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UNIVERSITY

Social Work Program
Student Handbook

Chatham University
Woodland Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Introduction

Welcome to the Social Work Program at Chatham! This book contains valuable information about the requirements and policies of the program. If you have a specific question that is not answered here, please contact a member of the social work faculty or staff:

Faculty Member	Office	Phone	Electronic Mail
Dr. Melissa Bell	C227	365-2768	mbell@chatham.edu
Dr. Erica Maloney	C225	365-1884	e.maloney@chatham.edu
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"The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally."

Council on Social Work Education, 2015

Careers in Social Work

A BSW prepares students for entry-level generalist social work practice. Social work offers a wide variety of job opportunities and job settings. For example, social workers work in mental health agencies, child welfare agencies, schools, hospitals, research settings, community agencies, federal, local, and state government, advocacy groups, nursing homes, employee assistance programs, colleges and universities, private practice, outpatient clinics, HMOs, and group homes.

Specifically, BSWs may serve in the following roles/fields:

- Jr. Clinician, Community mental/behavioral health
- Milieu clinicians
- Juvenile probation
- Adult prison reentry
- FBI Agent
- Medical settings
- Immigration and Refugee resettlement
- Adoption /foster care
- Advocacy/organizing.
- Developmental Disabilities
- Gerontology
- Addiction services and counseling
- Early intervention
- Housing and safety net services
- Community outreach and organizing
- Psychosocial rehabilitation
- Politics and lobbying
- Community nonprofits
- Child protection
- Community living and support services for people with disabilities
- Counsel rape victims, crime victims
- Provide crisis intervention services
- Provide information referrals, and coordination of resources for individuals and families to obtain resources they need or to make decisions about family members or life transitions (obtain meals on wheels so someone can live independently, help children with special needs, obtain in home tutoring or assistance with transportation)
- Work with communities or neighborhoods to assess needs and develop resources to meet those needs (help establish a playground, or community program for seniors, for instance)

Accreditation

The Chatham Bachelor of Social Work program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (http://www.cswe.org/). This means employers and colleagues nationwide will recognize that your degree has prepared you for professional social work practice. It also means that, should you choose to pursue a graduate degree in social work, you will be eligible for advanced standing in most MSW programs. Advanced standing allows BSW graduates to complete a Master of Social Work Degree in as little as 10 months.

Chatham University Social Work Program

Program's Mission Statement:

Our mission is to prepare students to be competent generalist social workers and to prepare students, as appropriate, for graduate study in social work. The program incorporates the core social work values of service, integrity, and human dignity throughout the curriculum and promotes the importance of human relationships, social and economic justice, human rights, environmental justice and sustainability, and scientific inquiry. The values, knowledge, and skills necessary for work with diverse populations, for critical thinking, and for continued professional development form the basis for student learning and professional competency.

The program builds upon Chatham University's long-standing liberal arts foundation that incorporates the humanities, the arts, science, and technology. It prepares graduates to help improve the quality of life for the groups they serve and to identify, ameliorate and prevent conditions that contribute to poverty and limit human rights. In order to promote the wellbeing of individuals, groups and communities, a common core of knowledge, skills, local and global perspectives, and values enables graduates to function in a broad range of settings and serve diverse client populations. As beginning generalists, graduates will approach the strengths and needs of client systems in an ethical manner that considers the environmental context and utilizes research-based interventions with client systems of individuals, families, groups, or communities.

Program Goals

The overarching goal of the Social Work Program is to prepare competent social work practitioners for beginning generalist practice with diverse populations. The eight goals listed below reflect the mission of undergraduate social work education and its intersection with the particular strengths and mission of Chatham University.

Goal 1: To prepare generalist social workers who demonstrate professionalism informed by critical thinking in all aspects of their practice.

Goal 2: To develop generalist social work practitioners who demonstrate the appropriate professional knowledge, behavior, values, and skills to serve client systems of diverse sizes and types.

Goal 3: To prepare generalist social workers who integrate knowledge about how individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations grow and change within the context of their environments.

Goal 4: To develop within generalist practitioners both an appreciation of the impact of the cultural context on social work practice and the human condition and the competencies, including cultural humility, necessary for respecting and engaging diversity and difference in practice.

