



# MSW Program Policy Manual

2023-2024

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## Accreditation Statement



Montclair State University is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education's Board of Accreditation.

Accreditation of a master's social work program by the Council on Social Work Education's Board of Accreditation indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of program quality evaluated through a peer review process. An accredited program has sufficient resources to meet its mission and goals and the Board of Accreditation has verified that it demonstrates compliance with all sections of the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards.

Accreditation applies to all program sites and program delivery methods of an accredited program. Accreditation provides reasonable assurance about the quality of the program and the competence of students graduating from the program.

## Background Information

### Montclair State University

Building on a distinguished history dating back to 1908, Montclair State University (MSU) is a leading institution of higher education in New Jersey. Designated a Research Doctoral University by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, the University's nine colleges and schools serve more than 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students with more than 300 doctoral, master's and baccalaureate level programs. Situated on a beautiful, 252-acre suburban campus just 12 miles from New York City, Montclair State delivers the instructional and research resources of a large public university in a supportive, sophisticated and diverse academic environment.

MSU offers nearly 300 majors, minors, concentrations, and certificate programs, as well as state-of-the-art facilities including a new 2,000-bed student residence and dining complex. The University offers exceptional opportunities for motivated students, regardless of race/ethnicity or economic background. MSU students receive the individual attention expected from a much smaller institution, including student-to-faculty ratio of 17 to 1 and average class size of 23 students.

## College of Humanities and Social Sciences

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), which houses the Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy, combines a traditional liberal arts education with focused preparation in a wide range of disciplines and professional areas. With 21 majors, more than 40 minors and numerous areas of graduate study and professional certificate programs, CHSS offers students the opportunity to begin a lifetime of learning in the humanities and social sciences while also preparing for a successful career.

## Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy

The Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy offers the region's premier undergraduate and graduate academic programs that specialize in service and advocacy to children, youth, and families. The Department offers undergraduate and graduate programs in Child Advocacy and Policy, a Minor in Social Work, and the Master's in Social Work (MSW) program. The Department has eighteen full-time faculty with diverse research and teaching interests broadly focused on vulnerable children, youth, and families in the state of New Jersey and beyond. The specific research interests of our faculty include, among others, the adjustment of children and youth in foster care, civic engagement, child welfare workforce development, forensic interviewing of children, the impact of trauma on mental health, and research on clinical social work practice. Our graduates are employed at child welfare agencies, non-profit organizations, youth mentoring and development programs, and other agencies.

## The Master of Social Work (MSW) Program

### The Social Work Profession

According to the Council on Social Work Education, "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" (EPAS, 2015, p. 5).

### MSW Program Mission

The mission of the MSW program is to prepare graduates for ethical, culturally responsive, and evidence-informed social work practice and advocacy with children, youth, families, and communities of diverse socio-economic and geographic backgrounds. Graduates will build knowledge and skills necessary for fostering client relationships that are anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and rooted in the principles of social justice. Graduates will also be prepared to advocate and collaborate on policy and procedural matters that directly impact the well-being of diverse client populations.

The mission of the MSW program at MSU is consistent with the purpose and values of the social work profession. Our program is committed to promoting individual, family and community well-being through research, teaching and service. Our curriculum design is guided by person-in-

environment and anti-oppressive frameworks, additionally emphasizing the importance of evidence-informed process within social work practice and policy work.

Our program promotes an understanding of people's experiences within broader systemic contexts, emphasizing the reciprocal relationships between children, youth, families, communities, and broader socio-cultural and political institutions. Students learn to recognize multiple interconnected factors that impact individual behaviors, including biological, psychological, social factors, and structural factors. In addition, students are taught to assess for and build upon the strengths and resiliencies of children, youth, families and communities, when planning for and implementing interventions at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. Students learn to facilitate clients' unique change processes by mobilizing a range of resources within themselves and their environments.

Our mission statement also reflects our commitment to promoting social, racial, and economic justice. We firmly believe that social work professionals must recognize dynamics of power and oppression as part of the social order within a dynamic global society, and acquire the necessary skills to engage in culturally responsive and anti-oppressive practices. We aim to foster self-awareness in our students, including their abilities to reflect on their beliefs and biases and consider the potential implications of such biases in professional practice. Our curriculum stresses culturally responsive service pertaining to micro, mezzo and macro practice, across diverse settings serving children, youth, and families.

The program mission also reflects the belief that a critical component of social work practice and policy involves advocating for equitable opportunities among people who experience systemic oppression on the basis of their intersectional characteristics, such as related to age, race/ethnicity, immigration status, class, sexual identity, gender identity, ability, among other characteristics. Students are taught the historical roots of systemic oppression, their contemporary manifestations, and active socio-political threats to social justice. Our students are encouraged to reflect on social, racial, and economic injustices inherent in our society, and to recognize their impact on individuals, families and communities. Throughout the curriculum, we place an emphasis on two components: (a) understanding the detrimental effects of social, racial, and economic injustice on children, youth, families, and their communities; and (b) examining the harmful effects of prejudice, discrimination, and structural oppression on children, youth, families, and their communities. Our students are taught to engage in culturally responsive and anti-oppressive practice across a range of settings, with the ultimate goal of promoting social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Finally, the mission of the MSW program explicitly emphasizes the need for evidence-informed practice across various social service settings. We believe that social work professionals must be able to understand and critically analyze research pertaining to their field of practice, and incorporate research findings in their assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of interventions. Students learn to be critical in their approach to practice, to reflect on existing and emerging intervention models, and to apply the available evidence and research evaluation processes to enhance client outcomes. Students also learn how to effectively communicate research findings to clients and other professionals, and how to use such findings to promote research-informed practice with diverse client populations across various settings.

### MSW Program Goals:

The MSW program has the following goals:

1. To apply advanced knowledge of social work practice with children, youth and families situated in diverse organizational and social contexts.
2. To identify with the core mission and values of the social work profession, and to demonstrate professional demeanor, ethical decision making, and engagement in reflective practice.
3. To engage in critical thinking, and apply theory and research to various forms of professional practice, including direct practice, policy practice and advocacy.
4. To critically analyze and actively promote policies, practices and programs to advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice for children, youth and families, as well as their communities.
5. To demonstrate capacities for anti-racist, anti-oppressive, culturally responsive practice with individuals, families, and their communities while considering broader contexts of structural power and oppression.
6. To promote self-empowerment, self-advocacy, and self-efficacy among clients by facilitating their use of intrinsic and community-based strengths, resiliencies, and resources.
7. To promote the well-being of communities through the evaluation, application, and dissemination of knowledge.

To achieve the program's stated mission and goals, we designed a curriculum that is grounded in the liberal arts tradition and promotes a holistic view of the person in their environment. The program strives to prepare practitioners who respect diversity, advocate for social and economic justice, promote and facilitate clients' strengths, and use scientific research to improve practice at the micro, mezzo and macro levels.

### MSW Program Specialization

The MSW program at Montclair State University offers a single specialization in advanced social work practice with children, youth, and families. This specialization prepares competent social work practitioners to provide a range of clinical and advocacy services to children, adolescents, and their families. Students take specialized courses in clinical social work with children, adolescents, and families, and gain an understanding of the major theories and frameworks guiding child and family practice. They also acquire specialized skills to engage, assess, intervene and evaluate practice, with children, youth, and families across a range of practice settings. In addition to clinical skills, students acquire a broad understanding of social policies affecting these populations, and discuss societal issues that impact their wellbeing and functioning (e.g., child abuse and neglect and other forms of trauma). Finally, students further their knowledge of the use of research evidence in micro, mezzo and macro practice, especially as it pertains to evaluating programs and interventions geared to children, youth, and families. In addition to classroom learning, students complete a field practicum in settings serving children, youth, and/or families during the second year of the program.

### Competency-Based Education in Social Work

Competency-based education in social work rests upon a shared view of the nature of competence in professional practice. Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being. The demonstration of competence is informed by knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that include the social worker's critical thinking, affective reactions, and exercise of judgment in regard to unique practice situations. Overall, professional competence is multi-dimensional and composed of interrelated competencies. An individual social worker's competence is seen as developmental and dynamic, changing over time in relation to continuous learning (EPAS, 2015).

The MSW program follows the competency-based education framework presented by the Council on Social Work Education. The overarching goal is to ensure that students are able to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice. The competencies to be attained during the generalist and specialized practice years of the program are presented in the table below.

Social Work Competencies	Description and Behaviors: Generalist Practice	Description and Behaviors: Specialized Practice
<p><b>Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</b></p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families are able to effectively utilize frameworks for ethical decision making, engage in theoretically-grounded and evidence-informed practice, and apply principles of critical thinking to interventions at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. They incorporate a range of theoretical frameworks pertaining to practice with children, youth, and families, including developmental theories, ecological theories, and models of family functioning. They are familiar with laws, regulations and policies that may pertain to children, youth and families in various practice settings, and are able to effectively use this knowledge to enhance service delivery. Advanced practitioners serving children, youth and families are also able to reflect on their personal values, family histories and biases, assess their possible impact on professional practice, and take self-corrective measures when appropriate. They continuously and effectively use</p>

	<p>the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 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.</li> <li>2. Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.</li> <li>4. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.</li> <li>5. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.</li> </ol>	<p>clinical supervision and inter-professional collaborations to enhance professional practice, and incorporate relevant technologies in service delivery in an ethical and professional manner. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continuously and effectively use relevant theoretical frameworks, practice models and research evidence in professional practice with children, youth and/or families.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate familiarity and effective use of relevant laws, regulations and frameworks for ethical decision making to enhance service delivery to children, youth, and/or families.</li> <li>3. Effectively and continuously use clinical supervision to enhance their own professional development and improve service delivery to children, youth, and/or families.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice</b></p>	<p>Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress,</p>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the ways in which diversity and difference characterize and shape individual and family functioning. They recognize that oppression, discrimination and privilege may influence various components of professional practice, including engagement strategies, goal setting and contracting, and implementation of interventions at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. Advanced practitioners serving children, youth and families are also able to customize the aforementioned components to the specific needs, developmental levels, and personal/cultural backgrounds of their clients, and effectively manage conflicts between their own values, beliefs and biases, and those</p>

	<p>marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.</li> <li>2. Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.</li> <li>3. Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.</li> </ol>	<p>of the children, youth and families they serve. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continuously assess the ways in which personal backgrounds, values and biases may influence their interactions with diverse children, youth, and/or families, and apply corrective measures to enhance intervention effectiveness.</li> <li>2. Tailor engagement and intervention strategies to the specific backgrounds, developmental levels, and other relevant characteristics of the children, youth, and/or families they serve, in ways that enhance intervention effectiveness.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice</b></p>	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels</li> <li>2. Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice</li> </ol>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families recognize the dignity and worth of every child, adolescent, and family member, in spite of the myriad oppressions many face. They demonstrate a nuanced understanding of theories of human need and social justice as they pertain to children, youth and families, and utilize these theories effectively to promote social and economic justice and human rights. They value interpersonal relationships with children, youth and families they serve, and recognize that these relationships may build solidarity and combat injustice. Additionally, they utilize a range of strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers that may negatively influence the wellbeing and functioning of children, youth and families and promote equal opportunities and resource distribution for all. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify gaps in community-based services and/or broader social policies that may marginalize children, youth, and/or families.</li> <li>2. Continuously engage in the promotion of social, economic and</li> </ol>

		<p>environmental justice on behalf of children, youth, and/or families.</p>
<p><b>Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice</b></p>	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use practice, experience, and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research</li> <li>2. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings</li> <li>3. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery</li> </ol>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families rely on current scholarly literature to guide their practice, and make use of evidence-based inquiry in multiple aspects of their work with clients. They understand that research evidence should inform practice and a knowledge of research methods is necessary to effectively use scholarly literature to make informed practice decisions. Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families are also able to add to the scientific knowledge base of the profession by engaging in meaningful research examining the efficacy of social work practice and sharing that knowledge with other professionals. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilize evidence-based inquiry to guide their work with children, youth and/or families.</li> <li>2. Use empirical research methods to evaluate their work with children, youth, and/or families, and incorporate such research evidence to inform and improve service delivery.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Engage in Policy Practice</b></p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families possess the knowledge and skills to develop, advance, and implement policies affecting their clients at all levels of practice (micro, mezzo, and macro). They are able to assess and analyze core policies relevant to children, youth and families (e.g., social insurance/income maintenance, housing, child welfare, and healthcare) at all stages of the policy process. Additionally, they demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the ways in which core policies may help and/or hinder child, youth, and family functioning. Finally, advanced social work</p>

