



# Student Handbook

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## **THE MID-TENNESSEE COLLABORATIVE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MTC-MSW) PROGRAM**

Welcome to the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work (MTC-MSW) Program. This unique collaboration brings together three institutions of higher education in Tennessee: Austin Peay State University, Middle Tennessee State University, and Tennessee State University. This is one program that has three locations. The program is designed for the working professional, with some courses offered on-campus in the evening and others offered online. It can be completed on a full-time or a part-time basis.

The MTC-MSW Program began in fall 2009 with the admission of students to the full 60-hour program. Admission of advanced standing students began in fall 2010. Students who have a Bachelor of Social Work degree from an accredited undergraduate social work program and a cumulative GPA of 3.00 are eligible for advanced standing.

The MTC-MSW program prepares students for Advanced Generalist Social Work Practice. We are frequently asked: What is Advanced Generalist Social Work? and, How does the concentration of Advanced Generalist impact the jobs for which I'll be eligible? The advanced generalist concentration provides a specialty area for the student. A clinical or direct practice concentration prepares students for clinical or direct service work with clients. An administrative concentration prepares students to provide indirect services. The advanced generalist concentration prepares students to work with both direct and indirect services.

Agency-based internships are a vital part of MSW students' learning. The MTC-MSW Program is pleased to be able to offer a wide variety of agencies that can serve as field education sites. Students complete 900 hours during their two internship experiences. Employment-based internships are encouraged for those already working in a social work setting, as long as a new learning experience can be provided.

As this program has three locations, you must first determine your home campus. The home campus is where you apply for admission, take your on-campus courses, enroll each semester, and pay tuition. Although you have a home campus, you also have classmates on the other two campuses. When you are enrolled in online courses, you will be interacting with students from all three locations.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the accrediting body for Social Work. The MTC-MSW Program entered "Candidacy," a major step in the accreditation process, in June 2010. Students admitted during the academic year in which candidacy is granted will be considered as having graduated from an accredited program once initial accreditation is granted. Therefore, as students in a new program, you will hear about the progress of the program as it moves from candidacy to initial accreditation. In Tennessee graduates from a program in candidacy can be issued temporary licenses.

As a MSW student, you will be encouraged to pursue your own interests and goals as well as

those of the program in order to become an active and independent learner. Each member of the MTC-MSW faculty stands ready to assist you, and we look forward to establishing a team effort towards your social work education and social work career.

This handbook is intended to:

- acquaint prospective applicants with the MSW program
- serve as a reference for students
- supplement the university catalog

We look forward to working with you and getting to know you.

Faculty & Staff  
MTC-MSW Program

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(as of October 2014)

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work (MTC-MSW) Program is dedicated to the enhancement of human well-being, diversity, and social justice through developing and improving systems of public social services, especially for children and families, by offering graduate training in Social Work with a hybrid model of delivery. The mission of the program reflects the dominant values of the social work profession and is dedicated to serving the needs of the region, preparing social workers with an Advanced Generalist practice orientation suited to the social context, and reflecting the values and skills of the profession.

## **MTC-MSW PROGRAM GOALS**

The goals of the MTC-MSW Program grow directly from its defined mission, the character of the region to be served, and the body of literature on the efficacy of the advanced generalist model for professional social work practice. To fulfill the above mission, the six goals of the MTC-MSW Program are:

1. To prepare a diverse student population for advanced generalist social work practice based on professional values and ethics to serve client systems of various sizes and types.
2. To promote the development of social policies and services to reduce the impact of poverty, oppression and discrimination.
3. To develop analytical skills and critical thinking that will encourage active participation in the development, evaluation, and improvement of social work knowledge and skills through research aimed at advancing social work practice.
4. To promote the development of a multiple theoretical orientation applicable across system sizes.
5. To provide an understanding of diversity and cultural competence with an emphasis on social justice, empowerment, and improving the well-being of people.
6. To socialize students to the profession of social work and the organizational environment through evidenced based practice.

## **MTC-MSW PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The MTC-MSW Program's mission and goals inform the design and organization of the curriculum. Courses in the foundation and concentration curricula contribute to students' achievement of the following objectives, which, in turn, advances the MTC-MSW Program's attainment of its goals.

### **Foundation Objectives**

1. Apply critical thinking and research skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.

3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
5. Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and the social welfare institution and their contemporary structures and issues.
6. Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.
7. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interaction among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies that promote social and economic justice.
9. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
10. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
11. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.