Goal 5: To prepare generalist social work practitioners who utilize social work values and ethics, as stated in the NASW Code of Ethics, in their professional decision-making throughout their professional practice and social work careers.

Goal 6: To prepare practicing social workers to respond to changing environmental contexts, issues related to human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice, in an effort to improve the quality of services through advocacy and policy-based practice

Goal 7: To prepare generalist practitioners who can conduct and use research to inform practice decisions and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Program Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) provides a competency-based foundation for the social work curriculum. The CSWE Education Policy (EPAS 2015) is available online at: https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/standards/2015-epas/ and is available from any social work faculty member.

The Social Work Program at Chatham seeks to prepare students to practice as generalist social workers. These competencies, operationalized by practice behaviors, drive the development of the generalist social work practice curriculum, including the acquisition of skills for working with individuals, couples, families, groups, communities, agencies, and organizations. These competencies are acquired first in the classroom and then in the field placement:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

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

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, because of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:
- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably, and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:
- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and

multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

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

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

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

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

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

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and

constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:
- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:
- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:
- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;

• critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and • apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Advising

Students who are interested in the social work major are encouraged to meet with a member of the social work faculty to discuss any aspect of the major or the profession. Any student interested in the major is also welcome to select a member of the social work faculty as her advisor. Declared social work majors must have an advisor who is a member of the social work faculty. Advisors meet with students at least once per term to review progress, address academic challenges and discuss course sequencing and requirements.

Curriculum

The social work curriculum focuses on the development of foundation knowledge about generalist social work practice, including the acquisition of social work practice skills for working with individuals, couples, families, groups, communities, agencies, and organizations. These skills are acquired first in the classroom and then in the field placement. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredits social work programs and mandates specific areas of curriculum content. The CSWE Education Policy is included in this handbook, in the Field Manual, and is available from any social work faculty member.

The courses required for a social work major at Chatham University are listed below. To complete all requirements for the social work major in a timely manner, students should plan their courses carefully in consultation with their faculty advisors.

Pre-professional Courses:

BIO 135	Applied Human Biology OR another approved biology course, plus lab
PSY 101	General Psychology
PSY 213	Statistics and Research Design
SWK 101	Introduction to Sociology
SWK 102	Introduction to Social Work, Social Justice and Social Issues

Professional Courses:

SWK 201W	Human Behavior in the Social Environment
PSY 314W	Foundations of Behavioral Research
SWK 321	Social Welfare and Social Justice
SWK 322W	Social Welfare: Women and Policy
SWK 351	Interviewing and Assessment with Individuals
SWK 352	Interventions with Individuals and Families
SWK 354	Working with Groups
SWK 355	Working with Organizations and Communities
SWK 451a-e	Field Placement
SWK 490	Capstone (Applied Research)

Course Sequencing: A sample course sequence is shown below

Fall Term	Spring Term
First Year = 32 credits	
SWK 101 Introduction to Sociology (3 credits)	PSY 101 General Psychology (3 credits)
SWK 102 Introduction to Social Work, Social Justice and Social Issues (3 credits)	SEE mission course (3 credits)
ENG 105 First Year Writing (3 credits)	Humanities (3 credits)
SDE 101 (1 credit)	Social Science (3 credits)
Arts (3 credits)	Wellness (1 credit)
Elective (3 credits)	Elective (3 credits)
16 credits	*16 credits*
Sophomore Year = 31 credits	
SWK 201W Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE) (3 credits)	SWK 352 Interventions with Individuals and Families (PRO) (3 credits)
SWK 351 Interviewing and Assessment with Individuals (PRO) (3 credits)	PSY 213 Statistics (3 credits) (Math/Quant gen ed and pre-req for PSY314W)
BIO 135 Applied Human Biology with lab (4 credits) (Science with a lab)	GBL mission course (3 credits)
EGR mission course (3 credits)	Gen Ed Depth (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	Elective (3 credits)
16 credits	*15 credits*
Junior year = 30 credits	
SWK 321 Social Welfare and Social Justice (3 credits)	SWK 322W Social Welfare: Women and Policy (3 credits)
PSY 314W Foundations of Behavioral Research (3 credits)	SWK 354 Working with Groups (3 credits)
Gen Ed Depth (3 credits)	Gen Ed Depth (3 credits)
Elective (3 Credits)	Elective (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	Elective (3 credits)
15 credits	*15 credits*
Senior Year = 28 credits	
SWK 451-5 Field Placement (6 credits)	SWK 451-5 Field Placement (6 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	SWK 490 Integrative Capstone Seminar (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	SWK 355 Working with Organizations and Communities (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	Wellness (1 credit)
15 credits	*13 credits*

