University of Akron Zip Card Office locations: Jean Hower Taber Student Union 106A, and Simmons Hall 103. Students that have scheduled their class(es) 100% online, may email the Zip Card office at [zipcard@uakron.edu](mailto:zipcard@uakron.edu) to request their first Zip Card. The Zip Card office will then email a link to their University of Akron student email account, so that they may upload a photo for their first Zip Card.

### **Financial Aid**

The University of Akron financial aid programs were developed by the federal and state governments as well as by institutions of higher education to assist students from families with limited resources to meet educational expenses. The primary purpose of financial aid is to ensure that no one is denied the opportunity of a college education because of financial need. When applying for financial aid at The University of Akron, the Office of Student Financial Aid determines a budget that best suits the needs of the student. The budget includes direct costs that

must be paid to the University (i.e., instructional and general fees and room and board in the residence halls) and variable expenses such as transportation and personal expenses.

Office of Student Financial Aid: <http://www.uakron.edu/finaid/>

### **Viewing Grades**

Check The University of Akron My Akron Workday Student profile for posted grades. For information use this link: [My Akron Workday](#)

### **Transcripts/Enrollment Verification**

Official transcripts and enrollment verification can be ordered through the Registrar office: <https://www.uakron.edu/registrar/transcripts/> .

### **Health Services**

The University of Akron Health Services works to assist students in meeting their educational and personal goals by addressing their health concerns during their enrollment. Health Services' Health Education section provides health education, wellness promotion and risk reduction programming to students, faculty and staff. Health Services continues to maintain the University's strategic vision of "shared responsibility" to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate health promotion techniques and continue to be a resource for those in need: <https://www.uakron.edu/healthservices/> .

### **Counseling Services**

The Counseling and Testing Center offers psychological services at The University of Akron: <https://www.uakron.edu/counseling/> . To make an appointment, please call 330-972-7082. Additionally, students who desire emergency counseling support in the evening and on weekends may now call the Counseling and Testing Center to speak with an on-call counselor. Call 330-972-7082 and choose option 2 for immediate assistance.

### **Bookstores**

University bookstores are located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Polsky Building, the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Student Union, and the Student Life Building. All students can utilize the online bookstore options at The University of Akron's bookstore link: <https://uakron.bncollege.com/>

### **Recreational Center**

The University of Akron Student Recreation & Wellness Center, (330) 972-7132: <https://www.uakron.edu/rec/> . On-campus students all have access to the Recreation & Wellness Center.

### **Roo Express**

Roo Express Shuttle, is contracted to and managed by UAkronPark, who operates the shuttle system: <https://www.uakronpark.com/shuttle-services/> .

### **Parking Passes and Information**

The University of Akron Parking & Shuttle Parking Services (purchasing permits and parking fines) North Campus Parking Deck, 255 Buchtel Avenue, Service (330) 972-7213:  
[https://www.uakronpark.com/?doing\\_wp\\_cron=1758113987.6588280200958251953125](https://www.uakronpark.com/?doing_wp_cron=1758113987.6588280200958251953125)

### **Campus Security**

The University of Akron Personal Safety University Police (UAPD)  
Physical Facilities Operations Center (146 Hill Street, beside EJ Thomas Hall)  
Non-emergencies: (330) 972-2911.  
<https://www.uakron.edu/safety/>

UA's officers patrol campus and surrounding neighborhoods around the clock. They are highly trained and have full arrest authority under Ohio law. Call the police 24-7 at 330-972-2911 or 9-1-1.

### **Military Services Center**

The University of Akron Military Services Center, Simmons Hall 305  
(330) 972-7838. The online services are available for students on all campuses.  
<https://www.uakron.edu/veterans/>

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students who have a documented disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact their instructor personally as soon as possible to discuss the appropriate accommodations necessary to complete the course requirements. Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Accessibility at 330-972-7928 or via their website: <https://www.uakron.edu/access/> .

### **Academic Calendar**

The Academic Calendar for The University of Akron can be found through the following link:  
<https://www.uakron.edu/registrar/dates/acadcal.dot>

### **Guidelines for Writing Papers**

There are a number of resources available on campus for assistance with writing papers, including:



1. An alphabetized list of all references cited in a paper (i.e., literature review) must be included at the end of the paper. Your reference list should include only those sources you consulted directly yourself.
  2. When you borrow someone else's words, figures or ideas, you must indicate the source of your information, either in a footnote or in your text. Plagiarism is so serious an offense that it can result in course failure.  
Here are some practical guidelines to follow in citing sources. You must give credit under three circumstances:
    - a. When you use direct quotations, even of single phrases (with page #);
    - b. When you borrow and use ideas not generally known, such as data from special investigations, ideas that are distinctly personal, or facts that are products of independent scholarship;
    - c. When you borrow and use statements, facts, or ideas for which you do not wish to accept the responsibility of proof, such as statements so controversial in nature that you wish the protection of documentation.
- If you find something mentioned in almost every source, it is likely to be common knowledge and you need not give credit.
3. As a general guide, use direct quotes sparingly and selectively. Putting things in our own words usually makes them easier for the reader to understand.
  4. Use headings and sub-headings liberally to improve the readability of your paper (use the Syllabus Outlines as your paper outline).
  5. Write in clear, concise, and correct English. Avoid the use of biased language. Use a proofreader if you need (highly recommended). Use the spell-checker on your computer software. Excessive and poorly written papers do not earn full credit.
  6. Never turn in a first draft; always plan on revising your work.
  7. Tables and figures must have titles. Use one-inch page margins. Number all pages. Staple your paper.