### **Concentration Objectives**

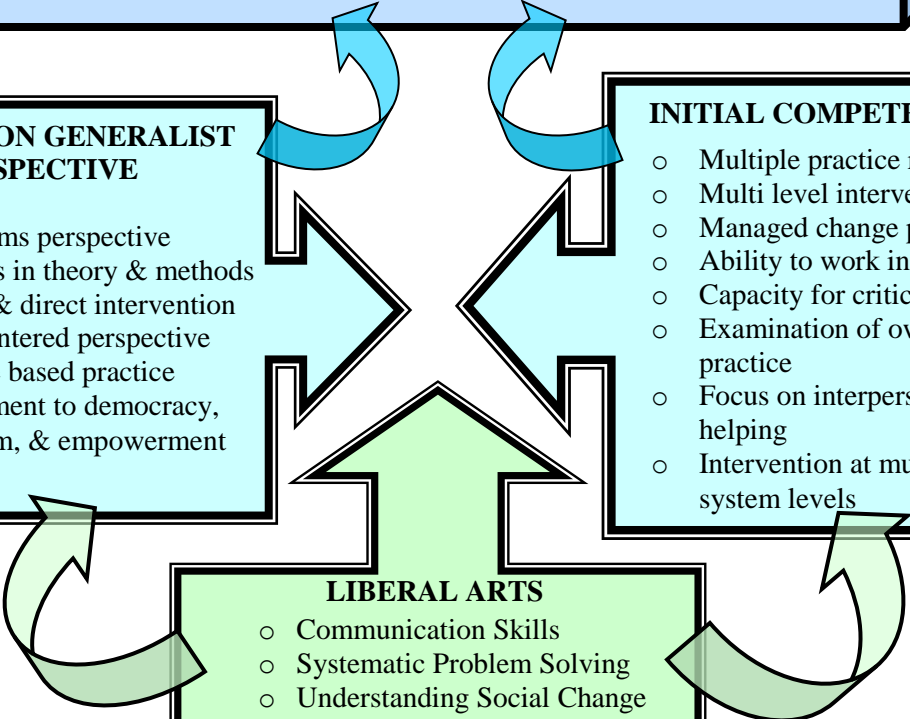
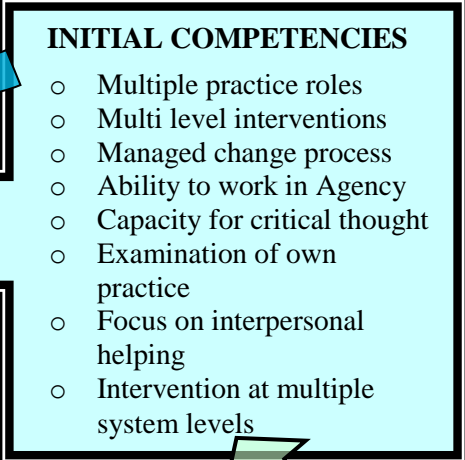
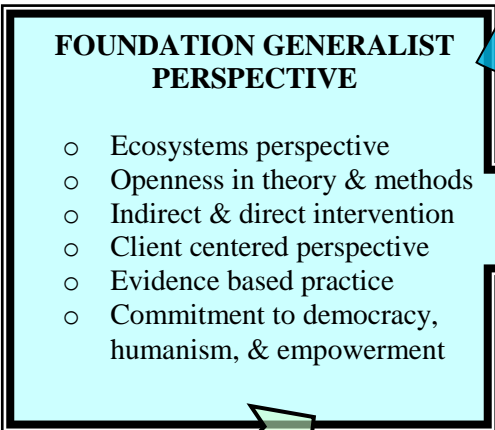
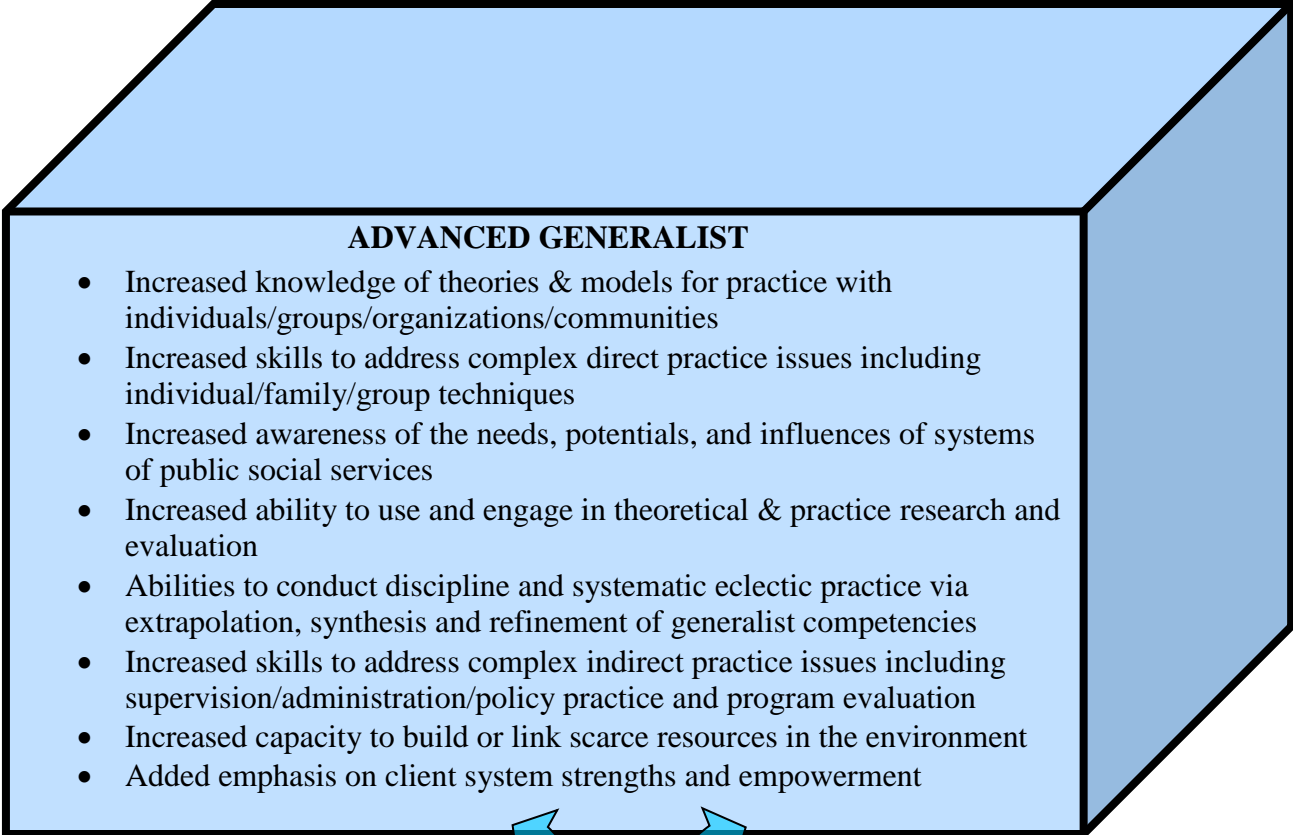
1. Utilizing a multiple theoretical orientation, apply the knowledge and skills of advanced generalist practice to diverse systems of all sizes within the scope of professional values and ethics.
2. Evaluate research studies relevant to advanced generalist practice and demonstrate skills in evaluating one's personal practice interventions.
3. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems offering advanced generalist practice services and seeking necessary organizational change when indicated.
4. Provide advanced generalist social work practice with increased awareness in the areas of diversity, social justice, and public services, especially with children and families.

## **THE MTC-MSW PROGRAM'S ADVANCED GENERALIST MODEL**

The MTC-MSW Program assumes two levels of professional preparation: foundation-level generalist social work practice and advanced generalist social work practice. The advanced generalist level is distinguished by increased complexity, depth, and range of knowledge and skills reflected in preparation for advanced practice roles. This program prepares students for advanced generalist social work practice.

Advanced generalist practice is practice that is autonomous, focused on public social service settings, and concerned with the enhancement of human well-being, diversity, and social justice, especially with children and families. Advanced generalist practitioners should be able to analyze and resolve more complex ethical and value conflicts, apply empirically-based interventions to micro, mezzo, and macro practice situations, and use research methods to evaluate their own practice and to contribute to the profession's knowledge base. Advanced generalist practitioners should be able to integrate knowledge, theories, and practice in such a way as to eventually model and instruct others in the profession.

The following figure illustrates our Advanced Generalist Practice Model (adapted from Morales Sheafor, 2007).



## **ADMISSION TO THE MTC-MSW PROGRAM**

In addition to the standard institutional requirements for admission to the graduate college at each of the participating universities, individuals must also submit an application to the Department of Social Work at their selected home campus. Information about the application process is available online at:

APSU    <http://www.apsu.edu/SocialWork/graddegree.htm>  
MTSU    <http://www.mtsu.edu/socialwork/msw.shtml>  
TSU      <http://www.tnstate.edu/interior.asp?mid=5898&ptid=1>

The Department of Social Work application for the MSW Program consists of:

- A completed MSW Application Form, which includes an essay.
- Three (3) reference forms to be completed by professionals who can address the applicant's interest in social work, potential for successfully completing a master's program, and potential for professional social work practice.

Applicants interested in obtaining Advanced Standing must have: a) completed a Bachelor of Social Work from a CSWE-accredited program, and b) attained a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 in their undergraduate course work. International students who hold a baccalaureate degree from a social work program outside the U.S. must have their transcript reviewed by CSWE for a determination of equivalency.

Applicants should be aware that, consistent with CSWE standards, the MTC-MSW Program does not grant academic credits for life, volunteer, or work experience.

Applicants who have successfully completed graduate coursework at an accredited college or university in a discipline other than social work may be able to transfer up to nine (9) credits of elective coursework.

Those who have successfully completed graduate coursework in social work at a program accredited by CSWE should contact the Social Work Department at their home campus for information on transferring credits.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

A number of loan programs are available to eligible students. Individuals also may qualify for the federal work-study program. A limited number of assistantships and fellowships are available.

General information about financial aid alternatives can be found online at:

APSU    <http://apsu.financialaidtv.com/>  
MTSU    [http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/08\\_10/2008-10\\_Financial\\_Aid.pdf](http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/08_10/2008-10_Financial_Aid.pdf)  
TSU      <http://www.tnstate.edu/interior.asp?mid=69>

For more information about financial aid, students are encouraged to contact the Financial Aid Office at their home campus.

## CURRICULUM DESIGN

The MTC-MSW Program's curriculum prepares students to engage in advanced generalist social work practice. The curriculum is designed so that by the time students graduate they will have acquired the knowledge, skills, and professional values to allow them to meet the needs of the region and enhance human well-being, diversity, and social justice through developing and improving systems of public social services, especially for children and families. Classroom and field-based learning reinforce each other, allowing students to develop the competencies required of advanced generalist social work practitioners.