Field Placement

Field placements constitute a required and important part of social work education in which students learn and work under the supervision of practicing social workers in real world settings. The field placement provides practical, hands-on experience in doing social work while integrating the knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom. A major component of professional education, the field experience provides a bridge between the classroom and employment or graduate school.

Students complete field placements, offered in a broad variety of settings, during the senior year. Generally, students are in the field for two days and one-half days per week. This schedule can be modified, if necessary, at the discretion of the Field Placement Coordinator and the field supervisor's agreement, although all students must complete 500 hours at their placement. Field placements are graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Students also must take SWK490 Integrative Capstone in order to share field experiences and help integrate academic preparation with practice.

Students must apply for field placement during their junior year and demonstrate that they have developed the basic knowledge, skills, and values to be successful at field placement and in the profession. The specifics of the application process may be found in the next section "Policies and Procedures." Once accepted for field placement, the Field Placement Coordinator meets with the student to assess student areas of interest and assign placement. Prior to beginning field placement, the student visits the agency and meets with supervisory staff.

Students may complete field placements at family service agencies, medical settings, mental health agencies, community advocacy organizations, juvenile and criminal justice settings, child welfare agencies, and many other sites. The Social Work Program has contact with many local agencies that may be used for student placements. Agencies must offer generalist social work experience and training and supervise student work. The Field Placement Coordinator maintains regular contact with both students in field placement and their field instructors. The Social Work Program Field Education Manual is available on the Social Work Website. You can also ask any social work faculty member for a copy.

Child Abuse Clearances and Criminal Background Checks

Some agencies require that students complete a Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Record Check (Act 34) and/or Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 33) before beginning a field placement at their agency. Agencies may **also** require you to complete FBI Fingerprinting. Your field placement coordinator will guide this process if the agency requires it. The costs associated with background checks are the student's responsibility. The field faculty coordinator will provide guidance on this process.

Criminal History https://www.psp.pa.gov/pages/criminal-history-background-check.aspx

Child Abuse: https://www.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/Clearances/Pages/PA-Child-Abuse-History-Clearance.aspx

Clearances obtained for previous work or internships **must** be less than one year old on the first day of field placement. Students also may be asked by their field placement agency to update their clearances during their placement. Agency policy differs regarding clearances, and all students **must abide by the policy at their agency**. While a history of criminal activity or a substantiated child abuse report will not preclude students from all field placements, it will significantly limit the choices available. Please discuss any concerns with the Field Placement Coordinator prior to your senior year.

Admissions and Field Placement Policies and Procedures

Students who are interested in pursuing a social work major may declare a social work major at any time by completing the major declaration form available from the Registrar or on-line via My.Chatham>Documents & Forms>Student Services. Students are then identified as part of the social work program and receive information about issues and activities of interest to social work majors. **In order to complete the major, students must have a GPA of 2.25 at the beginning of their junior year and maintain that average until graduation. They must also earn a C- or higher in all courses required for the social work major.**

Social work majors must apply and be accepted for the 12-credit field placement completed during the senior year. In addition to grades, the process of evaluation will include other academic criteria such as the demonstration of professional behavior and the personal maturity to work in a professional social work environment.

Applicants who meet the following criteria by the end of the fall semester in their junior year are ready to apply for field placement for the following fall. Students who wish to begin field placement in the spring semester (and plan to graduate the following December), must have met the following criteria by the end of the preceding spring term:

1. The applicant must be a junior (have completed at least 60 credits) to apply for field placement.
2. The applicant must have an overall GPA of 2.25 and a C or higher in all social work courses.
3. The applicant must have read the **Social Work Student Handbook and the Social Work Field Manual** prior to completing this application. The applicant's signature on this form confirms that they have done so. The manuals may be found on the Brightspace Field Site (SWK451-455:01).