	<p>historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.</p> <p>Social workers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services</li> <li>2. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services</li> <li>3. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice</li> </ol>	<p>practitioners serving children, youth and families leverage their power, privilege, and advanced training to promote equitable opportunities for their clients vis-à-vis policy change. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Systematically evaluate and analyze core child-and family-oriented policies and incorporate such knowledge to enhance service delivery.</li> <li>2. Identify, articulate, and debate the ways in which child and family policy interrelates, as well as enhances or challenges the constituencies it purports to serve.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p>	<p>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:</p>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families demonstrate an ability to effectively engage with diverse client systems and establish a positive working alliance. They incorporate a range of conceptual frameworks in their engagement efforts, including theories of child development, systems frameworks, anti-oppressive and intersectional frameworks, and knowledge of diversity and cultural responsiveness. They also develop inter-professional collaborations and involve other professionals as necessary to inform and improve engagement efforts. They demonstrate an understanding that their cultural and personal experiences may impact their ability to engage with diverse clients, and apply self-corrective measures when appropriate. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate an understanding that engagement strategies may differ based on a range of individual characteristics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability), as well lived</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies</li> <li>2. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies</li> </ol>	<p>experiences (e.g., discrimination, oppression, homophobia) of the children, youth, and/or families served.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Demonstrate an ability to tailor their engagement strategies to the unique needs and characteristics of the children, youth, and/or families served, in ways that promote the establishment of a positive working alliance.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p>	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies</li> <li>2. 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</li> </ol>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families understand that assessment is an ongoing process that continuously informs interventions at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. They utilize biopsychosocial assessment as a holistic strategy, and incorporate theories of child development, models of family functioning, and other relevant frameworks in the collection and analysis of assessment data. They also incorporate the strengths perspective and family resilience framework in their assessment strategies, and understand the influence of culture, power and privilege on the interpretation of assessment data and problem formulation. Finally, they utilize inter-professional collaborations as necessary, and obtain data from multiple sources to enhance their understanding of clients' strengths and challenges. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critically select and implement assessment methods with children, youth, and/or families, while incorporating relevant developmental theories, family functioning models, and larger social/cultural context.</li> <li>2. Collect and organize information from various sources (e.g., children, parents, school personnel, etc.) and apply relevant theories</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies</li> <li>4. Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies</li> </ol>	<p>and research to critically evaluate and interpret these data.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Develop mutually agreed-upon intervention goals based on assessment data and clients' unique preferences, while consulting with other relevant professionals as necessary.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p>	<p>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 inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies</li> <li>2. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies</li> </ol>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families initiate effective interventions that incorporate evidence-informed practices, and also reflect clients' cultural backgrounds and preferences. They apply integrated knowledge of human development, ecological theories and other relevant frameworks to effectively intervene with diverse client systems at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. They critically select and implement various therapeutic modalities at the individual and family level (e.g., cognitive-behavioral, solution-focused, crisis intervention, etc.) to improve clients' wellbeing and functioning. Moreover, they continuously and effectively promote inter-professional and inter-organizational collaborations to address the complex needs of the clients. Finally, they are familiar with relevant policies and community resources that may affect clients' presenting difficulties, and are able to utilize such knowledge to enhance intervention effectiveness. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critically select and implement specific intervention strategies while incorporating assessment data, relevant theoretical knowledge, evidence regarding intervention effectiveness, and clients' unique preferences.</li> <li>2. Continuously and effectively use inter-professional and inter-</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes</li> <li>4. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies</li> <li>5. Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals</li> </ol>	<p>organizational collaborations to address presenting difficulties of the children, youth, and/or families served.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Effectively utilize knowledge of relevant policies, services and community resources to enhance intervention effectiveness with children, youth, and/or families.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p>	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes</li> <li>2. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes</li> <li>3. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes</li> <li>4. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels</li> </ol>	<p>Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families understand that evaluation is an integral part of the helping process, and it constitutes an ongoing endeavor in professional practice. They recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to provide critical feedback that informs the development and implementation of interventions at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. Advanced social work practitioners serving children, youth and families incorporate theories of human development, ecological models and other relevant frameworks in the evaluation of clients' outcomes. They understand qualitative and quantitative research methods for evaluating practice effectiveness and apply that knowledge to evaluate their own practice. Advanced social work practitioners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use purposeful reflection and research methods to continually evaluate their practice with children, youth, and/or families.</li> <li>2. Utilize evaluation findings to assess the effectiveness of their practice, and adapt their practices to fit the needs and preferences of the children, youth, and/or families served.</li> </ol>

[MSW Program Structure: Two, Three, or Four-Year Program](#)

The program offers a two-year, three-year, or four-year 60-credit option for students without a

bachelor degree in social work. Students complete a minimum of 1000 field education hours over the course of their studies. The first 30 credits of the program are focused on generalist social work practice. Students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. During the specialized social work practice portion of the curriculum, students extend their knowledge and skills to become specialized practitioners providing clinical practice and advocacy to children, youth, and families. Students take courses and complete their field hours during the fall and spring semesters only (though some elective courses may be offered in the summer, there are no required courses or field placements during the summer months).

### MSW Program Structure: Advanced Standing Program

Advanced Standing option is offered to students who possess a baccalaureate social work degree (BSW) from a CSWE-accredited institution, or a degree that is recognized through the CSWE International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors. To qualify for the Advanced Standing program, the following conditions must be met: (a) applicants must possess a BSW degree from a CSWE-accredited institution, or a degree that is recognized through the CSWE International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors; (b) the BSW degree must be obtained within five years from the application to the MSW program; and (c) applicants must show competency in all required undergraduate social work courses, as demonstrated by a grade of C- or above. Students admitted to the Advanced Standing program are required to complete 33 credit hours in one or two years. Students in the full-time Advanced Standing program begin the program in the summer, where they take the Social Work Assessment and Diagnosis course. Once the course is successfully completed, they enroll in the specialization courses and field education during the fall and spring semesters of the subsequent academic year. Students in the part-time, two-year program, begin their courses in the fall semester and complete their field education in their second year.

### Cohort-Based Structure of the Program

Our program is unique in its cohort-based structure geared to enable students to progress through the curriculum together. We believe that this structure is conducive to in-depth learning, as it allows students to develop close relationships with peers and faculty and provides opportunities for both formal and informal mentoring. Our goal is to become familiar with the strengths and challenges of every student in our program, and assist them in becoming competent social work professionals. We match students with field placements where they can utilize their existing strengths, while also improving their knowledge and skills in areas that they find more challenging. Furthermore, we strive to create an environment where students can learn from each other; where they feel comfortable to discuss their values and biases; and where they are able to rely on their peers and faculty when challenging situations arise.

## The MSW Curriculum

### 60 Credit, Two-Year, Full-Time Program

Students who do not have Advanced Standing enroll in the 60-credit program. The structure of the MSW curriculum for the two-year full-time program is presented in the table below.

\*\*Students may choose to take up to two electives in the summer.

Year 1	Fall Semester	Credits
SOWK 500	Generalist Social Work Practice I: Individuals, Families and Groups	3
SOWK 501	Diversity, Oppression and Social Justice	3
SOWK 502	Social Welfare Policy and Services	3
SOWK 503	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3
SOWK 504	Field Education Seminar I	3
Year 1	Spring Semester	Credits
SOWK 520	Generalist Social Work Practice II: Organizations and Communities	3
CHAD 603	Research and Evaluation	3
SOWK 522	Social Work Assessment and Diagnosis	3
SOWK 523	Field Education Seminar II	3
	Elective **	3
Year 2	Fall Semester	Credits
SOWK 600	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I	3
SOWK 601	Practice Evaluation	3
SOWK 602	Child and Family Policy	3
SOWK 603	Field Education Seminar III	3
	Elective **	3
Year 2	Spring Semester	Credits
SOWK 620	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families II	3
CHAD 502	Child Abuse and Neglect	3
SOWK 622	Field Education Seminar IV	3
	Elective **	3
	Elective **	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>60</b>

### 60 Credit, Three-Year Part-Time Program

The structure of the MSW curriculum for the three-year part-time program is presented in the table below. While the program identifies this as a part-time option, Montclair State University states that students who take six or more credits per semester are full-time for financial aid purposes. \*\*Students may choose to take up to two electives in the summer.

Year 1	Fall Semester	Credits
SOWK 501	Diversity, Oppression and Social Justice	3

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SOWK 502	Social Welfare Policy and Services	3
SOWK 503	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
CHAD 603	Research and Evaluation	3
SOWK 522	Social Work Assessment and Diagnosis	3
	Elective **	3
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 500	Generalist Social Work Practice I: Individuals, Families and Groups	3
SOWK 602	Child and Family Policy	3
SOWK 504	Field Education Seminar I	3
	Elective **	3
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 520	Generalist Social Work Practice II: Organizations and Communities	3
CHAD 502	Child Abuse and Neglect	3
SOWK 523	Field Education Seminar II	3
	Elective **	3
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 600	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I	3
SOWK 601	Practice Evaluation	3
SOWK 603	Field Education Seminar III	3
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 620	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families II	3
SOWK 622	Field Education Seminar IV	3
	Elective **	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>60</b>

### 60 Credit, Four-Year Part-Time Program

The structure of the MSW curriculum for the four-year part-time program is presented in the table below. While the program identifies this as a part-time option, Montclair State University states that students who take six or more credits per semester are full-time for financial aid purposes. \*\*Students may choose to take up to two electives in the summers.

<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 501	Diversity, Oppression and Social Justice	3
SOWK 502	Social Welfare Policy and Services	3
SOWK 503	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
CHAD 603	Research and Evaluation	3
SOWK 522	Social Work Assessment and Diagnosis	3
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>

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SOWK 500	Generalist Social Work Practice I: Individuals, Families and Groups	3
SOWK 504	Field Education Seminar I	3
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 520	Generalist Social Work Practice II: Organizations and Communities	3
SOWK 523	Field Education Seminar II	3
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 602	Child and Family Policy	3
	Elective **	3
	Elective **	3
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
CHAD 502	Child Abuse and Neglect	3
	Elective **	3
	Elective **	3
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 600	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I	3
SOWK 601	Practice Evaluation	3
SOWK 603	Field Education Seminar III	3
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 620	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families II	3
SOWK 622	Field Education Seminar IV	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>60</b>

Advanced Standing, One Year, Full-Time Program

The structure of the MSW curriculum for the one-year, full-time Advanced Standing program is presented in the table below.

	<b>Summer Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 522	Social Work Assessment and Diagnosis	3
	<b>Fall Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 600	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I	3
SOWK 601	Practice Evaluation	3
SOWK 602	Child and Family Policy	3
SOWK 603	Field Education Seminar III	3
	Elective	3
	<b>Spring Semester</b>	<b>Credits</b>
SOWK 620	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families II	3
CHAD 502	Child Abuse and Neglect	3
SOWK 622	Field Education Seminar IV	3
	Elective	3
	Elective	3

<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>33</b>
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### Advanced Standing, Two-Year, Part-Time Program

The structure of the MSW curriculum for the Advanced Standing, two-year, part-time program is presented in the table below. While the program identifies this as a part-time option, Montclair State University states that students who take six or more credits per semester are full-time for financial aid purposes.

Year 1	Fall Semester	Credits
SOWK 522	Social Work Assessment and Diagnosis	3
SOWK 602	Child and Family Policy	3
	Elective	3
	Spring Semester	Credits
CHAD 502	Child Abuse and Neglect	3
	Elective	3
	Elective	3
Year 2	Fall Semester	Credits
SOWK 600	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I	3
SOWK 601	Practice Evaluation	3
SOWK 603	Field Education Seminar III	3
Year 2	Spring Semester	Credits
SOWK 620	Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families II	3
SOWK 622	Field Education Seminar IV	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>33</b>

### Course Descriptions for Required Courses: Generalist Practice Courses

#### **SOWK 500 Generalist Social Work Practice I: Individuals, Families and Groups**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

The goal of this course is to introduce students to basic principles of generalist social work practice with individuals, families and groups. Students will be introduced to a variety of practice skills needed for establishing professional relationships; defining problems and conducting assessments; setting goals, planning and contracting; selecting and implementing interventions; monitoring and evaluating client outcomes, etc. Students will also develop an understanding of human diversity (e.g. racial/ethnic, cultural, sexual orientation, socioeconomic) and its relevance to social work practice. Rigorous standards for ethical and culturally competent delivery of interventions and the concept of evidence-based practice will be discussed.

#### **SOWK 501 Diversity, Oppression and Social Justice**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course is designed to heighten students' knowledge and awareness of differences among

people, as well as raise students' consciousness and sensitivity to socially constructed problems resulting from difference. Students will learn about the roles that power, oppression and social justice play in the context of cultural expression, language, poverty, availability of resources and services, powerlessness, racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and ageism. Through a process of didactic teaching, reading, critical thinking and analysis, and self-reflection, students will explore themselves and the society in which we live, develop an appreciation for the multifaceted meanings of diversity and cultivate professional skillset that combats discrimination, stereotyping and oppression across age groups, races, ethnicities, genders, religions, level of disability and sexual orientation.

### **SOWK 502 Social Welfare Policy and Services**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This class discusses the history, philosophical roots, and stages of development of social welfare as an institution in the United States, with a specific emphasis on policies, programs and services affecting children, youth and families. The class explores patterns of current service provision and introduces students to various frameworks used to analyze social policies. Students will learn to critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of various policies and services, and understand their impact on children, adolescents, and families. Major fields of social welfare service provision will be discussed, including alleviation of child and family poverty, health and mental health care, child abuse and neglect, and the criminal justice system. Students will discuss the ethics and values dimension of social welfare, and will reflect on their own values, beliefs and biases.

### **SOWK 503 Human Behavior and the Social Environment**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course focuses on theories (e.g. ecological systems) and conceptual approaches that undergird social work practice and research with individuals and families in social systems. Ecological-systems theory and a lifespan developmental framework will serve as the conceptual foundation for understanding social work's person-in-environment approach. Other traditional and alternative theories are also examined. Methodological, empirical, and ethical considerations of contemporary issues (i.e., poverty, privilege, oppression, risk and resiliency) and multi-dimensional aspects of the human experience and change across the lifespan (i.e., biological, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual) will be explored.