The first 30 credits of the MTC-MSW Program's curriculum constitute students' foundation education experience. Foundation-level courses and field education equip students with the knowledge, skills, and professional values that form the core of generalist social work practice. The advanced generalist concentration curriculum, which entails 30 credits, builds on students' foundation learning and offers more advanced course work and field education experiences.

Students admitted to the MTC-MSW Program with advanced standing are given credit for the foundation curriculum's course and field education requirements. Advanced standing students complete the course and field education requirements of the 30-credit concentration curriculum.

Students without advanced standing who enter the program with a strong background in content covered by certain foundation courses have the option of taking an examination to be exempt from those courses. Exemption from a foundation course is by examination only, and exemption exams are only available for specific courses. Exemption from a foundation course does not reduce the number of credits a student must complete to satisfy the requirements for the MSW degree; additional elective coursework can be taken to satisfy the 60 credits needed for graduation.

Registration for MSW courses is by permission of the department. The specific courses that make up the Foundation and Concentration curricula are described below.

**Foundation Courses** (Foundation courses are restricted to students admitted to the MSW Program)

SW 6000 MSW Practice I (3 hours)

A social work methods course designed to enable the student to understand and apply social work methods within the context of the generalist perspective with individuals and families. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program

SW 6010 Human Behavior and the Social Environment (3 hours) (online delivery)

An introduction to the theories and knowledge of the human bio-psycho-social development including theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations, agencies, and communities). Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program

SW 6020 Research I (3 hours)

This is a basic research and statistical methods course, utilizing research in general inquiry and practice evaluation in social work with the generalist perspective. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program

SW 6030 Social Welfare Policy and Services (3 hours) (online delivery)

The historical development, philosophical orientation, and analysis of U.S. social welfare policy and services, including the global context. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program

SW 6100 MSW Practice II (3 hours)

A social work methods course designed to enable the student to understand and apply social work methods within the context of the generalist perspective with groups, agencies, and communities. Prerequisites: MSW Practice I & HBSE

SW 6110 Social Justice & Equity for Multicultural Populations (3 hours) (online delivery)

An overview of the professional commitment of social work to oppressed peoples. Prerequisite: HBSE

SW 6120 Research II (3 hours)

An advanced discussion of program evaluation strategies and single system design issues. The student will conduct a research project. Prerequisite: Research I

SW 6130 Practicum IA (3 hours)

A 200 hour field practicum experience within the generalist perspective. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IB. Prerequisites: MSW Practice I, HBSE, Research I, & Policy

SW 6140 Practicum IB (3 hours)

A 200 hour field practicum experience with the generalist perspective. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IA. Prerequisites: MSW Practice I, HBSE, Research I, & Policy.

**Concentration Courses (Students must have taken their Foundation courses or been admitted with Advanced Standing)**

SW 6200 Advanced Practice with Individuals (3 hours)

Advanced practice with individuals including client system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission

SW 6210 Advanced Practice with Families (3 hours)

Advanced practice with families including client system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission

SW 6220 Advanced Group Practice (3 hours)

Advanced practice with groups including client system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission

SW 6230 Advanced Macro Practice (3 hours)

Advanced practice with organizations and communities including system assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission

SW 6240 Social Policy Analysis (3 hours) (online delivery)

A study of the design, implementation, and analysis of social policies and their impact on social work practice. Prerequisites: Practicum IA (SW 6130) & IB (SW 6140) OR Advanced Standing admission

SW 6300 Empirical Social Work Practice (4 hours)

A seminar in the integration of theoretical perspectives and the application of research findings and empirical outcome evaluation techniques to advanced generalist social work practice. Prerequisites: Advanced Practice with Individuals, Advanced Practice with Families OR Advanced Group Practice, Advanced Macro Practice, & Social Policy Analysis

SW 6310 Practicum IIA (4 hours)

A 250 hour field practicum experience. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IIB. Prerequisites: Advanced Practice with Individuals, Advanced Practice with Families OR Advanced Group Practice, Advanced Macro Practice, & Social Policy Analysis

SW 6320 Practicum IIB (4 hours)

A 250 hour field practicum experience. May be taken concurrently with Practicum IIA. Prerequisites: Advanced Practice with Individuals, Advanced Practice with Families OR Advanced Group Practice, Advanced Macro Practice, & Social Policy Analysis

### **Elective Courses**

SW 5000 Special Topics (3 hours) (online delivery)

Special topics in social work and social welfare. May be repeated for a maximum of 15 hours.

SW 6400 Independent Study (3 hours)

Independent study allows a student to develop more fully an area of his or her particular interest. Topics for intensive study are chosen in joint consultation between the student and the instructor.

SW 6410 Aging Issues and Controversies (3 hours) (online delivery)

This course examines the biological, psychological, and social issues affecting older adults. The field of gerontology is explored with special attention to current controversies in health care, independence, and social status with application of ethical theories to these problems. Special attention is given to the impacts on the family of caregiving, alternative living arrangements, cognitive and physical decline, and other aging issues.

SW 6420 Adult Mental Health (3 hours) (online delivery)

This course prepares students for advanced generalist practice by integrating foundation level knowledge of policy, research, HBSE and practice with substantive knowledge from the field of mental health. Students will learn the basics of DSM-IV-TR diagnosis, biopsychosocial

assessment, and treatment planning. They will be exposed to the skills necessary to conduct strengths and competency-based assessments and interventions. Permission of department required.

## DEGREE PLAN – PROGRAM OF STUDY

### FULL TIME PROGRAM

#### MSW FOUNDATION, 30 SEMESTER HOURS

##### FIRST YEAR:

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
SW 6000 MSW Practice I	3	SW 6100 MSW Practice II	3	Optional	
SW 6010 HBSE (online)	3	SW 6110 Social Justice (online)	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3
SW 6020 Research I	3	SW 6120 Research II	3	Optional	
SW 6030 Policy (online)	3	SW 6130 Practicum IA (200 hrs)	3	SW 6140 Practicum IB (200 hrs)	3
SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3	SW 6140 Practicum IB (200 hrs)	3		
<i>Total 15 hours</i>		<i>Total 15 hours</i>		<i>Optional Total 6 hours</i>	

#### FULL TIME MSW CONCENTRATION IN ADVANCED GENERALIST PRACTICE, 30 SEMESTER HOURS SECOND YEAR:

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
SW 6200 Advanced Practice w Individuals	3	SW 6300 Empirical SW Practice	4	Optional	
SW 6210 Advanced Practice w Families	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3
OR		SW 6310 Practicum IIA (250 hrs)	4	Optional	
SW 6220 Advanced Groups	3	SW 6320 Practicum IIB (250 hrs)	4	SW 6320 Practicum IIB (250 hrs)	4
SW 6240 Social Policy Analysis (online)	3				
SW 6230 Advanced Macro Practice	3				
SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3				
<i>Total 15 hours</i>		<i>Total 15 hours</i>		<i>Optional Total 7 hours FOR SUMMER GRADUATES</i>	

### PART-TIME PROGRAM

#### MSW FOUNDATION, 30 SEMESTER HOURS

Fall - First Year	Hours	Spring - First Year	Hours	Summer - First Year	Hours
SW 6000 MSW Practice I	3	SW 6100 MSW Practice II	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3
SW 6010 HBSE (online)	3	SW 6110 Social Justice (online)	3		
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 3 hours</i>	
Fall - Second Year	Hours	Spring - Second Year	Hours	Summer - Second Year	Hours
SW 6020 Research I	3	SW 6120 Research II	3	SW 6140 Practicum IB (200 hrs)	3
SW 6030 Policy (online)	3	SW 6130 Practicum IA (200 hrs)	3		
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 3 hours</i>	