**Council on Social Work Education  
Commission on Accreditation  
2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards**

**Accreditation Standard 4.1.8  
Student Social Work Organizations**

## **Organizations of the MSW Program**

### **MSW Program Standing Committees**

The MSW program has seven standing committees which encourage student representation. According to the Constitution of the Master of Social Work Student Association, all committees shall have membership from the MSW student body. Students are elected by the MSWSA membership in accordance with Article V: Elections of MSWSA Constitution, which is included in the Appendices of this handbook.

These committees are:

1. **Academic Performance Committee** – Reviews and makes recommendations regarding students' academic and non-academic performance problems.
2. **Admissions Committee** – Reviews applications and accepts students into the program; students participate in review and modification of policies and procedures for full faculty approval.
3. **By-laws Committee** – Reviews and recommends to faculty the policies and procedures concerning the program's governance and operation.
4. **Curriculum Committee** – Reviews, revises, and modifies, with full faculty approval, the MSW curriculum.
5. **Evaluation Committee** – Develops and implements assessment procedures for measurement of the MSW's program, generalist, and specialist objectives.
6. **Field Education Committee** – Reviews and recommends policies and procedures regarding field education and provides consultation to the field coordinators regarding field related issues not covered under existing policies and procedures.
7. **Library and Information Technology** – Reviews and recommends library and technological resources to the MSW program

### **The MSWSA**

The purpose of the Master of Social Work Student Association (MSWSA) is to promote and foster relationships between students and faculty involved in the MSW program at The University of Akron by:

- ☐ Advocating for the rights and needs of the students enrolled in the MSW program;
- ☐ Improving and participating in activities that will further the purpose and goals of social work profession;
- ☐ Hosting presentations by speakers from the professional community that keeps students abreast of the political, social, economic, and environmental trends locally and nationally;
- ☐ Encouraging life-long learning in professional practice;

### **Phi Alpha**

UA participates in the Phi Alpha Honor Society, and the Omicron Omega Chapter is open to MSW students. The purpose of Phi Alpha Honor Society is to provide a closer bond among students of social work and promote humanitarian goals and ideals. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social worker students and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work: <https://www.phialpha.org/>

### **NASW**

The MSW program strongly encourages the social work majors to join National Association of Social Workers at a reduced rate. This entitles students to voting rights, to receive the monthly *NASW News* and the monthly journal *Social Work*, and to other member services. The national membership also entitles them to membership in the local program units in Ohio. The student members may hold leadership positions and participate in program activities, which many of the MSW students are actively engaging in this organization.

<https://www.socialworkers.org/>

## **Social Work Licensure**

In the State of Ohio, social work practice is regulated by the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board. A series of links and contact information are provided below for information about social work licensure in the State of Ohio. Please note that all licensing questions should be directed to the Board. Meeting the requirements of the licensure is the sole responsibility of the applicant.

**Social Work Licensing in the State of Ohio** <http://cswmft.ohio.gov/swlicen.stm>

<http://cswmft.ohio.gov/SocialWorkers/LicensedSocialWorker.aspx>

**Social Work Licensing outside of the State of Ohio** – Use to find link to find the state seeking licensure in: <https://www.aswb.org/licenses/how-to-get-a-license/getting-licensed-in-another-state-or-province/>

## **Licensing Requirements and Procedures**

**Association of Social Work Boards (licensure exam information):**

<https://www.aswb.org/licenses/how-to-get-a-license/>

Outside of Ohio: <https://www.aswb.org/licenses/how-to-get-a-license/getting-your-first-license/>

### **OHIO SPECIFIC:**

**Trainee:** <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/get-licensed/social-workers/SW-trainee-license-instructions>

**Assistant:** <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/get-licensed/social-workers/SW-assistant-license-instructions>

**Licensed Social Worker: LSW - License Procedure** <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/get-licensed/social-workers/lsw+license+instructions>

**Licensed Independent Social Worker: LISW – License Procedure**

<https://cswmft.ohio.gov/get-licensed/social-workers/lisw-license-instructions>

### **How to become a Licensed Social Worker**

#### **Licensure Map**

In OHIO: <http://socialworklicensemap.com/become-a-social-worker/become-a-social-worker-in-ohio/>

**Laws and rules:** <http://cswmft.ohio.gov/Portals/0/pdf/4757%2012-2014.pdf>

**Contact Information****State of Ohio CSWMFT Board****Vern Riffe State Office Tower****77 South High Street****24<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 2468****Columbus, OH 43215****General Inquiries - 614-466-0912****Renewals - 614-466-5436 or 614-466-0912****Social Workers - 614-466-5465****Fax - 614-728-7790****Social Work Licensure Preparation**

The MSW program has made licensure preparation a top priority. As part of their course fees for SOWK 603, students are able to engage in a licensure prep testing and overview of steps to apply as well as practice exams. Throughout their final year of the MSW program, students meet with the Director to review the application process for social work licensure, and may attend optional trainings sessions throughout the spring semester of their final semester.

**Useful Social Work Links****Council on Social Work Education** <https://www.cswe.org>**Influencing State Policy** <https://www.socialpolicy.org>**National Association of Social Workers** <https://www.socialworkers.org>**National Association of Social Workers—Ohio Chapter**<https://www.naswoh.org>***The New Social Worker* (Magazine) Online**<https://www.socialworker.com/>**National Association of Social Workers – Code of Ethics**<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>