Further details of the application process may be found in the Social Work Field Manual.

Transfer students

Transfer students will be evaluated on an individual basis in relation to program admissions criteria. The University evaluates transfer credits and, in general, accepts liberal arts courses for transfer with a grade of at least a "C-." The social work faculty will assess transferred courses for credit for liberal arts requirements, the pre-professional sequence, or the major. No major credit is given for experiential learning, life, or work experience. Credit for life or work experience may be granted toward the pre-professional or liberal arts requirements.

Only courses from other CSWE-accredited social work programs will be considered for transfer for major requirements; such course work will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis. Field education will not be accepted in transfer.

Appeal Process

Students who are not accepted into field placement may appeal, in writing, within seven days, to the Dean of Arts, Science and Business. The Dean will respond, in writing, within two weeks.

Students may appeal the decision of the Dean of Arts, Science and Business to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will respond within two weeks.

Appeals received at times other than during regular academic terms may require a longer response time.

Criteria for Admission and Continued Enrollment in the Social Work Program

In addition to intellectual ability, professional social workers must be able to engage in constructive helping relationships with people. They must possess good judgment and a high degree of emotional stability. It is not in the best interest of the program and the profession that students who do not possess characteristics necessary for professional practice continue in the program. It is also not in the student's best interest to pursue a professional career path that is not appropriate for them.

Expectations for admission, continued enrollment, and graduation from the program include:

1. *Academic performance:*
   Students must maintain a GPA of at least 2.25. Students who do not have at least a GPA of 2.25 after completion of their graduation and social work major requirements will not be permitted to graduate with a BSW. They will receive a BA and their designated major will appear on their transcript as *Social Service Administration.* This degree will not qualify them for advanced standing in MSW programs nor will it be recognized as a professional social work degree. Students may also choose to complete or declare another major prior to graduation.

2. *Ability to develop constructive helping relationships:*
   Students shall act in a manner that shows recognition of individual worth and dignity and must be willing and able to communicate clearly and effectively.

   Students who have drug, alcohol, mental health, or criminal justice problems that consistently and significantly impact their performance may not be able to develop these constructive professional relationships.

3. *Standards of Professionalism:*
   Poor or tardy class or field placement attendance, failure to notify instructors or field supervisors of illness when unable to attend class or field placement, and violations of the Chatham Honor Code are examples of unprofessional behavior and demonstrate a poor potential for successful social work practice.

4. *Upholding Social Work Values and Ethics:*
   Students must exhibit an appreciation and respect for human diversity and a willingness to serve all people in need, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, handicap, or sexual preference. Students must uphold the NASW Code of Ethics.

Termination

Terminating a student from the program is a joint decision made by all social work faculty members and the student's field instructor, if appropriate. The faculty advisor will meet with any student whose performance jeopardizes their continued enrollment in the social work program. The student and advisor will develop a plan including specific expectations for the student. This plan will be reviewed within a specified time limit.

Termination Appeal Process

Students who are terminated from the BSW program may appeal, in writing, within seven days, to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will respond, in writing, within two weeks.

Students may appeal the decision of the Department Chair, in writing, within seven days, to the Dean of Arts, Science and Business. The Dean will respond, in writing, within two weeks.

Students may appeal the decision of the Dean of Arts, Science and Business to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will respond within two weeks.

Appeals received at times other than during regular academic terms may require a longer response time.

Other Department Policies

Affirmative Action

The social work program at Chatham University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, political affiliation, or sexual orientation in any aspect of its program. The program supports the equal opportunity and affirmative action policies of the University as a whole. This policy of nondiscrimination is applied to student admission and retention, as well as personnel decisions. In addition, the social work program promotes equal opportunity for all in its curriculum.

Policy against Harassment

The University provides an environment free from any form of sexual or discriminatory harassment. Each individual has the right to an environment that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including sexual harassment.

Specifically, the University expressly prohibits any form of harassment based on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, or veteran status. Sexual harassment and other forms of discriminatory harassment are unacceptable conduct, anywhere on the University campus, whether in the University's offices or in other work-related or educational settings and will not be tolerated by the University. Discriminatory harassment in the workplace is also prohibited by law.