**PART-TIME PROGRAM (cont.)**

**MSW CONCENTRATION IN ADVANCED GENERALIST PRACTICE, 30 SEMESTER HOURS**

<b>Fall - First Year</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring - First Year</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Summer - First Year</b>	<b>Hours</b>
SW 6200 Advanced Practice w Individuals	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3		
SW 6240 Social Policy Analysis (online)	3	SW 5000 Special Topics (online)	3		
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 6 hours</i>			
<b>Fall - Second Year</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring - Second Year</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Summer - Second Year</b>	<b>Hours</b>
SW 6210 Advanced Practice w Families		SW 6300 Empirical SW Practice	4	SW 6320 Practicum IIB (250 hrs)	4
OR		SW 6310 Practicum IIA (250 hrs)	4		
SW 6220 Advanced Groups	3			<i>Total 4 hours</i>	
SW 6230 Advanced Macro Practice	3			<i>Part Time Students are Summer Graduates</i>	
<i>Total 6 hours</i>		<i>Total 8 hours</i>			

**ADVISEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Student advisement is an important component of the MTC-MSW Program. The purposes of advisement are to:

- Advise the student through the process of obtaining a MSW degree.
- Work with the student around any academic problems that may arise.
- Assist the student in exploring possible directions for his or her professional career.

Once admitted, students are assigned to an academic advisor who is a faculty member. Faculty advisors will have posted office hours during which they are available to meet with students for advisement. They may also be contacted by phone or email.

**ADMISSION TO FIELD**

Field education is one of the cornerstones of professional social work education. During their field practicum, MSW students have the opportunity to apply what they are learning in the classroom to real world situations. They also can bring their field practicum experiences back to the classroom for reflection, examination, analysis, and synthesis.

Students who enter the MSW Program without advanced standing complete two field experiences: a 6-credit foundation placement and an 8-credit advanced generalist practice placement. Students who enter with advanced standing complete a single, 8-credit advanced generalist practice placement. In addition to agency-based supervision, a faculty member serves as a liaison between the program and the placement to foster the integration of field and classroom learning.

Students should be aware that, consistent with CSWE standards, the MTC-MSW Program does

not grant academic credits for life, volunteer, or work experience or for graduate-level internship experiences completed in a field or discipline other than social work.

Orientation to the MTC-MSW Program's field education component is provided to students each fall semester. For further information on field education policies and procedures, including a listing of the specific criteria to be met before beginning a field placement, see the *Field Education Manual*.

### **ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

Admission to candidacy signifies that a student has demonstrated the ability to do graduate-level studies and is prepared to continue on with the work required for her or his degree. Criteria for Admission to Candidacy include having:

- Been admitted to the MSW program
- Successfully completed a minimum of 12 hours of graduate work
- Maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Secured a faculty recommendation for candidacy
- Filed a degree plan/plan of study with appropriate approvals

### **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

As a non-thesis program, the culminating experience for the MSW Program will be a written comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination will be completed in the student's final semester of study, and will incorporate both the application of research and the integration of classroom and field-based learning experiences. Information about the comprehensive exam will be provided in the SW 6300 Empirical Social Work Practice course.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

To qualify for graduation, MSW students must complete all of this program's course and field education requirements and have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher.

It is the responsibility of the MSW student to submit in a timely fashion all necessary paperwork required for graduation by the home university's College of Graduate Studies/School of Graduate Studies and Research. Information on these requirements can be obtained from the home university's *Graduate Catalog/Graduate Bulletin*:

- APSU    [http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin_2010-2011.pdf)  
MTSU    <http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/>  
TSU     [http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate\\_Catalog\\_2009-2011.pdf](http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate_Catalog_2009-2011.pdf)

## COUNSELING OUT

"Counseling out" is a term used to describe discontinuing a student's enrollment in the MTC-MSW Program. In most cases, the decision to discontinue a student in the program is considered permanent. In certain circumstances, a student may be counseled out with specific remedial steps to be taken before formal re-application to the program may be made.

Students can be counseled out for failure to meet academic standards, the conditions of academic probation, or for behavior that violates university, practicum agency, or professional standards.

Students have the right to appeal the counseling out decision through the identified grievance procedures of each of the three collaborating universities.

## STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The MTC-MSW Program is committed to ensuring that MSW students are treated fairly and with respect and dignity during their graduate education. Students deserve to have their work evaluated in a non-biased and timely fashion. They should receive appropriate recognition for their contributions to work they do with faculty members. No student in the MTC-MSW Program should be subject to bias or discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

A fuller statement of students' rights and responsibilities can be found at:

- APSU <http://www.apsu.edu/files/student-affairs/students%27-rights-and-responsibilities.pdf>
- MTSU [http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/08\\_10/2008-10\\_BillOfRights.pdf](http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/08_10/2008-10_BillOfRights.pdf)
- TSU <http://www.tnstate.edu/interior.asp?mid=3732>

## STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The MTC-MSW Program fully supports students' rights and responsibilities to formulate and modify policies affecting academic and student affairs. MSW students are encouraged to be full participants in exercising the rights and responsibilities available to them at the three collaborating universities, as outlined in each university's *Graduate Catalog/Graduate Bulletin*:

- APSU [http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin_2010-2011.pdf)
- MTSU <http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/>
- TSU [http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate\\_Catalog\\_2009-2011.pdf](http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate_Catalog_2009-2011.pdf)

The MTC-MSW program also encourages, and will facilitate, students organizing in their own interests. To further the goal of student participation in the development of Social Work Department policies, student liaisons and student representatives will be selected as follows:

### **Faculty Meetings**

A student at each campus will be elected by the social work student organization to function as liaison between social work students and social work faculty. Social work faculty may choose to select additional student(s) to serve as student liaisons. The liaison(s) will be non-voting participants at social work department faculty meetings and will have a scheduled time on the agenda to share concerns and information from student organizations and the student body. Student liaisons will be excused from the discussion at faculty meetings when the faculty address confidential issues.

### **Social Work Department Advisory Board**

A student from each campus will be elected by the social work student organization to be a student representative on the Social Work Department Advisory Board. One of the elected students should be in her or his foundation studies, while the other two should be students in the concentration. Student representatives will be a full participant in board activities.

## **GRADE APPEAL**

Students have the right to appeal grades or other academic matters. These policies are published in the *Graduate Catalog/Graduate Bulletin* of each of the three collaborating universities:

- APSU [http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin_2010-2011.pdf)
- MTSU <http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/>
- TSU [http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate\\_Catalog\\_2009-2011.pdf](http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate_Catalog_2009-2011.pdf)

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

MSW students are expected to intellectually honest and forthright in their academic and field placement activities. All work MSW students complete for all courses should be their own. MSW students are expected to give credit to the sources used in their work by including appropriate citations and identifying direct quotations with quotation marks and providing complete reference information. Each of the collaborating universities has a policy for academic integrity, including the potential penalties for academic misconduct, and the MTC-MSW Program will adhere to those policies. Academic misconduct includes the following behaviors: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, or facilitating any such act. The following definitions apply:

- (1) Plagiarism.** The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper acknowledgment.
- (2) Cheating.** Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
- (3) Fabrication.** Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- (4) Facilitation.** Helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic misconduct.