### **SOWK 504 Field Education Seminar I**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: SOWK 500*

The purpose of this course is to help students integrate classroom learning and a supervised practice experience in a human service agency. An emphasis will be placed on generalist social work practice with individuals, families and groups. The requirements for this course include participation in an agency-based practicum for approximately 220 hours per semester, as well as weekly supervision sessions with a field instructor assigned by the agency. In addition, students are required to participate in campus seminars throughout the semester, as well as in online seminars providing opportunities for case presentations, discussion and consultation. Field Education Seminar I (SOWK 504) must be taken concurrently with Generalist Practice Social Work Practice I: Individuals, Families and Groups (SOWK 500).

### **SOWK 520 Generalist Social Work Practice II: Organizations and Communities**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 500 Co-requisite: SOWK 523*

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the idea that problems exist in communities. These problems negatively affect groups of people, including populations at risk. Addressing social problems necessitates that social workers intervene beyond one-on-one efforts, and into organizational and community realms. Social workers must understand social problems, and help develop and implement solutions. The scope of this course is to help students develop skills in community assessment, intervention planning, advocacy, and group facilitation.

### **SOWK 522 Social Work Assessment and Diagnosis<sup>1</sup>**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

The purpose of the course is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of assessment and diagnosis of psychological disorders through the lifespan. Students will acquire diagnostic skills as they relate to social work assessment. Emphasis will be placed on evaluating clients from a biopsychosocial perspective. Further, ethical considerations (e.g., personal bias, cultural competency, client rights, clinician responsibilities) will be discussed throughout the course. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-V) is used to organize and review the major psychological disorders.

### **SOWK 523 Field Education Seminar II**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 504 Co-requisite: SOWK 520*

The purpose of this course is to help students integrate classroom learning and a supervised practice experience in a human service agency. An emphasis will be placed on generalist social work practice with organizations and communities. The requirements for this course include participation in an agency-based practicum for approximately 220 hours per semester, as well as weekly supervision sessions with a field instructor assigned by the agency. In addition, students are required to participate in campus seminars throughout the semester, as well as in online seminars providing opportunities for case presentations, discussion and consultation. Field Education Seminar II (SOWK 523) must be taken concurrently with Generalist Practice Social Work Practice II: Organizations and Communities (SOWK 520).

### **CHAD 603 Research and Evaluation**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course provides an introduction to the fundamentals of social work research with children, youth and families. In this course, research is presented as a logical and necessary extension of service delivery rooted in the ethical imperatives to not harm clients and to provide the most effective services possible. As such, this course will focus on the following topics: research ethics, evidence-based practice, formulation of research questions, operationalizing variables, data analysis, and report writing.

### **Course Descriptions for Required Courses: Specialized Practice/Advanced Standing**

#### **SOWK 600 Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 520 Co-requisite: SOWK 603*

This course discusses clinical interventions with children and adolescents across multiple service

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<sup>1</sup> This course is also taken by students enrolled in the Advanced Standing program.

systems, including child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health, education, etc. At the intersection of biology, psychology and the social environment, students will explore a range of social work interventions at different stages of development, and advance their clinical skills to adequately meet the needs of at-risk children and youths. An emphasis will be placed on developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed and culturally-responsive interventions at different levels of the social ecology. In addition, students will critically evaluate the continuum of services available to at-risk children and adolescents at various practice settings, and consider new directions to improve policy and practice. This course must be taken concurrently with Field Education Seminar III.

### **SOWK 601 Practice Evaluation Research**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 521 Co-requisite: N/A*

The need to evaluate social work interventions is key to effective practice and is an ethical imperative. This specialization year course focuses on practice evaluation, in general, with a focus on practice evaluation of single client systems. The goal of this courses is to impart students with an understanding and appreciation of an empirical approach to building knowledge for practice and service delivery. This course affords students the opportunity to develop evaluative skills that can be used to assess their own practice methods and outcomes. The culminating assignment of this course is an active learning research project in which students conceptualize, formulate, design, and execute a research project based upon their own practice. Reporting findings and practice accountability are emphasized.

### **SWOK 602 Child and Family Policy**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 502 Co-requisite: N/A*

This course provides an advanced understanding of public policies, programs, and services that impact children and families. The formation, implementation, and evaluation of national, state, and local policies are explored in-depth. Building on knowledge acquired in SOWK502, students will analyze these policies through formalized frameworks for analysis, with an eye towards issues of equity and efficiency.

### **SOWK 603 Field Education Seminar III**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 523 Co-requisite: SOWK 600*

The goal of this course is to integrate classroom learning of clinical social work practice with children and adolescents, and a supervised practice experience in a human service agency. The requirements for this course include participation in an agency-based practicum for a minimum of 250 hours, as well as weekly supervision sessions with a field instructor assigned by the agency. In addition, students are required to participate in campus and online seminars throughout the semester, providing opportunities for case presentations, discussion and consultation. The Field Education Seminar III (SOWK 603) must be taken concurrently with Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I (SOWK 600).

### **SOWK 620 Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families II**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 600 Co-requisite: SOWK 622*

This course discusses clinical interventions with diverse family configurations across a range of service delivery systems. Students will continue learning about major theories and concepts guiding family practice, including the systems perspective, psychoanalytic and experiential

perspectives, cognitive-behavioral perspective, etc. Students will acquire specialized knowledge and skills for delivering interventions to family systems experiencing a range of difficulties. An emphasis will be placed on serving diverse family configurations (e.g. single-parent, same-sex, multigenerational), and engaging in culturally-sensitive practice. Students will be encouraged to critically evaluate the continuum of services available to at-risk families, and consider new directions to improve policy and practice. This course must be taken concurrently with Field Education IV.

### **SOWK 622 Field Education Seminar IV**

*Prerequisite: SOWK 603 Co-requisite: SOWK 620*

The goal of this course is to integrate classroom learning of clinical social work practice with families, and a supervised practice experience in a human service agency. The requirements for the course include participation in an agency-based practicum for a minimum of 250 hours, as well as weekly supervision sessions with a field instructor assigned by the agency. In addition, students are required to participate in campus and online seminars throughout the semester, providing opportunities for case presentations, discussion and consultation. The Field Education Seminar IV (SOWK 622) must be taken concurrently with Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families II (SOWK 620).

### **CHAD 502 Child Abuse and Neglect**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course will take a comprehensive look at the problem of child abuse and neglect from a multidisciplinary perspective. There will be a consideration of the multiple levels of causation of child maltreatment as well as its impact on children. Major models of service delivery, child welfare policies and cultural competency considerations will be discussed.

### **Sample Elective Courses**

#### **CHAD 518 Development and Trauma in Adolescence**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

Through the text, journal articles, class lecture and class discussion, students will gain an understanding of the various forms of trauma affecting adolescents. Particular focus will be placed on familial (e.g., incest, physical abuse), non-familial (e.g., gang related violence, sexual and non-sexual assault), as well as other forms of trauma, such as those that may emanate from the service delivery system, interpersonal losses associated with termination of parental rights and removal from the home, among others. To achieve these course goals, students will explore issues of adolescent development as they relate to the impact of trauma on adolescents. Effects on psychological, personality, and interpersonal relationship processes will be examined. In addition, individual and systemic intervention approaches often used to promote healing and recovery for adolescents in the child welfare system will be discussed and evaluated. Students will also explore the role of the service delivery system in both aggravating and ameliorating the impact of trauma on the adolescent.

#### **CHAD 521 Substance Abuse and Families**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course will explore the impact of substance abuse on families involved with the child welfare system. Current research regarding the connection between substance abuse, domestic

violence and child abuse will be reviewed. Residential and outpatient models of treatment will be evaluated.

### **CHAD 610 Selected Topics: Social Work with Groups**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course presents an overview of the history and current application of group work in social work practice. It exposes students to theories of group intervention and group dynamics, and includes experiential exercises designed to help students gain familiarity with both participating in and facilitating groups. The course will explore various modalities of group work in social work practice, stages of group development, and factors associated with effectiveness for both task and treatment groups. Readings and class discussions will emphasize the importance of the professional use of self for social workers leading groups. This course will cover each phase of the intervention process, from planning and recruitment, group composition, through goal formulation, intervention, evaluation and termination. In addition, the course will explore how these phases may be modified to account for the diverse identities based on age, race, class, gender, ethnic, sexual orientations, and abilities of clients. \*\*CHAD 610 will be offered with different topics each semester. Students may take two CHAD 610 courses in different topical areas.

### **CHAD 501 Forensic Interviewing of Children**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course will provide students with an understanding of various theoretical and applied models for interviewing children who may have been abused. Recent research on the communication process and the significance of integrating age-appropriate interviewing strategies and child development will be explored. Appropriate models for interviewing children of diverse backgrounds will be presented.

### **CHAD 504 Children and Justice**

*Prerequisite: N/A Co-requisite: N/A*

This course will provide students with a multisystem view of children's rights and the justice system. Students will comprehensively examine the law as it relates to children as victims and as witnesses. Common issues in child abuse and neglect will be explored. Advocacy protocols and practice will be examined. Confidentiality, expert-testimony and child abuse reporting laws will be studied.

The list of electives above is not all-inclusive and additional electives may be offered each semester. Furthermore, students may request to take an elective in another graduate program at the University, providing that the course is relevant to social work. Requests for outside electives must be approved by the MSW Program Director.

## **MSW Program Policies and Procedures**

### **MSW Admissions**

Graduate admissions are overseen by the MSU Graduate School, which sets basic standards for student admission. Nevertheless, each program may determine specific admission standards,

including minimum GPA requirements, number of reference letters, interview requirements, etc.

International applicants can find detailed information about admissions requirements [here](#).

To be considered for admission to the Master's in Social Work program, applicants must:

1. Possess a bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized, regional accrediting association, with a *recommended* GPA of 3.0
  2. Submit two letters of recommendation. The letters may come from faculty members, employers, supervisors or professional colleagues, but may not come from relatives, friends, partners or other informal contacts.
  3. Submit a resume detailing educational attainment and any prior employment and/or volunteer experience.
  4. Submit a personal statement that addresses the content below
- The Montclair State University MSW faculty have the responsibility of evaluating your application. You will be submitting a variety of evidence concerning your ability to undertake a graduate program in social work.
  - Use the questions that follow to complete your personal statement. **DO NOT** use a question and answer format. Write a full essay answering ALL questions below. Your essay should be double spaced, in 12-point font. There is no specific min/max page requirement for the personal statement essay. We highly recommend you keep to 5-6 pages double-spaced.
  - **Social work as your career goal**
    - What are your values and beliefs? How do you think they relate to social work?
    - What leadership and personal qualities do you bring to the social work program and profession?
    - The Montclair State University MSW program educates students to engage in anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice. How have you demonstrated your commitment to anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices in the past or how might you do so in the future?
    - The Montclair State University MSW program educates students to advocate for and to engage in clinical social work practice with children, youth, and families. Why is this program the best fit for you and your career goals?
  - **Your experience as a student**
    - How do you expect your academic and social performance in graduate school to compare with your academic and social performance as an undergraduate student? Give reasons for any differences you may anticipate.
    - Have you ever received low (D's) or failing grades, been on academic probation, or been dismissed from or denied readmission to any college? If so, explain. Be specific.
    - If your overall GPA is below a 3.0, please explain.
  - **Your experience with others**

- Describe any social work experience in which you were supervised by an MSW professional.
- Give an example of a work-related problem you experienced and how you were able to resolve it. What did you learn from this experience?
- Describe your experience/participation in school and community activities.
- Describe your experience in the helping role, such as family or other social or work experiences, in which you gave or received help.
- **Your time commitments**
  - The program is academically rigorous, emotionally challenging, and time consuming. If you are a full-time student, you should plan on devoting at least 40 hours per week to your coursework and 15 or 22 hours of field work per week. If you are a part time student, you should plan on devoting at least 25 hours per week to your coursework and 15 or 22 hours of field work per week.
  - How do you plan to manage your time and commitments to successfully complete the program?
  - If you are expecting to be employed while in the program, how you will ensure that you have at least one day available to complete your field placement hours?

Applicants for the *Advanced Standing* program submit the application materials listed above and must meet the following conditions:

- a. Applicants must possess a BSW degree from a CSWE-accredited institution, or a degree that is recognized through the CSWE International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors with a *recommended* minimum GPA of 3.0.
- b. The BSW degree must be obtained within five years from the application to the MSW program.
- c. Applicants must show competency in all required undergraduate social work courses, as demonstrated by a grade of C- or above. The rest of the application requirements (i.e, two letters of recommendation (one letter from the BSW Program Director or Field Director, a resume and a personal statement) are identical to the traditional 60-credit program.
- d. Applicants must submit their final field evaluation.
- e. One of the references must be the form submitted by the BSW Program or Field Director.

Upon receiving applications, the departmental admissions committee will carefully review and evaluate each prospective applicant. Attention will be paid to the applicant's academic potential, life experiences, professional goals and perceived appropriateness for the social work profession. All decisions regarding admission will be communicated to prospective applicants by email and a formal letter sent by the Graduate School.

### Conditional Acceptance

Conditional acceptance to the 60 credit MSW program may be granted to applicants who have a GPA below the recommended standard (i.e., 3.0), but who otherwise have a strong application and demonstrate an interest and commitment to the field of social work. Conditionally-accepted

students will be required to obtain a 3.0 GPA during the first semester of the program. These conditions will be detailed in a formal letter sent to the student by the Graduate School.