Students with Special Needs

Chatham University is committed to providing an environment that ensures that no individual is discriminated against on the basis of their disability. Students with disabilities, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and who need special academic accommodations, should notify the director of the Office of Academic and Accessibility Resources (OAAR) Center as soon as possible. The OAAR Center will work with the student and the course instructor to coordinate and monitor the provision of reasonable academic accommodations.

Honor Code and NASW Code of Ethics

Chatham University students pledge to maintain the Honor Code, which states in part: "Honor is that principle by which we at Chatham form our code of living, working and studying together. The standards of honor at Chatham require that all students act with intellectual independence, personal integrity, honesty in all relationships and consideration for the rights and well-being of others." Information about the Honor Code may be found in the Chatham Student Handbook. Social work majors are also expected to uphold the NASW Code of Ethics as students and professionals (available on the web at http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/default.asp).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without attribution. This includes using someone else's exact words, paraphrasing those words or using a person's ideas without a citation (a reference to the author and the article and/or web site). Plagiarism is stealing and it is a serious form of academic dishonesty. It violates both the Chatham Honor Code and the NASW Code of Ethics. Plagiarism will result in, at a minimum, a grade of zero for the assignment. Other penalties (such as referral to Judicial Board) may occur at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to understand what plagiarism is and to use the proper format for quotations and references. If in doubt, it is better to over reference. The format used in the Social Work Program is that of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association,6th ed.* (2009).

Chatham University Social Work Program
Woodland Road - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15232

Student Application for Admission to Social Work Field Placement

Social work majors must apply and be accepted for the 12-credit field placement completed during the senior year. Applicants who meet the following criteria by the end of the fall semester in their junior year are ready to apply for field placement for the following fall. Students who wish to begin field placement in the spring semester (and plan to graduate the following December), must have met the following criteria by the end of the preceding spring term:

1. The applicant must be a junior (have completed at least 60 credits) to apply for field placement.
2. The applicant must have an overall GPA of 2.25 and a C- or higher in all social work courses.
3. The applicant must have read the **Social Work Student Handbook and the Chatham University Social Work Field Manual** prior to completing this application. The applicant's signature on this form confirms that they have done so. The manuals may be found on the Brightspace Field Site (SWK451a-e).

Students meeting these prerequisites should submit an **Application for Admission to Social Work Field Placement** with all other requested materials to the Field Placement Coordinator by November 15 for field placement starting the following fall term or March 1 for field placement starting the following spring term. Within two weeks, students will be notified about the results of their application. Once accepted, applicants will meet with the Field Placement Coordinator and begin the interview process at a cooperating agency.

In addition to grades, the process of evaluation will include other academic criteria such as the demonstration of professional behavior and the personal maturity to work in a professional social work environment. In cases where there is concern about a student's academic readiness to begin field placement, the student will meet with a member of the social work faculty to discuss the reasons for any concerns and develop an action plan. This plan will identify areas in need of remediation and include a timeline and tasks to help the student develop the competencies necessary to begin field placement.

The Social Work Faculty reserve the right, on the basis of an educational judgment, to recommend that an applicant be denied admission or to recommend dismissal of an admitted student whose academic record or potential or actual performance in field instruction does not meet expectations or whose performance is not consistent with the accepted standards for professional behavior.

Students who are not accepted into field placement may appeal, in writing, within seven days, to the Dean of Arts, Science and Business. The Dean will respond, in writing, within two weeks. Students may appeal the decision of the Dean of Arts, Science and Business to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will respond within two weeks. Appeals received at times other than during regular academic terms may require a longer response time.

Every effort is made to respond to student preferences for placement if possible. However, the Social Work Field Placement Coordinator and the Field Placement Agency will base the final decision for the placement upon the following criteria:

1. fit between student's abilities, strengths, and weaknesses and agency's educational potential
2. student preferences
3. consideration of specific student needs and considerations as per this application
4. geographical location of agency

SOCIAL WORK FIELD INSTRUCTION APPLICATION

Instructions:
Please complete the following pages and **attach a copy of your resume** and an **unofficial transcript** to the Field Placement Coordinator. In addition, please attach the completed **Field Placement Preference Worksheet, which can be found on the Field Placement Brightspace page**. All forms must be completed and received no later than November 15 for the following fall term placement and March 1 for the following spring term. A late application may result in delay of field instruction placement.