Refer to the *Graduate Catalog/Graduate Bulletin* at each university for additional information:

- APSU [http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin_2010-2011.pdf)  
MTSU <http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/>  
TSU [http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate\\_Catalog\\_2009-2011.pdf](http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate_Catalog_2009-2011.pdf)

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodations, or if you have any questions related to any accommodation for testing, note taking, reading, etc., please speak with the instructor as soon as possible. To register with the university for accommodations, contact:

- APSU: Office of Disability Services, Austin Peay State University, Morgan University Center 114, Clarksville, TN 37044, 931-221-6230 (Voice)/931-221-6278 (TTY)  
MTSU: Office of Disabled Student Services, Middle Tennessee State University, KUC 120, Murfreesboro, TN 37132, 615-898-2158 (Voice)/615-898-2836 (TTY)  
TSU: Office of Students with Disabilities, Tennessee State University, Kean Hall 117, Nashville, TN 37209, 615-963-7400

## **REPORTING OF UNOFFICIAL WITHDRAWALS**

Federal regulations require that students who cease class attendance but do not officially withdraw from the University must be reported so that future financial aid will cease and/or the student will be required to return funds. Therefore, during the term, the instructor is required to complete a roster indicating those students who have stopped attending class without officially withdrawing.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Each university participating in this collaboration is a community of people with respect for diversity that emphasizes the dignity and equality common to all individual faculty, staff, and students. For information on non-discrimination contact:

- APSU: Office of Affirmative Action, Austin Peay State University, Browning Bldg 7B, Clarksville, TN 37044, 931-221-7178  
MTSU: Institutional Equity and Compliance Office, Middle Tennessee State University, Cope Administration Building #220, Murfreesboro, TN 37132, 615-898-2185  
TSU: Office of Equity, Diversity, and Compliance, Tennessee State University, 3500 John Merritt Blvd., Nashville, TN 37209, 615-963-7435

The MTC-MSW Program and the Social Work departments at each of the collaborating universities make specific and continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity (including age, class, color, culture, disability,

ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation) are practiced. Social work education builds upon professional practice and values; therefore, the MTC-MSW Program provides a learning context that is nondiscriminatory and reflects the profession's fundamental tenets. The learning context, the educational program (including faculty, staff, and student composition; selection of agencies and their clientele as field education settings; composition of program advisory or field committees; resource allocation; program leadership; speakers series, seminars, and special programs; research and other initiatives), and the program's curriculum model understanding of and respect for diversity.

### **POLICY ON HARASSMENT**

Each of the collaborating institutions is committed to establishing an atmosphere where your work, education, and participation in the university's activities and programs will be free from intimidation or offensive behaviors. Sexual, racial or other forms of harassment have no place in a university community. For more information contact:

- APSU: Office of Affirmative Action, Austin Peay State University, Browning Bldg 7B, Clarksville, TN 37044, 931-221-7178
- MTSU: Institutional Equity and Compliance Office, Middle Tennessee State University, Cope Administration Building #220, Murfreesboro, TN 37132, 615-898-2185
- TSU: Office of Equity, Diversity, and Compliance, Tennessee State University, 3500 John Merritt Blvd., Nashville, TN 37209, 615-963-7435

### **ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL RECORDS**

Each university participating in this collaboration has established procedures by which students can access their educational records. Please consult the *Graduate Catalog/Graduate Bulletin* of your home university for further details:

- APSU [http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://www.apsu.edu/files/registrar/GradBulletin_2010-2011.pdf)
- MTSU <http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/>
- TSU [http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate\\_Catalog\\_2009-2011.pdf](http://www.tnstate.edu/uploads/documents/Graduate_Catalog_2009-2011.pdf)

### **EXCEPTIONS TO MTC-MSW PROGRAM POLICIES**

Exceptions to MTC-MSW Program policies are rare; however, in unusual situations students may seek an exception by submitting a request in writing. Students who do not meet admission requirements, course prerequisites, or other stated conditions may appeal the decision in writing. A request or appeal for an exception, which is made by the student, should include a statement as to why the student believes her or his case is exceptional and merits additional consideration.

## STUDENT AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

### MSW Student Organization

To Be Announced

### Phi Alpha Honor Society

Phi Alpha Honor Society is a national honor society for social work students. The purposes of Phi Alpha are to provide a closer bond among social work students and to promote humanitarian goals and ideas. Phi Alpha embraces high standards of social work education and invites for membership only those students who have attained excellence in scholarship and service.

To be eligible for Phi Alpha a student must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 and recommendations from two faculty members. MSW students can apply for membership in Phi Alpha at the end of their first semester.

### National Association of Social Workers (NASW) <http://www.socialworkers.org/>

NASW is the national organization for professional social workers with over 150,000 members and 56 chapters throughout the United States and abroad. The organization has programs in professional development, standards, and action. It seeks to achieve sound social policy affecting those who are served. Its activities and membership services are structured to help all social workers to advance their practice in the field of helping people. The organization is committed to a high standard of practice and guides its members to this standard through the Code of Ethics (<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>). NASW meetings are held annually, both on the national and state levels. Local branch meetings are held monthly. Low student membership rates are offered for those pursuing an education in the field of social work. Liability insurance, sometimes required during a student's practicum semesters, may also be obtained from NASW. Members of NASW also receive the professional journal *Social Work*, which is committed to improving practice and extending knowledge in social work and social welfare. The journal is published bimonthly and is indexed/abstracted in: *Criminal Justice Abstract*, *Social Citation Index*, *Social Work Research and Abstracts*, *Social Sciences Index*, and various other publications.

### National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) <http://www.nabsw.org/mserver/>

NABSW is the national organization established in 1968 specifically to address social issues that affect the social, economic, psychological, and physical well-being of the Black community. There are chapters across the U.S., as well as in the Caribbean and Africa. Through participation in NABSW's national and international conferences, social workers can stay connected with each other and stay informed on state-of-the-art practice approaches and ideas. NABSW is a rich source of professional and cultural resources to help social workers in reaching their full potential in the profession and in enriching the lives of those with whom they work. Students are encouraged to become members and to form student chapters; NABSW's Office of Student Affairs is available to facilitate students' participation.

**International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)** <http://www.ifsw.org/>

The International Federation of Social Workers brings together social workers and their professional organizations from around the globe. The organization works to foster social justice, social development, and international cooperation. It strives to identify and disseminate information about best practices. It is committed to enhancing the profession of social work. Each year, the organization holds a thematically-focused annual meeting.

**Tennessee Conference on Social Welfare (TCSW)**

<http://www.tcsww.org/page/page/3049682.htm>

The TCSW grew out of the activities of reform leaders at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Originally called the Tennessee Conference on Charities and Corrections, the TCSW celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013. Today the TCSW is statewide organization composed of six regional networks that focus on a variety of topics. The organization engages in advocacy, and educational activities directed at “improving the social and economic well-being of Tennesseans.” Regular training sessions on issues related to public policy and service effectiveness are offered across the state. In addition to its annual conference, the TCSW also holds regional conferences.

**Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)** <http://www.cswe.org/>

CSWE is a national nonprofit organization that was established in 1952. Its membership includes individuals as well as undergraduate and master’s-level social work programs. CSWE is the accrediting body for social work educational programs. The organization also engages in research on the profession, especially those issues that relate to professional social work education. CSWE publishes the *Journal of Social Work Education*; the CSWE Press publishes book relevant to social work education, including textbooks for classroom use. CSWE holds an annual meeting that offers social worker academics a chance to learn about new research and instructional methodologies.

**Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)** <http://www.sswr.org/>

SSWR was established in 1993 to promote the engagement of practicing social workers, social work academics, and social work students in research. SSWR is dedicated to fostering the well-being of people and communities through the conduct of research and the application of research findings. At each year’s annual meeting, excellence in faculty and doctoral student research is acknowledged.