Conditional acceptance to the Advanced Standing program may be granted to students whose overall GPA is below the recommended threshold of 3.0, provided that they obtained a grade of C- or above on all required undergraduate social work courses, and met the rest of the admission criteria (i.e., a CSWE-accredited degree obtained within the past five years, recommendation letters, personal statement, etc.). Conditionally accepted Advanced Standing students must obtain a 3.0 GPA during the first semester of the program (i.e., this includes the summer Assessment and Diagnosis course, as well as all fall semester courses).

### Transfer Credit

A maximum of six credit hours of graduate-level credit may be accepted for transfer from any regionally accredited college or university including Montclair State University prior to full matriculation. Transfer credits must be approved by the MSW Program Director, as well as by the Graduate School. For students who do not come from another MSW program accredited by the CSWE, transfer credits may count towards elective courses only; no waivers will be granted for any of the required courses or for field education hours.

### Procedures:

Transfer requests must be submitted to the MSW Program Director or the Department Program Manager via email. When making the request please include the following information:

- The course or courses which you would like transferred
- Copies of the syllabi for each course being considered in the transfer request

The MSW Program Director reviews all requests for transfer credits. The review considers the materials submitted by the student including syllabi and course descriptions. The MSW Program Director compares these materials to courses that are offered by the MSW program. In cases where a direct transfer is justified, the course may be approved as a substitution. In cases where a direct transfer is not justified, the course may be approved as an elective. Transfer courses must be relevant to the social work profession. It is the MSW Program Director's sole discretion to approve or deny the request based on the materials submitted.

### Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships are highly competitive. Students should mark the appropriate area on the admission application if interested in a graduate assistantship. All applicants must undergo a review and approval process, which involves initial review of their application, interview, selection and recommendation for a position from the department. The student will then need approval from both The Graduate School and the Dean's office. If chosen, an offer of an Assistantship position is only official when it is sent to the student from The Graduate School.

Graduate assistantships will be awarded for a full academic year (September 1 through June 30) beginning in the Fall of each year. Graduate Assistants are approved for a partial (10 hours per week) or full (20 hours per week) appointment and receive tuition and university-wide fee remission for up to 24 graduate credits per academic year. Fees that are specific to courses or to

individual students are not included in the remission (e.g. housing, studio fees, supplies, parking, and/or Health Insurance, etc.). Graduate Assistants also receive a stipend for their work throughout the term of their appointment. The value of the stipend payment may vary and is taxable. You can find out more information about graduate assistantships [here](#).

Graduate Assistants will be assigned a faculty member from the Department to serve as their official supervisor. The primary responsibility of a Graduate Assistant is to assist research-producing faculty members (tenured or tenure-track) in research-related efforts (e.g., conducting literature reviews; performing data collection, analysis, write-up, and/or dissemination of findings). Graduate Assistants may also be called upon to assist in teaching and administrative efforts, as needed (though their primary responsibilities shall be research-oriented). Of note, Graduate Assistants can only perform teaching-related duties for undergraduate courses.

### Academic Credit for Life/Work Experience

MSU does not grant any academic credit for life experience or previous work experience. This applies to all required and elective courses in the MSW program, and to field education hours. No exceptions to this policy will be granted for any reason.

### Academic and Professional Advising

Academic and professional advising are an integral part of student development and occur within the advising relationship. Although the standards require discussion of these separate advising activities, we integrate academic and professional advising. Advising provides an opportunity to guide each student through the curriculum and ensure adequate progress towards degree completion. Furthermore, advising represents a key opportunity for students to interact with faculty outside of the classroom, and discuss any concerns or challenges they may encounter over the course of their studies.

### Academic and Professional Advising Policies

All students are assigned an academic and professional advisor, who provides guidance in planning a schedule to complete all program requirements, shares resources for success, and discusses career plans and goals. The advisor is a full-time MSW program faculty, and ideally, should remain with the student throughout the course of his or her studies. Advisors maintain regular office hours for meeting with students, and are also available by phone, Zoom, and/or email during arranged hours.

All new students meet with their advisor in their first semester to ensure that they are registered for all the necessary classes and have sufficient knowledge of the university and the department. After the initial meeting, advisors continue to be available throughout the year to discuss any challenges the students may experience, and provide guidance as necessary. However, students are expected to initiate advising sessions, and to do so in a timely manner when a consultation is needed. Appointments are scheduled directly with the advisor. If a specific advisor is unavailable and the matter is urgent, the student may contact the MSW Program Director.

After semester grades become available, advisors review their advisees' records. Students whose grade-point average is below the minimum required (i.e., 3.0) will meet with their advisor to discuss their academic progress. These students are formally placed on academic probation and

required to bring their grades up in the subsequent semester (a formal letter from the Graduate School is sent to indicate probation status). Students who are on academic probation should contact their faculty advisor to meet with them. These informal meetings are designed to address any barriers to learning and make a plan for improvement.

Students in the *last* semester of the program are required to meet with their advisor to review their academic progress and ensure that all graduation requirements are met as well as discuss professional goals. At this meeting, students may also request career counseling, licensure exam information, and any other information necessary for a successful graduation experience.

### **Academic and Professional Advising Procedures**

As mentioned above, students are assigned a full-time MSW faculty member as their academic and professional advisor. The Department Chair assigns advisors to students before they begin the program. If questions arise during the summer, the MSW Program Director, Program Manager, Department Chair, and Field Education faculty are available to advise students. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor often and especially during the first semester of the program, when they are experiencing challenges, and before they apply for graduation.

### **Registration for Courses**

Students who are in the first semester of the MSW program are registered for courses by the Program Manager. The program utilizes a cohort model and students can choose to take their courses in the day or evening cohorts. Because of this structure, the Program Manager registers students so that they are taking the same sections of classes. Advanced standing students are kept together and registered into classes that have openings. After the first semester of the program, students register themselves for classes. For students continuing in the program, the Program Manager and MSW Program Director offer registration information sessions before Fall and Spring registration begins. Students are also directed to the MSW website and MSW Program Policy Manual to ensure that they are taking the appropriate courses during the appropriate semester.

### **Additional Professional Advising Activities**

Professional advising is provided to students who exhibit difficulties in their field placement, or show challenging behaviors in the classroom. This form of advising is provided based on demonstrated need, and may be initiated by the student, the social work faculty, or field education personnel. If a student experiences difficulties with his/her field placement, advising is generally provided by the Field Education Director, Field Coordinator and/or the field seminar instructor (who also serves as a liaison between the agency and the MSW program). If a student shows challenging behaviors in the classroom, advising is generally provided by the MSW faculty, including those who teach the specific course where the issue has occurred, the student's assigned advisor, and/or the MSW Program Director.

The Department Career and Recruitment Specialist also contributes to the professional advising activities offered to MSW students. Students and prospective employers have been encouraged to create Handshake accounts so that job and professional development opportunities can be shared more easily. Several alumni of the MSW program speak to classes and prospective students about their work. The MSW Program Director and Field Director provide workshops

about licensing and Field Seminar courses included licensure preparation practice exams as well as other career-oriented activities.

### **Procedures for Changing Advisors**

Students may change their advisor by contacting the Department Chair with a formal request and a brief explanation. If the situation cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, a new advisor is assigned based on faculty availability. It should be noted that students are not guaranteed to be assigned a *specific* advisor of their choice – assignments are made based on the faculty's advising load.

### Evaluating Students' Academic Performance

Academic performance is evaluated by a letter grade assigned at the end of each course. Professors are required to provide a syllabus in the beginning of the semester, which must include the departmental grading scale and an explanation of how grades are assigned. Graduate students must maintain a GPA of 3.0. Failure to maintain a GPA of 3.0 for the first time will result in being placed on academic probation. Continued failure to maintain a GPA of 3.0 will result in academic dismissal.

### Evaluating Students' Field Performance - Midterm and Final Evaluation

At the end of each semester, a field evaluation is completed for every student by the Field Instructor, with input from the student and the Task Instructor, if applicable. There are separate evaluation tools for the generalist practice and the specialized practice/advanced standing years, as distinct competencies are addressed in these two types of field placements. The evaluation is based on these required competencies for each year, as well as the specific assignments detailed in the Learning Contract. Student evaluations are completed in Tevera. The Field Seminar Instructor reviews the field evaluation and then uses the departmental grading scale to determine the final grade in the Field Seminar course.

### Academic Probation Policies

Any student who fails to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 every semester, will be placed on [academic probation](#). Students on probation will be formally notified of their status by the Graduate School. Per the Graduate School policy:

A student will be placed on academic probation at the end of the Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters if their GPA falls below a 3.0.

Following the semester in which the GPA dropped below the minimum requirement, the student must raise their GPA to the minimum requirement upon completion of an additional six credits of coursework or one semester, whichever is later. All credits attempted during the probationary period will be considered.

### Grade Grievance Procedures

1. Informal Resolution Procedure

- a. It is the responsibility of any student wishing to pursue an academic grievance involving a faculty member to first discuss the matter privately with the professor involved. In the event that the student is unable to contact the professor within a two-week period, an appointment should be arranged through the departmental secretary for the first time available. The initiation of the student grade grievance must take place within three weeks from the beginning of the next regular (Fall or Spring) semester.
  - b. Should the meeting fail to accomplish a resolution between the student and the faculty member, the student should arrange a private conference with the faculty member's Chairperson. The Chairperson must notify in writing the faculty member involved that a meeting has been arranged between the Chairperson and the student. Following the conference with the student, the Chairperson must meet privately with the faculty member to discuss the problem and attempt to resolve the conflict.
  - c. Should the grievance still not be resolved, it must be reported to the Dean of the College/School. The Dean should attempt to resolve the problem informally, meeting separately or jointly with the individuals involved. The Dean should prepare a written evaluative statement concerning the student-faculty conflict. All concerned parties must receive a copy of the Dean's statement within eight weeks from the beginning of the regular (Fall or Spring) semester.
  - d. If the conflict is still not resolved, the Dean of the College/School must notify the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs in writing of the unresolved grievance and must forward all paperwork to the Associate VPAA within one week of the issuance of the Dean's statement. Both parties to the grievance must be apprised of this action. The Associate Vice Provost shall decide whether the institution of a formal grievance is warranted. If a formal grievance is deemed warranted, a grievance committee must be convened.
2. Formal Resolution Procedure
- a. The Grievance Committee shall be composed of one faculty member from each College/School, appointed by the Dean of that College/School. Each faculty member shall be a voting member of the Committee. A representative from the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs will convene the Committee, chair the meetings, but will have no vote. Additionally, a representative from each of the following bodies shall hold non-voting, observer status on the Committee: the Office of the Dean of Students, and a graduate and undergraduate student. The Student Government Association will select an undergraduate student to serve as the representative, and The Graduate School will aid in identifying a graduate student to serve as the student representative. The Grievance Committee must be convened within two weeks after receipt of the paperwork from the Dean of the College/School.
  - b. A new committee will be selected each year.
  - c. The faculty member involved may appoint one advisor to be present during committee hearings. The aggrieved student may also bring an advisor to the hearings.
  - d. If any committee member has a direct personal relationship with any individual(s) involved in a particular case, the committee member must disqualify him/herself

from serving on the committee while the case is being heard. If the impartiality of a committee member is questioned, the committee itself must reach a decision as to the continuance of the individual so questioned. If a member is disqualified, another individual from the same constituency shall be appointed to serve in his or her place.

3. Grievance Committee Procedure

a. Grievance Committee

- i. The Grievance Committee will hold hearings in two steps. In the first step the complainant will present the relevant charges and the complainant and the individual charged will present relevant evidence in support of their respective positions and ask questions of the other party. In the second step members of the Grievance Committee only will deliberate leading to a recommendation to be forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- ii. In advance of the hearing, the Chair of the Grade Grievance Committee shall notify the grievant, the individual charged with the unfair practice and the members of the committee of the time and place of the hearing, specification(s) of the complaint, composition of the committee and the right of the individual charged to be accompanied by an advisor. The advisors to the student and faculty member may be present when charges and evidence are presented to the committee.
- iii. At any hearing, all parties with the exception of advisors may question witnesses.
- iv. All committee hearings shall be confidential; witnesses shall be excluded except for the period of their questioning.
- v. The report and recommendation of the committee shall be in writing, including the committee's rationale for its decision and any dissenting opinion(s). Only those committee members who have heard all testimony and evidence in a given case may vote on a committee's recommendation. Class schedules of students and faculty members must be accommodated when setting committee meetings.
- vi. If the committee finds in favor of the student, the committee's report and recommendation shall be forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University after completion of the hearing, and copies shall be provided to all parties of the complaint. If the committee finds in favor of the faculty member and no appeal to the committee's decision is filed within the specified time period, (see 3a below) the committee shall destroy all documents pertaining to that particular case.

b. Appeal Process

- i. If any parties to the complaint are not satisfied with the recommendation of the Grievance Committee, they may submit an appeal in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Such an appeal must be filed within five (5) calendar days after receipt of the recommendation of the Grievance Committee.
- ii. Such an appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be based upon: a contention that committee procedure may have had a prejudicial

effect on the outcome of the report and recommendation; the discovery of new information after the committee hearing which may have an effect on the outcome of the hearing; and the belief that the committee recommendation was unsubstantiated by the evidence and documentation presented.