Section I

_____

Last Name   First Name   Middle Initial

_____

Former Last Name(s), if applicable   Current Address   Permanent Home Address

_____

Student ID#   Date of Birth   City   State   Zip   City   State   Zip

_____

Cell Phone Number   Landline Phone Number   Campus Box #

_____

All Other Colleges/Universities Attended (*Please provide dates*)

Current Status *(Check One)*
- ❑ Full Time
- ❑ Part Time

_____

Expected Graduation Date   Current Academic Advisor

Act 33, Act 34 and FBI clearances

Current Status *(Check One)*
- ❑ Student has current clearances
- ❑ Student clearances are older than 1 year
- ❑ Student does not have clearances

Chatham E-Mail_____ Other E-Mail Address _____

I wish to begin the Field Sequence in the _____ Semester, _____.

                                             Fall/Spring   Year

Section II

- Will you have the regular use of an automobile during placement? **_____ Yes _____ No**

- Please list any priorities, needs or concerns which may impact the selection of your placement (i.e., geographic, family responsibilities, health issues, accommodations for disabilities, employment, etc.).
  Please list and explain:

  _____

  _____

As per the **Social Work Program Student Handbook** under the section *Child Abuse Clearances and Criminal Background Checks*: "While a history of criminal activity or a substantiated child abuse report will not preclude students from all field placements, it will significantly limit the choices available."

Please discuss any concerns regarding Section II with the Social Work Field Placement Coordinator.

Section III

Social Work Field Placement Readiness Essay Questions

Answer the following questions: *(Please attach your answers on a separate sheet. 2 pages total maximum length)*

1. What experiences have contributed to your interest in social work?

2. What do you hope to do with your social work degree upon graduation?

3. What areas in social work interest you and in which areas of practice would you like to pursue a career?

4. What current social issues do you believe are pertinent to the practice of social work? Discuss briefly why you think one of these issues might be relevant.

5. What strengths will you bring to your field placement? What areas of weakness do you hope to work on during your field experience?

6. Do you foresee any difficulties in completing 500 hours of field placement during your senior year?

Section IV

In applying for Field Placement, I hereby agree to abide by *the NASW Code of Ethics* and the policies governing Chatham University Field Placements as explained in the Social *Work Field Manual*. You can find the *Field Manual* on the Brightspace site for social work field placement.

Please note: The Social Work Faculty reserve the right, based on an educational judgment, to recommend that

an applicant be denied admission or to recommend dismissal of an admitted student whose academic record or potential or actual performance in field instruction does not meet expectations or whose performance is not consistent with accepted standards for professional behavior.

Your signature below certifies that you have read and understood the above statement, and read and understood the *Social Work Field Manual,* the *Social Work Program Student Handbook,* and all materials you have submitted for consideration are complete and accurate.

_____
Signature of Applicant   *Date*

Student Checklist for *Application for Admission to Field Placement*

_____ I have read and understood the *Social Work Field Manual*
_____I have read and understood the *Social Work Program Student Handbook*
_____I have attached my resume to my completed application
_____I have attached my Social Work Field Placement Readiness Essay Questions
_____I have attached my unofficial Chatham University transcript
_____I have attached the Field Placement Preference Worksheet

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications within 14 days of submission. Questions about the application process may be directed to any of the social work faculty.

Melissa Bell, Ph.D.
Social Work Program Director
412-365-2768
mbell@chatham.edu

Erica Maloney, D.S.W.
Field Placement Coordinator
412-365-1884
e.maloney@chatham.edu

Christine Sarteschi, Ph.D.
Social Work Faculty
412-365-2759
csarteschi@chatham.edu

Date Application Submitted _____   Date Acceptance Letter Sent_____

Signature indicates application approval
Reviewed by M. Bell   _____   Date   _____

Reviewed by E. Maloney   _____   Date   _____

Reviewed by C. Sarteschi   _____   Date   _____

Social Work Program Faculty and Staff

Melissa Bell, Social Work Program Director, Associate Professor
B.A., Indiana University of Pennsylvania
M.S.W., University of Pittsburgh
Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh. LSW

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M.S.W., Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. LSW
D.S.W., Millersville University of Pennsylvania

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