## AWARDS/SCHOLARSHIPS

A limited number of graduate student scholarships are available at each university. Information on these awards and scholarships can be obtained from the Financial Aid Office at the student’s home university:

- APSU <http://www.apsu.edu/Financialaid/>
- MTSU <http://www.mtsu.edu/financialaid/>
- TSU <http://www.tnstate.edu/interior.asp?mid=69>

## **Tennessee Department of Children's Services Tuition Program**

To enhance the knowledge and skills of current employees, the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) is offering financial and administrative support to DCS employees who wish to complete their MSW degree. For further information about the DCS tuition program, please contact: William Haynes, Executive Director of Human Resources for DCS, [william.haynes@state.tn.us](mailto:william.haynes@state.tn.us), 615-741-7265.

### **SOCIAL WORK ADVISORY BOARD**

A board of community social service professionals serves in an advisory capacity to the MTC-MSW Program, providing current professional community input to the program. At each site, community members advise MTC-MSW Program faculty on needs, trends, and issues of particular relevance to the local area. Community members are brought together across sites to provide guidance on the development and delivery of the program overall.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Any student who is dissatisfied with his or her treatment in any academic situation (except grades) that may occur in the MTC-MSW Program may have his or her grievance addressed by utilizing the following grievance procedure:

1. The student discusses the issue with the faculty member(s) with whom there is a difference.
2. If the issue remains unresolved, the student should contact the Chair of the Department of Social Work at the student's home campus.
3. If there is still no resolution, the student should prepare a written statement addressed to the MSW Review Committee. The statement should provide the committee with all relevant information about the issue or problem, and the steps the student has taken to obtain a resolution of the problem.
4. Upon receipt of the student's statement, the Committee will meet to consider the issue or problem. The Committee will accept written statements from any involved faculty member. The Committee will prepare a written report with recommendation(s) for resolution. Membership of the committee will include all social work faculty from student's home campus as well as the MSW Program Coordinator; excluded from the Committee will be the Department Chair and the faculty member with whom the student has a dispute.
5. The Committee will send the report to the Department Chair for appropriate action.
6. The student, if not satisfied, may confer with the Chair of the Department of Social Work and with the Dean of the Graduate College.

## **APPENDIX: MTC-MSW PROGRAM POLICIES**

The following policies, with the exception of those for field education, were adopted September 2009. Field education policies were adopted February 2010.

### **Policy #1.1 -- Credit for Life, Volunteer, or Employment Experience**

Academic or field education credit shall not be granted by the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program for life, volunteer, or employment experience.

### **Policy #1.2 -- Advanced Standing**

Advanced Standing is defined as the awarding of academic credit toward a MSW degree for prior baccalaureate course and field work completed at an undergraduate social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).\*

Persons who enter the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program with a degree granted by a CSWE-accredited undergraduate social work program\* and who have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 are eligible for advanced standing. Individuals granted advanced standing upon admission to this program will be given credit for foundation course and field work and will have the requirements for the MSW degree reduced by 30 credits; advanced standing students will complete this program's concentration curriculum only.

- \* For the purposes of granting Advanced Standing credit under this paragraph, an accredited undergraduate social work program is one that is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education as posted in the Council's Directory of Colleges and Universities with Accredited Social Work Degree Programs. International students who hold a baccalaureate degree in social work from a program that is not accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and who are interested in obtaining advanced standing credit must submit their transcript to the Council for a determination of equivalency.

### **Policy #1.3 -- Transfer Credit or Course Exemption in the MSW Program**

Transfer Credit is defined as the awarding of academic credit toward a degree for post-baccalaureate course or field work completed at an accredited academic institution when such work meets the transfer credit requirements of the university in this collaboration that is serving as the student's home campus as well as those of this MSW Program.

Exemption is defined as the waiving of a required academic course following: 1) an evaluation of the student's previous post-baccalaureate work that determines it to be essentially identical to the required course being waived and that meets the requirements of the university in this collaboration that is serving as the student's home campus as well as those of this MSW Program; or 2) demonstration by the student via examination of his or her mastery of a specific foundation content area for which such an examination is available. An exemption as defined herein does not reduce the number of credits required for graduation.

- A. Persons who have completed master's level work at a CSWE-accredited master of social work program\* and who are admitted to the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program for completion of the MSW degree may be eligible to receive transfer credits and/or course exemptions.

Any exemption granted will not reduce the number of credits the student needs in order to complete his or her MSW degree. The number of credits granted or reduced for a given course can neither exceed the number on the transcript from the school where they were earned nor the number earned in the corresponding course in this program. Regardless of the exemptions or transfer credits granted under this paragraph, the student will be required to complete before graduation all foundation and concentration requirements of this program's curriculum.

The specific transfer credits or exemptions granted will depend on the curriculum of the master of social work program the student attended, the courses the student completed, this program's MSW curriculum, and the requirements of the university in this collaboration that is serving as the student's home campus. This evaluation will be performed by the MSW Program Coordinator, or his or her designate, in collaboration with relevant graduate faculty from this program and representatives of the graduate division of the university in this collaboration that is serving as the student's home campus.

\* For the purposes of granting Transfer Credit or Exemption under this paragraph, an accredited master of social work program is one that is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education as posted in the Council's Directory of Colleges and Universities with Accredited Social Work Degree Programs.

- B. Persons who have completed post-baccalaureate academic work at an accredited academic institution in some discipline or profession other than social work and who are admitted to the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program may be entitled to transfer up to nine (9) credits of elective coursework. Coursework considered for transfer credits must meet the requirements for transfer credit of the university in this collaboration that is serving as the student's home campus.

The number of credits granted for a given course can neither exceed the number on the transcript from the school where they were earned nor the number earned in the corresponding course at the university in this collaboration that is serving as the student's home campus.

Exemption or transfer credit will not be granted for internship experiences completed during post-baccalaureate work in a discipline or profession other than social work.

- C. Persons whose undergraduate education has afforded them strong preparation in one or more of the subjects covered in this program's foundation curriculum may be able to be exempt from the course(s). Exemption from MSW foundation courses will be determined via available examination only. Any exemption granted, however, will not reduce the number of

credits that students will need to complete their MSW degree.

Exemption credit will not be granted for internship experiences completed during baccalaureate work in a discipline or profession other than social work.

#### **Policy #1.4 -- Enrollment Status**

- A. Full-time students, who will complete the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program in two (2) years, will need to enroll in 12-15 credits per semester.
- B. Part-time students, who will complete the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program in four (4) years, will need to enroll in 6-8 credits per semester.
- C. A student wishing to change his or her enrollment status from full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time should first discuss the matter with his or her academic advisor. The student must then submit to the MSW Program Coordinator a written request that indicates the rationale for the change of enrollment status. The written request must be submitted in advance of the student changing the number of credits for which he or she registers. The MSW Program Coordinator will review the request and will notify the student and the academic advisor of the decision.

A change of enrollment status does not increase the amount of time the student has to complete the MSW degree beyond four years from the date of the student's entry into the program (see Policy #1.5).

#### **Policy #1.5 -- Statute of Limitation on Earning the MSW Degree**

There is a four-year statute of limitation on the earning of the MSW degree, consistent with the Council on Social Work Education's Accreditation Standards. The four-year period is counted from the date of entry into the program for four full academic calendar years.

Under extenuating circumstances (listed below), an academic advisor can recommend an extension of time to the MSW Program Coordinator. If approved, the period of extension and the conditions for completing the program will be recorded in the student's folder, with a copy sent to the student. Extenuating circumstances include the following:

- extended illness of the student
- extended personal emergency
- mobilization into a US military unit
- death of a close family member

### **Policy #1.6 -- Leave of Absence/Stop Out**

Under special circumstances, a MSW student may be granted a leave of absence from the program. A student wishing to take a leave of absence should refer to his or her university's Graduate Catalog for information on specific requirements and procedures. The time out of the program during an approved leave of absence/stop out will not count against the total time allowed to complete the MSW degree.