- iii. The Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University shall weigh all evidence and recommendations and render a final written recommendation of the matter after the expiration of the five-day waiting period. All parties to the grievance must receive copies of the Vice President's recommendation.
- iv. If the Vice President is in agreement with the committee's findings in favor of the faculty member, the Vice President must destroy all documents pertaining to that case. If, however, the Vice President for Academic Affairs finds in favor of the student, a recommendation for change of grade should be made by the Vice President to the faculty member. A copy of this recommendation should go to the Chairperson of the Department, the Dean of the College/School, and the Dean of Students. All procedural actions must be completed within the semester they are initiated.
- v. Department Chairs, Deans, Vice Presidents, etc. should not attempt to discuss or resolve any grade grievance unless the above procedure has been faithfully adhered to.

Note: No individual involved in the appeal process should hear, initiate, or attempt to resolve a grade grievance unless the Grade Grievance Procedure, obtainable at Department Chair's offices or at the Office of the Dean of Students, has been properly followed.

### Evaluating Students' Professional Performance

At times, concerns may arise regarding a student's professional performance, and/or overall compatibility with the field of social work. Specific concerns may include exhibiting unethical or unprofessional behaviors at the agency, such as violating established practice standards, frequent absences or tardiness, failure to meet documentation and/or reporting requirements, difficulties with authority and use of supervision, failure to show adequate progress in learning, violation of agency-specific policies, etc. Concerns may also arise from the classroom context, such as difficulty managing class discussions in a respectful manner, exhibiting erratic or aggressive behaviors, etc.

The following list describes the major professional performance expectations required of all social work students. These expectations will be used as a basis for evaluating students' professional performance throughout their studies.

1. Attendance and Punctuality: Students must report to their field placement on time and stay for the duration of their assigned hours. Excessive tardiness and/or leaving early is not acceptable. Students must notify their supervisor in advance if they are coming late or leaving early due to unanticipated circumstances. Students must attend and participate in all required activities, including staff meetings, training, and other activities.

2. Professional Appearance: Students' attire must be appropriate to the agency's protocol (e.g., business-casual). Students are encouraged to inquire with their immediate supervisors about the appropriate dress code for the agency, as well as any additional expectations about their appearance.
3. Communication: Students must be able to manage all communications in a professional manner, and demonstrate adequate verbal, written and electronic communication. Students must be proactive in notifying their supervisors about unexpected circumstances that may affect their hours and/or performance in the field. Students must be able to clearly and respectfully communicate with clients, peers, supervisors and other professionals, including listening attentively; offering and accepting constructive feedback; and managing conflict and disagreements in a cooperative and positive manner.
4. Respect: Students must demonstrate courtesy, politeness, cultural humility, and civility towards clients, supervisors, staff, faculty, and other professionals. Overall, students are expected to exhibit calm and professional demeanor in all interactions, and use professional and respectful language when communicating with others.
5. Self-Awareness: Students must show an ability to monitor and critically evaluate their thoughts, emotions and biases, and act consciously in difficult situations. When constructive feedback is offered, students must be willing to critically reflect on it and modify their behaviors as necessary.
6. Diversity Awareness: Students must demonstrate cultural humility and sensitivity in their personal and professional interactions. This includes, but is not limited to, respecting and appreciating diverse opinions, experiences and/or people. Overall, students must be willing to learn about and respect people's beliefs and ideas that are different from their own.
7. Collegiality: Students must be able to work cooperatively, collaboratively and respectfully with classmates, faculty, agency staff, and supervisors. Students must approach any conflicts or divergence in opinion in a collegial and respectful manner.
8. Initiative and Reliability: Students must take appropriate initiative in their field placements and classroom experiences, and demonstrate self-direction, self-motivation and persistence in completing assignments, tasks and projects. Students must strictly adhere to deadlines, and complete all assignments in a timely manner.
9. Responsiveness to Feedback: Students must show receptivity to feedback from their supervisors, faculty and colleagues. Students must be willing to critically evaluate the feedback provided, respectfully discuss any disagreements, and adjust their behaviors as necessary.
10. Compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics, program and University policies: Students must demonstrate full compliance with the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), MSW program, and University policies. The Code and policies should guide students' interactions at their field placements, classroom settings, home/community visits and other professional activities.
11. Demonstration of Competency: Students must demonstrate their mastery of the generalist and specialized practice competencies. Students must show receptivity to feedback about competency development and performance from their supervisors, faculty, and others.
12. Field Education Performance and Termination: Students must demonstrate the level of knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive and affective processes necessary for social work

practice. Field supervisors and agencies may terminate a student's field education experience based on performance concerns.

13. Compliance with the Student Review Committee: Students who have been referred to the Student Review Committee must meet with the committee. If the recommendation is a Performance Improvement Plan, students are expected to complete the tasks within the allotted time.

Process to Address Professional Performance Concerns:

*Informal Resolution*: The issues are clearly identified by the appropriate parties. Specific recommendations for improvement are made and consequences for failure to meet expectations are clearly communicated to the student. Specific feedback is provided to the student by the Field Education personnel, Faculty, Staff (depending on the issue at hand), including examples of problem behaviors and strategies to improve performance.

If the concern is about professional performance in field education, the Field Instructor/Task Instructor will contact the Field Seminar Instructor and/or Field Education Director for consultation. If the issues persist or are serious and warrant immediate intervention, the Field Seminar Instructor and/or Field Education Director will offer guidance to the agency personnel and the student by telephone or in person. A site visit will be conducted if necessary.

*Formal Resolution*: If the attempt to informally resolve the issue is unsuccessful, or if the issue is serious enough to warrant an immediate formal response (e.g., a serious ethical violation), the Student Review Committee will meet with the student.

### The Student Review Committee (SRC)

The Student Review Committee is charged with addressing potential violations of professional performance expectations and developing an action plan. The Student Review Committee consists of the MSW Program Director, the Field Education Director, and at least one additional faculty/staff member from the Department.

### SRC Procedures

1. If a student issue is unable to be resolved informally or MSW program personnel identify a potential violation of the professional performance expectations, then the SRC will convene a meeting, usually within 1-2 weeks, with the student and other relevant people (field instructor, task instructor, classroom instructor, etc.) to discuss the concern.
2. During the meeting, all individuals will have the opportunity to share their information about the concern. After all information has been provided, the SRC members will meet to discuss the situation and recommend a course of action.
3. The SRC will then meet with the student to discuss the recommended course of action. The possible actions include:
  - a. Continue the student in the program without condition. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.

- b. Continue the student in the program with formal conditions, specified in the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) including the development of specific goals targeted to address the problematic behavior(s), a timeline in which the specific goals should be met, and detailed course of action should the goals not be met.
  - c. Reduction in course load and/or removal from the field practicum.
  - d. Requiring additional coursework and/or field hours to be completed.
  - e. Recommend to the Graduate School that the student be terminated from the program. The Graduate School considers the recommendation from the Student Review Committee and makes the final decision. If a student is dismissed from the program, he/she/they are entitled to appeal the dismissal in accordance with policies and procedures set by the Graduate School.
4. The student will receive the Performance Improvement Plan within 10 days of the meeting. The student will sign the PIP and return it to the SRC for the MSW Program Director's signature.

#### Professional Performance Appeal/Grievance Procedures

Students may appeal any decisions made by the Student Review Committee regarding their professional performance, including dismissal recommendations. The appeal must be made in writing to the Department Chair, within two weeks of receipt of the Performance Improvement Plan from the Student Review Committee. The Department Chair will review all the relevant materials and may meet with the student and/or any involved parties prior to issuing a final decision. If the matter is still unresolved, the student will follow the [Graduate School's formal resolution procedure](#).

#### **Policy and Procedure about Termination Based on Academic Performance**

Failure to achieve the 3.0 GPA within the prescribed period of time will lead to final review, which may result in removal of matriculated status and dismissal. The Graduate School will notify the Graduate Program Coordinator, or designee about students who have not raised their GPA to the required level within this period of time. The dismissal notification to students will be sent out by The Graduate School.

#### ***Appeals and Exceptions to Academic Dismissal***

- a. The dismissal notification to students will be sent out by The Graduate School.
- b. All students have the right to appeal their first academic dismissal.
- c. Exceptions to the academic dismissal policies, will be considered only in special cases and under extenuating circumstances by TGS in consultation with the GPC.
- d. Conditions will be set for the student's continuing in the program. The decision to withhold dismissal and the conditions for continued matriculation will be forwarded to the student by the Dean of The Graduate School or designee. The notification letter to the student will be sent out by The Graduate School.
- e. Failure to meet the conditions for continued matriculation will result in final academic dismissal from the program.

#### **Policy and Procedure about Termination Based on Professional Performance:**

According to the policies set by the MSW program and the Graduate School, students can be recommended to the Graduate School for termination from the program for the following reasons, which is not an exhaustive list:

1. Obtaining a failing grade in a Field Seminar course in any semester.
2. Obtaining a failing grade in a practice course (i.e. Generalist Social Work Practice I & II, and Clinical Social Work Practice I & II) in any semester.
3. Failing to obtain a field placement in a timely manner, including refusals.
4. Dismissal from a field placement due to significant performance difficulties and/or serious ethical violations.
5. Exhibiting behaviors that are considered inappropriate for the social work profession and failing to meet Performance Improvement Plan recommendations to address these issues within the time frame designated by the Student Review Committee.
6. Recommendation from the Student Review Committee for violations of professional performance expectations.

Concerns about unethical behavior will be addressed by the SRC. The SRC will review oral and written reports of the student's unethical behavior. The student and constituents involved will be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will deliberate and decide whether or not to recommend dismissing the student from the program. If a decision is made to dismiss, the student and the Graduate School will receive a letter indicating the rationale for the decision. The Graduate School makes the final decision.

### Student Participation

We consider student feedback and participation to be of paramount importance and encourage active student participation in formulating and modifying policies affecting the program. The MSW Program Director, the Field Education Director and the program faculty maintain an open-door policy and encourage students to bring any concerns or feedback about their academic and/or professional experiences. Moreover, students are encouraged to keep regular contact with their faculty advisors and share any feedback and suggestions regarding programmatic matters.

### Student Advisory Board

In the fall semester of each year, we will invite all interested students to serve on the MSW Student Advisory Board. The Board is tasked with providing feedback and suggestions on program policies affecting academic and student affairs. The Board also serves as an organizing body representing students' interests in the program, the profession, and in building community within the program. Students will determine the structure of the Board and can serve on the Board as long as they are enrolled in the program. Board members will be invited to participate in social work program meetings once a month.

A Faculty Liaison for Student Involvement is assigned each year to facilitate student participation on the Advisory Board. The Liaison is a full-time member of the program, and his/her responsibilities include recruiting student members to serve on the Advisory Board, consulting with the members in organizing events and activities, and soliciting feedback from the Advisory Board members on a variety of programmatic matters.

### Student Concerns About a Course or Faculty Member

There may be times when a student has a concern regarding an instructor or a course. It is always best to first address the concern with the instructor. When a student “skips” this step and first shares the concern with the MSW director or department chair, the student will be asked to first discuss the concern with the instructor. Accordingly, students are requested to follow these steps. When a student has concerns about a course or a professor, he/she/they will follow the following procedure:

1. Request an appointment with the course instructor to discuss the concern as soon as the concern arises.
  - When arranging the appointment, provide the instructor with some information about the concern.
2. Meet with the instructor to address the concern in a professional and respectful manner.
  - Prior to meeting with the instructor, identify potential courses of action to address the concern.
  - Speak only for yourself.
  - If other students have the same or a similar concern, they need to make their own appointment with the instructor.
3. If, after meeting with the course instructor, and the situation is unresolved, request an appointment with the MSW Program Director and/or Field Director if it is a Field Seminar course.
  - When arranging the appointment, provide the MSW Program Director or Field Director with some information about the nature of the concern, and the outcome of the meeting with the course instructor.
4. If, after meeting with the course instructor and the MSW Program Director and/or Field Director, and the concern persists, request an appointment with the Department Chair.
  - When arranging the appointment, provide the Department Chair with some information about the nature of the concern, and the outcome of the meetings with the course instructor and the MSW Program Director, and/or Field Director.
5. The student may also discuss their concern with their faculty advisor at any point during this process.

### The Significance of Field Education

Field education is considered to be a “signature pedagogy” of the social work profession. As indicated in the Educational and Policy Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), “signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline. . . . The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the social work competencies” (EPAS, 2015, p. 12).

Consistent with the mission and goals of the MSW Program, the field education component of the curriculum is designed to prepare leaders in social work practice with children, youth, and families in an increasingly diverse and global society. Field education provides students with opportunities to integrate classroom learning and a supervised practice experience in human service agencies. Students obtain hands-on experience in various social service agencies, and practice the application of concepts learned in the classroom. In field education, students also gain the necessary skills and competencies to effectively promote the wellbeing and functioning of children, youth and families, as well as their communities. Finally, the field education component allows students to develop a professional identity, exercise critical thinking, and learn about ethical and professional behavior in practice settings.

The first 30 credits of the program are focused on generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Students will acquire a broad range of social work skills, such as the use of empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills, as well as the use of theory and research to guide engagement, assessment and intervention strategies with diverse client systems.

The second 30 credits of the program are focused on clinical practice with children, youth and families. Second-year placements are designed to extend and enhance the knowledge and skills acquired during the generalist practice year. Students will be placed in settings where they will acquire higher-level clinical and advocacy skills.