### **Policy #1.7 -- Readmission to the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program**

In addition to seeking readmission in the graduate division at the individual's home campus, a person seeking to re-enter this program must submit a letter to the MSW Program Coordinator. The letter should discuss why the individual wishes to return to the MSW Program and the plans he or she has to ensure that he or she will now be able to participate fully and meet the program's course and field education requirements. The letter will be reviewed by the MSW Program Coordinator and the graduate faculty at the individual's home campus. Their recommendation will be forwarded to the graduate division at the individual's home campus.

### **Policy #1.8 – Advisement**

Each MSW student will be assigned to a graduate faculty member who will serve as his or her advisor. The purposes of advisement are to:

- Provide guidance on academic matters
- Assist with problem solving
- Offer consultation on professional development and social work career opportunities

Students are expected to meet with their faculty advisors on a regular basis, at minimum once a semester.

### **Policy #1.9 -- MSW Graduation Requirements**

To qualify for graduation, MSW students must complete all of this program's course and field education requirements and have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher.

### **Policy #2.1: Requirements for Admission to MSW Field**

To be accepted for foundation field education (SW 6130/6140), MSW students must complete Practice I (SW 6000), HBSE (SW 6010), Research I (SW 6020), and Social Welfare Policy and Services (SW 6030) and achieve an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in their MSW courses. In addition, students are required to attend a general field introductory session as well as other field

education meetings. Pre-placement application materials must be submitted to the Department of Social Work prior to scheduling an individual appointment with the Field Coordinator. Student will be responsible for contacting the potential practicum agency and meeting with the field instructor to finalize the placement. Written confirmation of the placement must be received by the Social Work office prior to the end of the fall semester.

To be accepted for the advanced generalist concentration field experience (SW 6310/6320), MSW students must complete Advanced Practice with Individuals (SW 6200), Advanced Practice with Families (SW 6210) OR Advanced Group Practice (SW 6220), Advanced Macro Practice (SW 6230), and Social Policy Analysis (SW 6240) and have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students must enroll concurrently in Empirical Social Work Practice (SW 6300) during the spring semester in which they do their concentration field placement. Students are responsible for ensuring that request for placement forms, interviews with the Field Coordinator and with the potential field instructor, and written confirmation of the placement are completed by the deadlines set by the Department of Social Work.

### **Policy #2.2: Conflicts of Interest**

Field students should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with professional discretion and impartial judgment. During the field placement planning process, MSW students should let the Field Coordinator know about any agencies with which there may be a conflict of interest because:

1. students and/or their family members are currently receiving or have recently finished receiving agency services.
2. a family member is currently employed by the agency or has recently left a position with the agency.

Once in the field education placement, MSW students should follow the required steps to avoid conflicts of interest:

1. inform the field instructor when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the client's interests primary and protects client's interests to the greatest extent.
2. refrain from taking unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploiting others to further personal, political, religious, or business interests.
3. refrain from engaging in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of potential harm or exploitation to the client. Dual or multiple relationships occur when MSW students relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business.
4. when providing services to two or more individuals who have a relationship with each other (i.e., couples, family members), MSW students should clarify with all parties which individuals are considered clients and professional obligations to all individuals who are receiving services.

### **Policy #2.3: Confidentiality**

MSW students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior that is consistent with the ethical standards identified in the NASW Code of Ethics. As part of this, students are expected to maintain the confidentiality of information during their practicum experiences. They should avoid discussing the particulars of cases with friends, family members, and others not directly involved in the cases. Students should never disclose client names to others or use actual client names in their process recordings, journals, course notebooks, papers, etc.

### **Policy #2.4: Professional Liability Insurance**

While the risk is relatively small, the student and the agency should recognize the possibility of lawsuit in a case where a student is involved, even though the suit may not involve the student directly. The MTC- MSW Program requires malpractice insurance for all MSW students in practicum. Neither the MTC-MSW Program nor the three host campuses is able to cover the costs for such liability insurance for MSW students.

In some cases, agencies may be able to include students (who are their employees) under their "blanket policy." Alternatively, students can check with their insurance providers to see if they have a rider to cover such liability insurance. NASW provides such insurance for a nominal fee to its members. Information on NASW membership and insurance is available at:

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

Within two weeks of beginning their practicum, students must submit documentation of liability insurance to the MSW Field Coordinator at their home campus

### **Policy #2.5: Practicum Hours and Attendance**

The foundation practicum (SW 6130/6140) involves a total of 400 hours, or 6 credits. MSW students can enter their foundation practicum only in the spring semester. Students have the option of registering for all 6 credits and completing all 400 hours in a single spring semester OR registering for 3 credits and completing 200 hours in the spring semester and finishing the remaining 3 credits/200 hours in the summer semester. Students who register for all 6 credits of foundation field education in the spring semester must complete approximately 27 hours of practicum per week over the course of the semester, excluding the period for spring break. Those who register for 3 credits of foundation field education in the spring and 3 credits in the summer must complete approximately 15 hours of practicum per week, excluding the spring break period and the time between semesters.

The advanced generalist concentration practicum (SW 6310/6320) involves a total of 500 hours, or 8 credits. MSW students can enter their concentration practicum only in the spring semester. Students have the option of registering for all 8 credits and completing all 500 hours in a single spring semester OR registering for 4 credits and completing 250 hours in the spring semester and finishing the remaining 4 credits/250 hours in the summer semester. Students who register for

all 8 credits of concentration field education in the spring semester must complete approximately 33 hours of practicum per week over the course of the semester, excluding the period for spring break. Those who register for 4 credits of concentration field education in the spring and 4 credits in the summer must complete approximately 19 hours of practicum per week, excluding the spring break period and the time between semesters.

All students must observe agency work hours and notify the field instructor of any unavoidable absences or lateness in advance if possible. Students must make up time for being late and/or absent. Students are entitled to hazardous weather closings and to holidays that are observed by the field agency. Students are not expected to report to their field agency on holidays observed by the university, should these differ from the holidays observed by the field agency. However, students must discuss this with their field instructors prior to the absence; the field instructors may request that the students come to the agency that day.

If approved by their field instructors, students may continue in their practicum during spring break as well as during the period between spring and summer semesters. They may complete no more than their usual number of hours per week during these periods. A schedule must be submitted to the faculty liaison at least two weeks prior to the break.

Students are responsible for completing the required number of field hours and for maintaining a timesheet to document the completion of their field hours. Although students sometimes will want to complete more than the required number of hours per week in order to reduce the number of weeks in which they are at their practicum setting, they should be aware that they have made a commitment to the agency and are expected to extend their practicum throughout the semester in which they are enrolled. Therefore, students should not expect to complete their practicum prior to the final week of classes.

### **Policy #2.6: Employment-Based Practicum**

Students who are working in a social service agency or whose employment with a social service agency will begin at least 30 days prior to the start of their field placement can request a field practicum at their place of employment. The employing agency must be agreeable to serving as the employee's field practicum site and willing to create learning experiences, provide field instruction, and comply with other field education requirements. The practicum assignment must be clearly educational, should afford the student learning experiences that contribute to his or her development as an advanced generalist social worker, and do not replicate current or past work assignments. The use of settings where the student is already an employee as a field practicum site may be permitted if the following conditions are met:

1. The field practicum must be an entirely different experience than the one where the student is working or is employed.
2. Assignments developed for the practicum must be educationally focused and must be clearly delineated from work assignments.
3. The student's work supervisor should not serve as the field instructor.

4. The person supervising the student cannot be enrolled in the Mid-Tennessee Collaborative Master of Social Work Program.
5. The agency must meet the same criteria as other field practicum agencies, as specified in the *MSW Field Education Manual*.
6. The person designated as the field instructor must meet the same criteria as other field instructors, as specified in the *MSW Field Education Manual*.
7. The student must fill out the Field Education Application for an employment-based placement request.
8. The Field Coordinator may make an agency visit.