### Roles and Responsibilities of Field Personnel

A valuable and successful field experience requires the involvement of many individuals including the student, those at the field agency, and university officials. The following section defines the roles and responsibilities of field education personnel. The remainder of this manual uses these terms when discussing field-related components.

#### Field Education Director

A staff member who oversees and manages all field operations, develops new field opportunities, works directly with students in arranging and monitoring field placements, provides training and consultation to field education personnel, and assures program's compliance with the CSWE standards related to field education. Overall, the Field Education Director provides strategic leadership to all field operations, and ensures a successful field education experience for students and agencies.

#### Field Education Coordinator

A staff member who assists with the recruitment/retention of field placements, as well as in maintaining proactive and ongoing communication with agency-based field instructors, field education seminar instructors and students, for the betterment of programmatic success and student outcomes.

#### Field Seminar Instructor (Professor/Liaison)

A faculty/staff member or a contracted professional assigned to teach the field education seminar and serve as a liaison between the MSW program and the field agencies. This individual assists

students and field instructors in maintaining a quality learning experience in the field. The Field Seminar Instructor serves as the contact person for the student, the agency, and the university. His/her/their roles include ensuring the integration of classroom and field learning, and providing support to students, Field Instructors and Task Instructors as necessary. Students will have access to the Field Seminar Instructor on a weekly basis through the seminar course. Agencies will also have access to the Field Seminar Instructor through scheduled site visits and video conferences. The roles of the Field Seminar Instructor include, but are not limited to:

- Provides support and feedback to students enrolled in field education, and facilitates the integration of classroom and field learning.
- Supports the Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor in managing concerns related to the educational progress of the student.
- Identifies problem areas and assists the student and the agency to resolve conflicts.
- Informs the Field Education Director about any problems in the agency or the field seminar in a timely manner.
- Completes an independent assessment of the student's progress. Provides feedback to the student and the Field Instructor/Task Instructor as necessary.
- Conducts agency site visits with the student and his/her Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor at least once per semester. Completes an agency visit report for each site visit, describing the student's progress in meeting the core social work competencies.
- Assigns a final grade on the Field Education Seminar course.

### Field Instructor (Field Placement Supervisor)

The Field Instructor is a social work practitioner who serves as the student's social work supervisor. This individual is responsible for the education of the students while they are in field placements. The Field Instructor must hold an MSW degree, and at least two years of experience in the social work field after completing their MSW. Generally, they are employed at the agency where the student completes their field placement; however, they may also be externally-based.

An orientation to field education policies, procedures and requirements is provided to all Field Instructors, detailing the core social work competencies to be attained during the field placement experience. A copy of the field manual is made available to all Field Instructors. The Field Instructor must become familiar with all relevant policies detailed in this manual and act in compliance with them at all times.

The specific responsibilities of the Field Instructor include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Becomes familiar with the policies, procedures and requirements of field education, as well as the core social work competencies to be attained by the students.
- Confirms the field start date and any pre-placement requirements, such as background checks, immunizations and mandated trainings to be completed prior to the start of the field placement.
- Discusses with students the standards, ethics and values of the social work profession. Acts as a primary role model of a professional social worker. Encourages an open dialog, critical reflection and reciprocal learning.
- Becomes familiar with the Field Education Seminar course syllabi, the Learning Contract, Process/Journal Recordings, and Midterm and Final Field Evaluations.

Participates in the development of the Learning Contract with the student and the Task Supervisor (if applicable).

- *An agency-based instructor* constructs and oversees the student's experiences in the field. This includes defining student assignments in the agency and providing weekly individual supervision to the student (at least one hour per week).
- *An externally-based field instructor* maintains weekly contact via phone, email or video conference with the agency-based Task Instructor to understand the student's responsibilities in the field and infuse a social work perspective into to the student's field placement assignments.
- Reads and provides written comments on the student's journal/process recordings and reviews them with the student during weekly supervision meetings (note that generalist year students must complete 5 recordings and second year/advanced standing students must complete 8 recordings each semester).
- Attends the agency site visit with the student, Field Seminar Instructor and Task Instructor (if applicable) at least once per semester; available for follow-up conversations as needed.
- Completes the midterm and final field evaluations, in collaboration with the student, and submits it to the Department.
- Field Instructors are responsible for contacting the Field Seminar Instructor and/or the Field Education Director if problems arise, or if information or advice are needed.

### Task Instructor

An agency-based individual who may not hold a graduate degree in social work (MSW), but is responsible for social work-related activities at the agency. The Task Instructor may be responsible for certain learning objectives, evaluations, and overseeing the student's daily activities. For example, a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) at a mental health agency could provide task instruction but could not serve as a Field Instructor. The Task Instructor maintains weekly contact with externally – based Field Instructors and works collaboratively with field personnel to ensure the student attains all the necessary social work competencies.

## Field Education Expectations

### Student Expectations from Field Education

The field education experience is an exciting time for students. Students have high expectations from their field placements and are enthusiastic about learning practice skills in an agency setting. For most students, pursuing an MSW involves a considerable investment of both time and resources, and they expect to learn new skills, be challenged and develop as professionals.

Field education requires a substantial commitment on the part of the student. Some students may feel nervous or apprehensive about beginning their field placements. These feelings are normal, and can be discussed during the field seminar and with your Field Instructor/Task Instructor. As students develop a greater sense of confidence in their ability to practice social work, and build knowledge and basic skills, the feelings of anxiety will likely decrease. Many students are

balancing school, field placement, work and home life. Please remember to practice self-care and obtain consultation from faculty, peers and/or professionals as necessary.

Readiness for field involves a number of interrelated factors, including commitment, energy, strong communication skills (both verbal and written), interpersonal skills, objectivity, personal self-awareness, critical thinking abilities and a schedule that allows sufficient time and flexibility. Moreover, a degree of emotional and behavioral stability and maturity are necessary to successfully complete the field placement. Each student must conduct a realistic assessment of his/her degree of readiness to engage in field education and fulfill the rigorous demands of professional social work practice. Questions or concerns about a student's readiness for field must be discussed with the Field Education Director before a field match is finalized.

Please keep in mind that the Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy cannot guarantee flexible schedules and internships in specific geographic areas or with specific populations. Flexibility in terms of traveling distance and types of agencies will help ensure a successful field placement experience. Students may be required to travel up to one hour to their field placement (i.e., generally no more than 50 miles from their place of residence). Any issues related to distance, client populations or other preferences should be discussed during the field match process; however, the program cannot guarantee that any/all such requests will be accommodated.

### Expectations from Students in Field Education

The primary responsibility of the student is to be an active and engaged learner, both at the agency and in the field seminar courses. Because students are providing services to clients who are often vulnerable and in need of assistance, they must be prepared to pursue the knowledge base and skills necessary to provide appropriate services. Students are not expected to already possess such knowledge and skills when beginning their field placement; however, they are expected to be actively involved in the learning process. This includes completing all the necessary requirements for field (i.e., hours, process/journal recordings, learning contract, etc.), remaining open to and acting on feedback from their Field Instructor, Field Seminar Instructor and the agency staff, coming prepared to supervisory meetings, actively seeking information and advice when necessary, and being willing to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses.

The student responsibilities in field placement include, but are not limited to:

- Being available for field placement **15 hours per week** for Field Seminar I and II (i.e., generalist practice year of the program).
- Being available for field placement **21 hours per week** for Field Seminar III and IV (i.e., specialized practice and advanced standing year of the program).
- Attend and actively participate in the Field Education Seminar courses.
- Actively pursue the knowledge base and skills needed to provide adequate services to clients; researching the agency and its clients and services as necessary.
- Attending pre-placement meetings with the Field Education Director and the Field Education Coordinator; completion of all placement tasks in Tevera and submitting a signed Field Placement Confirmation Forms to finalize the placement.
- Arranging, completing and paying for background checks and fingerprinting as required by individual field placement sites.

- Maintaining the confidentiality of client information in accordance with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, as well as agency-specific guidelines.
- Acting in a professional manner as a representative of the agency and the University. Completing all agency and school paperwork, recordings, and assignments in a timely manner, using knowledge of the agency in a professionally responsible manner.
- Completing all professional duties in compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics.

Students must initiate the completion of the learning contract and the midterm and final field evaluations with their Field Instructor, and actively participate in this process. Students must initiate contact with their Field Seminar Instructor to share information and feedback, and must be present at the agency during the Field Seminar Instructor's site visit.

## **Field Education Policies and Procedures**

### **Selection Criteria for Field Agencies**

Montclair State University establishes formal affiliation agreements with various social service agencies to provide quality field placement experiences to MSW students. The affiliation agreement defines the requirements and organizational responsibilities for both the University and the agency in the relation to the field experience. The affiliation agreement is a formal contract approved by the University which clarifies the conditions, risks, and risk management of a field placement site. The affiliation agreement must be signed by both parties (i.e., the agency and the field representative) prior to the student beginning their field placement.

When an agency has been identified as a potential field placement site, the Field Education Director determines the feasibility and appropriateness of that agency through discussions with agency representatives and/or a formal site visit and/or meeting. The agency must demonstrate its fit to serve as a training site for graduate social work students, and its policies and procedures must be compatible with the values and ethics of the social work profession.

The following criteria are used in the agency selection process:

- The agency values participation in the education of graduate social work students and considers this to be an important endeavor. The agency agrees to support the mission, goals and objectives of the MSW program, and the partnership between the agency and the University is formalized by signing the affiliation agreement.
- The agency demonstrates professionalism, stability in providing services, and a climate conducive to student learning and professional development. The learning opportunities available at the agency must be aligned with the nine required CSWE competencies.
- The agency has adequate facilities for the student to complete their assigned tasks, such as appropriate space, access to telephones and computers, etc. The agency agrees to provide the student with a formal orientation to its programs and services, including safety training and procedures.
- The agency provides diverse learning opportunities for students, including opportunities to work directly with clients, attend staff meetings, and participate in other professional opportunities available to staff members.

### Selection Criteria for Field Instructors

Selection of Field Instructors is a purposeful process conducted by the Field Education Director, the Field Education Coordinator and other Department staff as appropriate. Once a potential Field Instructor is identified, the Field Education Office conducts an interview to assess their credentials and appropriateness for the role. The Field Education Office also conveys information regarding the responsibilities and requirements from Field Instructors. If the Instructor is *externally-based* (i.e., does not work at the agency where the student completes their field placement) he/she/they will be required to complete a formal application indicating their interest in the role and providing appropriate documentation regarding their credentials. *Agency-based* Instructors do not need to complete a separate application; however, their roles and responsibilities will be discussed during the selection process.

The following criteria are used in the selection of Field Instructors:

- The Field Instructor must possess an MSW degree from a CSWE-accredited program, as well as a minimum of two years post-MSW practice experience. This applies both to *agency-based* and *external* Field Instructors.
- The Field Instructor must possess adequate knowledge, skills and capacity to provide quality instruction to graduate social work students. This should include awareness and consideration of the students' needs as emerging professional social workers.
- The Field Instructor must be able to provide weekly supervision to the student for a minimum of one hour per week.
- The Field Instructor must be willing to submit a current resume and copies of their diplomas and/or social work license, if applicable.
- The Field Instructor must be willing to become familiar with the MSW program field policies and procedures, and participate in a Field Instructor orientation session.

### Student Eligibility for Field Education

All MSW students are eligible for admission to field education when they are accepted into the program. Full-time students in the 60-credit program begin their generalist field placement in the fall semester of their first year. Part-time students begin their generalist field placement in the fall of their second or third year in the program. To be eligible for their specialized field placement, students must have earned a C- or better in all generalist courses including completion of a minimum of 420 hours of generalist field placement.

### The Field Placement Process

Students will be placed in approved agencies by the Field Education Director and the Field Education Coordinator, after careful consideration of their educational needs, expressed interests and career objectives, as well as agency availability. The Field Education Director and the Field Education Coordinator generally make the initial contact with the agency to determine the potential for student placement. Students may suggest new field placement opportunities; however, they should not contact an agency without the Field Education Office's approval.

**Pre-Placement Meeting:** Students are required to participate in a pre-placement meeting to learn about the placement process, the student role, the agency role and general field education expectation as the initial step in the process.

**Tevera Registration:** After attending a pre-placement meeting, students are invited to register with Tevera, an online field management system that organizes and streamlines the field placement process. The Field Education Office will initiate an electronic invitation that will be emailed to the student. Upon receipt of the Tevera email, students should register with Tevera and create an online account in the system and view the Tevera training and orientation videos to become familiar with the system.

**Resume:** After creating a Tevera account, students must upload a current resume to Tevera for review and approval. The Field Education Office will review the resume and offer feedback to make edits when appropriate to enhance the overall appearance of the resume. The student's resume is shared with a prospective agency for consideration during the field placement process.

**Field Application Form:** Students must complete a Field Application Form electronically through Tevera. The application form is an essential part of the process, and placement efforts cannot be initiated without the completed form. The form details the students' career interests and prior experiences, preferred geographic locations, and any preferences and/or specific constraints related to the field placement.

After completion of the above tasks, students are invited to review the field placement site database in Tevera and indicate 2 -3 sites of interest. The Field Education Office reviews the suggested sites and provides instruction on next steps. The student will either be provided with instructions on how to contact the site to request an interview or the Field Education Office will contact the site and the student's resume for consideration. The Field Education Office may also make an initial assignment for the student with an agency deemed most likely to meet the mutual learning needs and expectations of the student, the agency, and the program. The Field Education Office will consider student preferences and constraints to the extent possible; however, there is no guarantee that specific requests will be accommodated. The educational needs of the students and the degree of fit with a particular agency will serve as primary considerations for assignment.