### **Policy #2.7: Compliance with Field Agency Policies and Procedures**

MSW students are expected to follow agency policies and procedures and abide by the rules and regulations of the agency while in their field placements. They are responsible for fulfilling the practicum agencies' requirements for background checks, health screenings, finger printing, and the like. Students represent their practicum agencies in their contacts with clients, other agencies and organizations, and the general public. They therefore are expected to present themselves in a professional manner and to demonstrate behavior that is consistent both with agency requirements and with the NASW Code of Ethics.

### **Policy #2.8: Compliance with University Policies and Procedures**

During their field education experiences MSW students are expected to follow the policies and procedures of their home university and the MTC- MSW Program. These include, but are not limited to, university policies concerning non-discrimination, academic integrity, and harassment. Students are not only representing their practicum agencies, but also their university and the MTC-MSW Program in their contacts with clients, other agencies and organizations, and the general public. They therefore are expected to present themselves in a professional manner and to demonstrate behavior that is consistent with university policies and codes of conduct.

### **Policy #2.9: Transportation**

All costs incurred travelling to and from the field placement agency, including but not limited to gas, parking, and tolls, are the responsibility of the student.

In some cases, students may be required to use their own vehicles to perform activities associated with the field placement, such as making home visits or attending case conferences at other agencies. Students who use their own vehicles for agency business should talk with their field instructors about agency policy and procedures for reimbursement of expenses incurred. It is the students' responsibility to submit documentation required for reimbursement to the agency. Students also should discuss potential liability issues with their field instructors as well as with their insurance agents and make sure that they have adequate automobile insurance coverage.

Students at times may be asked to transport clients in their own cars as part of their placement duties. If at all possible, the agency should provide students with an agency vehicle for the purpose of conducting agency business (i.e. transporting clients). However, an agency may not always be able to do this. In these cases it is the students' responsibility to discuss with their field instructors and their insurance agents the type of automobile insurance required if they are to transport clients in their own vehicles and to ensure that they have adequate automobile insurance coverage. These liability issues should be resolved before a student transports any clients.

### **Policy #2.10: Change of Placement**

Occasionally, difficulties arise in a field placement resulting in a need to change the agency placement. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain appropriate contact with the field liaison and/or Field Coordinator in an attempt to prevent issues that come up in the practicum from escalating to the point where a change of placement may be required.

Students who feel they are having problems should first try to resolve the issues directly with their field instructors. If these efforts do not resolve the problem, then students should contact their field liaison. In most cases, difficulties can be resolved through the combined efforts of the student, the faculty liaison, and the field instructor.

If the difficulty is sufficiently severe and cannot be resolved in this manner, the field liaison will apprise the Field Coordinator of the situation and the Field Coordinator will consider a change of placement. If the student and the Field Coordinator cannot agree on an appropriate course of action, the student can ask the MSW Program Coordinator to become involved in the matter. If after involving the MSW Program Coordinator the student still does not accept the recommended course of action, he or she can initiate an academic grievance, following the policies and procedures prescribed by the university.

Additionally, per the educational agreement between the universities and the agency, the agreement to have students placed at the agency is strictly voluntary and can be cancelled at any point.

### **Policy #2.11: Removal of a Student from Field Practicum**

Field education is considered an essential component of a MSW student's academic preparation for professional social work practice. Therefore, what happens at a student's practicum is considered to be an academic matter and, as such, comes within the purview of not only the field education policies, but also those of the MTC-MSW Program, the Graduate College, and the University.

A student can be removed from his or her field placement due to unsatisfactory performance at the practicum. Reasons for termination from the field include:

1. Serious or repeated violation of social work ethics as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics.
2. Breaking a law in an agency-related matter or conviction of a felony during the practicum year. (If it is discovered while the student is in the field that the student has failed to disclose a prior serious criminal conviction, this may also be considered grounds for action.)
3. Evidence of chemical dependence or illegal use of drugs while enrolled in the program.
4. A serious breach of the practicum agency's policy.
5. A hostile or resistant attitude toward learning or supervision.
6. An inability to carry out assignments in the practicum.
7. Behavior that is emotionally or physically dangerous to agency clients or to agency staff.

A student who is terminated from his or her field placement will receive a grade of "Fail" for the field education credits in which he or she is registered and will be asked to leave the MSW Program.

### **Policy #2.12: Field Education Grading**

A formal evaluation is conducted at the end of a student's field placement. The educational objectives and tasks established in the Field Education Learning Contract and Evaluation form provide the criteria against which the student's progress can be assessed. The field instructor and student should independently evaluate the student's performance and then should discuss their assessments with each other, identifying areas of commonality as well as difference. In this way the evaluation itself can be part of the student's learning.

The field practicum is graded on "Pass" or "Fail" basis. The field instructor recommends a grade to the field liaison. However, it is the field liaison, as a faculty member, who ultimately is responsible for assigning the grade and submitting it to the university.

The option of repeating a course in which a failing grade is received does not extend to field education (SW 6130/6140 and SW 6310/6320). Therefore, if a student receives a grade of "Fail" for the field practicum, he or she will be asked to leave the MSW program. The student has the right to appeal the grade of "Fail"; the procedures a student must use to appeal a grade are described in the *Graduate Catalog/Graduate Bulletin* of the student's home campus.

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) may be given if the student has not completed the required number of field hours or assignments. The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is a temporary grade indicating that the student has performed satisfactorily in the field placement but was unable to complete all practicum hours or assignments due to unforeseen circumstances. The field liaison, the field instructor, and the student jointly decide on the terms for the removal of the incomplete. If the grade of "I" (Incomplete) is not removed within the following semester, the grade will be changed from an "I" to an "F" (Fail) grade and, as described above, the student will be asked to leave the MTC-MSW program.

### **Policy #3.1 -- Counseling Out**

"Counseling out" is a term used to describe discontinuing a student's enrollment in the MTC-MSW Program. In most cases, the decision to discontinue a student from the program is considered permanent. In certain circumstances, a student may be counseled out with specific remedial steps to be taken before formal re-application to the program may be made.

A student may be counseled out of the program on recommendation by a faculty member, field instructor, or a participating practicum agency. The recommendation is made to the Social Work Department Chair at the student's home campus. The Social Work Department Chair will consult with the MSW Program Coordinator and with all other graduate social work faculty familiar with the student's performance prior to this action being taken. A formal vote is required to initiate such a process, and will include the MSW Program Coordinator and the graduate faculty at the student's home campus.

A MSW student may be counseled out of the program on the basis of:

1. **Academic Performance:** Student must meet grade requirements. Student must pursue academic honesty and demonstrate academic integrity.
2. **Absenteeism:** Student must meet the requirements of class and practicum attendance.
3. **Professional Behavior:** Student must act in a professional manner with peers, faculty, agency personnel, and clients; always treating others with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith. Student should behave in a fashion consistent with the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).
4. **Assaultive or Threatening Behavior:** Student will not participate in inappropriate behavior that is directed at clients, colleagues, or instructors.
5. **Damaging Behavior:** Student must treat others with respect, demonstrate a respect for diversity, protect confidentiality, ensure freedom of expression, and demonstrate a commitment to community.
6. **Ineffectiveness in Work with Clients:** Student must demonstrate minimal levels of effective performance and apply progressive learning techniques to evidence progress in working with clients. Student must not violate practicum agency policy.

**Progressive Discipline.** If a student violates any of the above tenets, the student will be counseled and receive one warning. Continuation of the behavior will result in being counseled out of the program. However, dangerous violations can result in immediate expulsion.

Students have the right to appeal the counseling out decision through the identified grievance procedures of the Social Work Program and the University.