**Placement Factors:** The following factors will be taken into consideration when assigning a student to a specific agency:

- The student's unique educational needs as determined by the Field Education Director and/or other staff.
- The student's expressed interests and career goals, as well as their work and volunteer experience in social service agencies.
- The student's geographical location and any constraints related to transportation.
- The student's capacity to function in a particular agency and work with a particular Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor, as determined by the Field Education Director and/or other staff.
- The agency's ability to work with a particular student. When an agency questions the selection of a particular student, the agency will bring this to the attention of the Field Education Office. After joint discussion and evaluation, a decision will be made about the appropriateness of the placement for that student.

- First-year students are placed at agencies providing generalist social work practice opportunities with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Higher-level clinical placements are generally not available for first-year students, as they do not yet possess the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in these types of placements.
- Second-year/Advanced Standing students are placed in specialized settings serving children, youth and families, in accordance with the program's stated concentration. These settings generally provide higher-level clinical practice opportunities for students.

**Agency Interview:** The Field Education Office will notify the student about their assignment and provide the name and contact information of the agency so that the student may reach out directly to the potential placement site to schedule an interview. It is the responsibility of the student to become familiar with the agency prior to the interview. It is also the student's responsibility to contact the agency and set up an interview unless otherwise specified. Students are expected to wear professional attire to their interview and demonstrate professional demeanor. Students are provided with an interview tip sheet that outlines specific guidelines for interviewing.

The student must inform the Field Education Office if any problems with scheduling an interview arise. Students must make an initial contact with the agency within 72 hours of their assignment. If the student fails to set up an interview in a timely manner, placement for that semester may be denied. Once the interview has occurred, the student will report back to the Field Education Office to discuss the interview and if he/she/they were offered/accepted a placement at that agency. If the student does not wish to accept the placement (with good reason, as determined by the Field Education Office), another interview may be set up with a different agency. If a student has declined two placement opportunities for any reason, a recommendation to the Graduate School that the student be dismissed from the program (with the exception of extreme attenuating circumstances) may be made.

Placement interviews should be approached like job interviews, requiring appropriate professional attire, behavior, and some background knowledge about the agency. Before the interview, the student should review the agency's website for specific information about the agency, the clients, and the types of services provided.

The purpose of the interview is to learn about the requirements of a particular placement and the educational opportunities available at the agency. Keep in mind that the interview is a reciprocal process. Students should have clear goals and priorities and be prepared to ask specific questions about the learning opportunities available at the agency, skills that can be developed, structure, methods of supervision, etc.

Students should be prepared to answer questions about their background, professional goals, and why they desire that particular placement. During the interview, agency personnel will assess the student's level of interest, motivation and suitability for the general types of assignments that the student may be expected to complete.

**Placement Decisions:** The student and the agency decide whether they want to work together during or after the interview. If during the interview both parties agree that the placement is a

good fit, the student informs the Field Education Office of that decision. If the student is not accepted by the agency and that decision is communicated during the interview, it is the student's responsibility to inform the Field Education Office and schedule a meeting to discuss an alternative assignment. In cases where a student is accepted by an agency, but refuses the placement, the Field Education Office will make one additional attempt to place the student. If the student is accepted by, but refuses a second placement option, the Field Education Office will not be obligated to seek an additional placement for that student and a recommendation to the Graduate School that he/she/they be dismissed from the program may be made. Similarly, if the student is refused by the agency after two placement attempts were made, no further efforts will be made to place the student and a recommendation to the Graduate School that the student be dismissed from the program may be made. Exceptions will be made for extreme circumstances only.

**Field Placement Confirmation Form:** Upon verbal confirmation that a student has been offered and accepted a field placement opportunity, the student must complete all placement tasks in Tevera and submit a Field Confirmation Form (signed by the agency and the student). The submission of the signed form finalizes the field placement assignment. The Placement Confirmation Form is available in Tevera, and should be signed by the Field Instructor (if the instructor is agency-based) and/or the Task Instructor. The student must submit the form prior to the beginning of their internship in order for field hours to be counted.

### General Field Placement Requirements

The following are basic requirements for students in field placements:

- Field placements begin in the fall semester during the second week of classes and continue through the spring semester of that academic year. Placements cannot begin mid-year or during the summer, with exception of extreme circumstances for mid-year placement starts. Generally, students must remain in their placement through the Winter Break with the exception of official University school closings to avoid disruptions in services. Students should follow the field education calendar.
- Students must remain in the same field agency throughout the year; mid-year changes in placement are generally not permitted, with the exception of extreme circumstances.
- Concurrent with the field placement, students must be registered for the appropriate Field Education Seminar course (i.e., Field Seminar I and II in the first year, followed by Field Seminar III and IV in the second year). The purpose of the seminar courses is to help students integrate classroom learning and their field experiences, and provide an additional venue for consultation and feedback.
- Students have two separate field placements for their generalist and specialized placements. Students cannot remain in the same field placement for more than one academic year. However, in some cases, students may intern in separate divisions and/or programs that belong to the same agency.
- Students in field must concurrently register and enroll in Generalist Social Work Practice I & II, and Clinical Practice with Children, Youth and Families I & II.
- If the student fails any of the Field Education Seminar courses, in extreme circumstances (e.g., a prolonged illness, a serious personal emergency), they may be allowed to repeat

the seminar and their internship hours in a subsequent year. Students who fail the concurrent Social Work Practice course may be allowed to repeat it in a subsequent year.

- In order to be placed in an agency, students should meet all program-specific requirements for good academic standing, as detailed in the student manual). Students on academic probation may be placed in an agency (or continue their existing placement) for one semester only following the probation decision.
- Any interruption of the field placement must be approved by the Field Education Director and the MSW Program Director. Please keep in mind that discontinued enrollment, for any reason, may require students to repeat the internship for that year, as well as the corresponding field education seminars.
- Students generally follow the holiday schedule of the agency rather than the University schedule. If the agency is open on a day that is a holiday for the University, the student is expected to continue to work in the agency on that day. Students are expected to discuss holiday work schedules with the Field Instructor/Task Instructor to clarify expectations. This should be done early in the internship process to avoid miscommunication.
- Lunch and dinner hours are **not** part of agency field hours, unless students are required to remain with clients during mealtime. Travel time to and from the internship/training(s) is also **not** part of agency field hours.
- Attendance at a training/conference (with prior approval from the Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor) is considered a part of the agency field hours.
- Students should not plan to take vacation or other extended leave during their internship except during the summer or federal holidays. Agencies may require students to work during Spring break and/or during the Winter break.
- Time missed for approved reasons must be made-up by the end of the academic year. Time missed for unapproved reasons may result in a failing grade for the field seminar course and could lead to dismissal from the program.
- The Field Seminar Instructor monitors and evaluates student performance in field. Students will generally work with the same Field Seminar Instructor throughout the academic year.
- All disability accommodations that involve field education must be developed by the University Disability Resource Center, in coordination with the MSW Program Director and the Field Education Director. Such plans should be developed prior to the start of field education whenever possible.

### Schedules and Hours

Students in the 60-credit MSW program complete a minimum of **1,000** hours of field during the program – at least **420** in the generalist practice year (i.e., Field Education Seminars I & II), and at least **580** in the specialized practice or advanced standing year (i.e., Field Education Seminars III and IV). As previously indicated, this corresponds with **15 hours per week** during the generalist practice year, and **21 hours per week** during the specialized practice year.

Students are required to complete all assigned field hours within a given semester. Should a student's hours fall substantially below the required hours, the student may be referred to the Student Review Committee to develop a plan to correct the concern. If the hours are still not completed by the end of the semester, the student may be issued a failing grade in the Field

Education Seminar and may be subject to a recommendation for dismissal from the program to The Graduate School, with the exception of extreme circumstances. In the event of extreme circumstances, such as extended illness, the student may receive an Incomplete grade (I) for the course. These requests must be approved by the Field Education Director and the MSW Program Director. If the hours are not completed by the assigned due date, a recommendation to The Graduate School for dismissal from the program may be made.

Field education hours are generally completed Monday through Friday during business hours (i.e. 9am - 5pm), therefore students are expected to be available for field placement for at least one full day during the week (i.e. Monday – Friday). Students participate in agency staff/clinical meetings, interface with key staff members and become integrated into the agency during normal business hours. Some agencies, however, may require evening and weekend availability. Such requirements will be discussed with students during the interview process. Students are expected to complete field placement hours as indicated by the agency. Occasionally, students may need to participate in events that are not during their usually scheduled hours; however, these events are not to conflict with their classes.

As previously indicated, lunch or dinner breaks are **not** counted as field hours. If evenings are required by the agency, students should be prepared to accommodate such requests; however, the overall number of hours should not extend beyond the required 15 hours per week during the first year of the program, 21 hours per week during the second year and advanced standing year of the program.

If an agency is closed for a holiday, the student is still expected to make up any missed time. If the hours are reduced in a particular week, students should plan to make up those hours by the end of the semester, in consultation with the Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor. This also applies to missing field for religious holidays. Keep in mind that students will not be able to pass field without completing all the required hours

All students must remain in their field placement until the last day of field as indicated in the field calendar. If a student exceeds the required hours by the end of the academic year, no additional credit will be awarded for those hours. If a student has a medical issue or an official disability accommodation related to hours, all plans must be reviewed and approved by the Field Education Director and the MSW Program Director.

### Student Orientation Workshops

All students are required to attend a field orientation workshop prior to the start of the fall semester and before reporting to their assigned agencies. The orientation is mandatory for all MSW students entering field. Separate field orientations will be held for generalist practice and specialized practice years. Students in the Advanced Standing program will join the specialized practice year orientation. Students must contact the Field Education Office in advance if they are unable to attend the mandatory field orientation due to a documented excused absence. In such instances, students will be assigned a make-up field orientation session. Students who miss both the mandatory field orientation may view a recorded version of the orientation in lieu of attendance. Students may not begin their field placement until they have attended an orientation.

## Field Supervision

All students must receive at least one hour of individual supervision per week with a designated Field Instructor who possesses an MSW degree and at least two years of post-MSW practice experience. The student and the Field Instructor should prepare for the supervisory meetings. The student should prepare a written agenda for each supervision meeting and send it to the instructor at least two days in advance. Students should also send process/journal recordings to their Field Instructor via Tevera in a timely fashion (i.e., at least 48 hours prior to the supervision meeting). Students should be receptive to supervision and open to feedback and use it to improve their practice skills and knowledge, increase self-awareness, and develop as a professional social worker. Field Instructors must be adequately prepared for supervision meetings, including reviewing and commenting on students' process/journal recordings and preparing relevant discussion points.

## Field Supervision/Task Supervision Methods

The approach to supervision is unique for each Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor. The following methods may be employed over a variety of settings, regardless of specific instructional or personal styles. Some of these instruction methods are required, while others are strongly recommended.

- Review and feedback on process/journal recordings (required)
- Review and discussion of case examples and case documentation (required)
- Direct observation of student's work (recommended)
- Student observation of the Field Instructor/Task Instructor at work (recommended)
- Review of audio and video recordings (if appropriate)
- Role plays and discussion (recommended)
- Discussion of events and experiences in the field and obtaining feedback and consultation (required)
- Visits to other service providers for comparison/contrast (if appropriate)
- Group discussion with other students/staff (recommended)
- Assigning additional readings in appropriate content areas (if appropriate)
- Attendance at relevant trainings and/or conferences (if appropriate)

## Agency Site Visits

The Field Seminar Instructor will also serve as a field liaison for the program and facilitate at least two site visits during the academic year. One site visit will be conducted during the fall semester, and an additional site visit will be conducted during the spring semester. Site visits may be conducted virtually through a HIPPA compliant platform and should be scheduled for at least 20 minutes and include the student, the Field Instructor and additional staff/supervisors as necessary (e.g., Task Instructor).

During the site visit, discussions will focus on the student's progress, the learning contract, application of theory and classroom material to practice, identification of problem areas and related topics. Additional site visits or follow-up conference calls may be scheduled for students who are not making the expected progress, and/or students rated below expected on the midterm evaluation. In such cases, a performance improvement plan may be developed with input from

the Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor to help the student successfully complete their field placement.

### International Students

The tasks performed in the field practicum experience required for social work education accreditation may be considered “work” from an immigration standpoint. Therefore, all non-U.S. citizens are advised to obtain the proper work permission *before the field practicum begins*. All international students should consult with the Office of International Engagement concerning work authorization procedures.

### Professional Liability Insurance

Both the University and field agencies require all social work students in field placement to be covered by a professional liability insurance policy. The purpose of the policy is to protect both the agency and the student against malpractice liability claims. Professional liability insurance is provided to all MSW students by Montclair State University. The liability insurance only covers student actions while they are actively enrolled in field (i.e., registered for the appropriate field education seminar courses) and does not cover the student for any other activities or jobs.

The limits of liability under the University’s insurance policy are \$2 million per occurrence and \$4 million per general aggregate. Under this policy, students are not covered for any claims relating to the operation of motor vehicles, whether personal or agency vehicles. Since the University has determined that students cannot provide services for which they are at risk without liability coverage, students may not transport clients as part of their field education hours. This should be clearly communicated to all field education sites, and agencies should not ask or allow students to transport clients while in field placement.

### Background Checks and Screenings

Many agencies require certain types of screening procedures from prospective interns, such as medical examinations, criminal background screenings, and child abuse screenings. If a fee is charged for background checks or other screening procedures, this fee is the responsibility of the student. Moreover, the time spent being fingerprinted or medically screened is not considered part of the field education hours. Students with a criminal conviction or arrest records may be restricted from certain field placements, and such records may also affect qualification for social work licensure in certain states.

### Safety Issues

The Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy is aware that the agency staff and students may face potential risks in certain practice situations. These risks are discussed in depth during the field orientation session. Students must be aware of the need for personal safety and act in a manner that minimizes risks when possible. Field Instructors and/or Task Supervisors must discuss safety issues and the steps that students can take to minimize risk within their agency, as part of the student’s orientation to the organization. Agency officials should keep in mind that students should not be left unsupervised without professional staff at the agency. Moreover, students should not be left in charge of conferences, staff retreats, and other professional

gatherings at the agency. As previously indicated, students may not transport clients in their personal vehicles under any circumstances.

If a situation occurs where a student or client experiences a safety issue, it should be reported immediately to the Field Education Office and written documentation should be submitted by the student and Field Instructor/Task Instructor. The Field Education Director will notify the MSW Program Director and the Chair of the Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy about any safety issues arising during the field placement and develop a plan of action to adequately address the issue.

### Use of Personal Cell Phones and Email Addresses

Whenever possible students should use agency provided cell phones for verbal and electronic communication with clients and client systems to reduce exposure of their personal information. If a student does need to use a personal cell phone for field related use, students may obtain a free google voice number that can be used for calling, text messages, and voicemail. It can be used on smartphones and computers and syncs across multiple devices. Students are not permitted to use or share personal cell phone numbers or personal email addresses for field related use.

### Social Media

The NASW Code of Ethics cautions that “Social workers should be aware of the potential that their personal information on the Internet, particularly social networking sites, can be accessed by anyone.” The NASW Code of Ethics advises social workers to avoid searching or gathering client information electronically “unless there are professional compelling reasons, and when appropriate with the client's informed consent.” In addition, the NASW Code of Ethics urges social workers to “avoid posting any identifying or confidential information about clients on professional websites or other forms of social media.”

To that effect students are responsible for adhering to the above guidelines detailed in the NASW Code of Ethics. Students are strongly prohibited from sharing personal social media accounts with clients, requesting and/or accepting friend requests from clients.

### Mandated Reporting

In the state of New Jersey all residents are considered mandated reporters. As you begin your MSW degree, it is important that you know the law around mandated reporting and are aware of what to expect if you need to call the New Jersey Child Abuse hotline. All students are required to complete the New Jersey Online Training for Mandated Reporting in the field education seminar I class.

In the event that a student needs to file a report of suspected child abuse and/or neglect at their field placement, the agency should provide students with clear guidance and instruction on the agency's protocol for making a report. The student learner should be supported throughout the entire process. The supervising agency is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the report is made.

### Translation

Students in field placement are not permitted to perform translation or interpretation services for the placement site. Translation and/or interpretation services should be arranged by the placement site and provided by an appropriate and competent person or service. The placement site may not rely on MSW students to translate or interpret for clients.

### Home visits

Students in field placement are expected to perform duties and tasks similar to those of a professional social worker, including home visits and community-based meetings, as these represent valuable learning opportunities. Students are expected to follow agency guidelines on home visits similar to those followed by agency staff members. In order to guide the student and the agency, the following safety principles are recommended:

- All home visits must be made with the full knowledge of the agency, and approval must be received from the student's immediate supervisor.
- The supervisor should be aware of time of departure, time of return, and other activities during the visit. The student should provide a phone number where they can be reached in case of an emergency.
- Students should know how to access a supervisor at all times while conducting a home visit.
- Meetings with clients should never be conducted in the home of the student.
- Students should immediately notify their Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor if they feel threatened, or if the presence of alcohol and/or illegal substances is detected during the home visit.
- Students should be aware of dogs and other household pets which may pose a threat.
- **STUDENTS SHOULD NOT TAKE RISKS.** Students who feel they are being asked to conduct home visits that do not follow these guidelines are urged to discuss the situation with their Field Instructor/Task Instructor. If the situation cannot be resolved at that level, the student should consult their Field Seminar Instructor and/or the Field Education Office.

### Student Expenses

Expenses for transportation and other costs incurred while completing required field assignments may be reimbursed to the student at the agency's discretion. Students must follow established agency procedures for reporting expenses connected with field assignments and receiving reimbursement. Students are responsible for paying the costs of transportation for reporting to and returning from their assigned agencies. As a general rule, the University will not reimburse any expenses associated with field assignments.

### Stability of Field Placements

The Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy requires a degree of stability and continuity at the agency as an important component of a solid educational climate. An affiliation agreement is signed by the Department and the field agency to formalize the terms of the relationship. Temporary or long-term disruptions of agency operations and programs adversely affect the educational environment and must be discussed with the Field Education Office.

Major changes in personnel that affect the educational experience of students, such as staff transfers, departures, or prolonged illnesses, are considered disruptions that should be brought to the attention of the Field Education Office. Discontinuation of services in programs where the students are placed is also considered to be a disruption. In the event of such major disruptions, the Field Education Office, in consultation with the Field Instructor (if available) and agency administrators (if relevant), shall recommend a suitable course of action. The Department's field personnel are responsible for monitoring the stability of field placements; however, the student should bring any major disruptions to the attention of the Field Seminar Instructor and/or the Field Education Director.

### Field Placement Disruption

Field placement is an integral component of graduate social work education, and a disruption for any reason may interfere with a student's professional development and jeopardize their status in the program. Therefore, it is essential that if a field placement is at risk of disruption for any reason including, but not limited to, the student's dismissal, harassment of any kind, agency instability, and/or unethical behavior on the part of the agency staff or the student, this must be immediately reported to the Field Education Office.

If a disruption is considered due to substantial performance difficulties on the part of the student, a Student Review Committee Meeting will be called to review the concerns. If termination from the placement is considered due to a serious ethical or professional issue on the part of the student, this should be communicated in writing to the Field Education Director prior to dismissal. The agency should submit a brief description of the serious ethical/professional issue and why an immediate dismissal is requested (i.e., without implementing a Performance Improvement Plan). Keep in mind that if a student is terminated from a field placement due to a serious ethical or professional issue, a recommendation to The Graduate School that the student be dismissed from the program may be made. Exceptions will be made in extreme attenuating circumstances only.

In the unlikely event that a student is dismissed from their field placements for reasons other than their professional performance (e.g., agency closure, supervisor-related difficulties that are not related to the student, etc.), attempts will be made to match the student with an alternative field placement. If the program is unable to re-match the student, he/she/they will be given an opportunity to repeat the field placement and the associated practice courses and field seminars in the subsequent academic year.

### Requesting a Change of Field Placement

A student's field placement assignment can only be changed with the approval of the Field Education Director, providing there are extreme extenuating circumstances that affect the educational experience. Keep in mind that general dissatisfaction with the agency, the assigned internship duties, or the direct supervisor(s) typically does not constitute a valid reason to change a placement. Students who desire a field placement change must contact the Field Education Office, discuss the situation, and make a formal request to change their placement. If it is determined that the educational environment at their current placement is not appropriate, that

placement may be terminated and the student will be reassigned. Overall, students are rarely changed from their field placement unless the agency requests termination of the placement or other unique circumstances exist. Even if the reasons for a placement change are valid, students must complete the minimum required field hours by the end of that year.

### Employment-Based Field Placement

Traditionally, field placements are educationally-focused, unpaid training experiences in approved human service agencies. Nevertheless, there are some situations in which paid employment can meet the standards for a field placement. These situations apply only to students who are employed at human service agencies deemed appropriate to serve as social work training sites. If a second-year placement is considered, the agency where the student is employed must provide opportunities for clinical practice with children, youth and/or families in accordance with the program's stated specialization.

An important guiding principle for these situations is that the employment-based field placement must offer robust learning opportunities that meet the nine core social work competencies. Students must be employed with the organization for **at least six months** by the time of the start of the placement in the fall semester or affiliated with the organization through an internship capacity for the same period of time as designated above. Moreover, employment-based field placements must be educationally directed and professionally supervised by a Field Instructor who meets the standards of the program (i.e., holds an MSW degree and at least two years of post-MSW practice experience). The Field Instructor may be the same person who serves as the student's work supervisor.

### Requirements for Employment-Based Field Placement

The following requirements must be met in order to receive approval for an employment-based field placement:

1. Students must be employed with the organization for a minimum of **six months** prior to the start of the internship.
2. The field assignment may be the same as the student's regular work assignment if the tasks have clear linkages to the nine social work competencies, including any competencies added by the program and their related behaviors.
3. All required field hours must take place under the supervision of a Field Instructor who meets the standards of the program. The Field Instructor must hold an MSW degree from a CSWE-accredited program, and at least two years of employment in the field since the completion of their MSW degree.
4. The Field Instructor and the employment supervisor of a student may be the same person. In such instances, dedicated supervision time for the field assignment must be established separately from the students' primary work responsibilities.
5. The field placement activities must be congruent with the student's placement level (generalist or specialized). Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the objectives of the field education seminars, as well as the corresponding practice courses.
6. The student's educational goals should be the primary focus of the field placement (rather than the needs of the agency).

7. Students must complete a learning contract that lists their proposed field education tasks and submit it to their field seminar instructor.
8. The Employment-Based Field Placement Confirmation form must be signed by the proposed Field Instructor and the student. The signed document is submitted to the Field Education Office for review and approval.
9. The agency and the Field Instructor must meet all of the criteria established for other field placements and supervisors, including an agency affiliation agreement.
10. Students who either voluntarily or involuntarily terminate from the agency will be considered terminated from the field placement. This may result in a recommendation to The Graduate School that the student be dismissed from the program.

Students in employment-based field placements must abide by all the policies and procedures detailed in this manual. This includes completing all required field hours and documentation, participating in supervision sessions and site visits, and adhering to the ethical and professional requirements discussed above.

## Timelogs, Learning Contract and Process/Journal Recordings

### The Canvas Electronic System

Students, field personnel and Field Seminar Instructors will have access to Canvas. The student is responsible to complete all field-related assignments in a timely manner. Documentation that must be reviewed by the Field Instructor should be submitted in Tevera per the assignment due date provided on the course syllabus, i.e. recordings. The student's progress and completion of the work will be monitored by the Field Seminar Instructor and discussed with the field agency as necessary. All documentation and hours will be verified by the Field Seminar Instructor during the agency site visit.

### Tevera

The MSW Program utilizes an online software system called Tevera to coordinate and integrate the field experience, including the field placement process, field assessments and field documentation and tasks in one electronic location. Students, leadership, faculty, field staff and field instructors all have access to Tevera. Students use Tevera to submit their learning contracts, recordings and timelogs. Students will upload field timelogs to Tevera and track their hours where field instructors can view the timelogs, verify and sign off on hours. Field Instructors will complete field assessments in the system where students and faculty can view and sign off on the assessment document. Field Instructors and Faculty will track their students in the system and monitor student assignments. Field staff will coordinate the field placement process in Tevera allowing students more participation in the process. Students are responsible for paying a one-time tuition fee for the lifetime use of the system.

Submitting the required documentation in a timely manner prevents concerns at the end of the semester and enables early intervention if students are experiencing difficulties. The goal is to ensure accountability, accessibility of the documents, and transparency so that all parties have verification of what has been submitted by the student.

Students will transition to alumni status upon graduation from the program and will have lifetime access to the system.

### Timelogs

As previously noted, students must complete 15 hours per week during the first year of the program and 21 hours per week during the second and advanced standing year. Timelogs must be submitted by the students on a weekly basis in Tevera. Timelogs are designed to calculate the student's hours and ensure all the requirements are met. Each week, students will update the form with their field hours for that week. The timelog will total the hours completed, and be monitored by the Field Seminar Instructor on an ongoing basis.

### Learning Contracts

All students in field complete a Learning Contract with their Field Instructor at the beginning of the fall semester of both generalist and specialized practice/advanced standing years. The Learning Contract allows the student and the Field Instructor to plan collaboratively for the assignments and the learning to be accomplished during the year. The Learning Contract creates a roadmap of expectations for both the student and the agency. It should be specific and measurable, and be used as the basis for the end of semester evaluation.

The Learning Contract incorporates the nine core social work competencies detailed by the CSWE (i.e., generalist competencies during the first year, and specialized/advanced standing competencies during the second year and the advanced standing year) and any behaviors indicative of attaining these competencies. The Learning Contract is available on Canvas and in Tevera and is accessible to all field education students. Students review and discuss the Learning Contract with their Field Instructor and Task Instructor (as applicable). Once the Learning Contract is developed, the student initiates the submission of the document in Tevera. The student sends the learning contract to the field instructor and task instructor in Tevera. The Learning Contract is read and given a grade by the Field Seminar Instructor. If the Learning Contract is deemed unsatisfactory, the student will modify the document as needed and submit again for the Field Seminar Instructor's approval. In the spring semester, the Learning Contract is revised by the student and the Field Instructor and completed in Tevera.

### Process and Journal Recordings

Process and Journal recording forms are found in Canvas and Tevera. The recording formats provided in Canvas and Tevera are the only acceptable formats. The process recordings and journal entries are to be submitted in Tevera in accordance with the Field Education Seminar course schedule (**5 recordings for generalist students and 8 recordings for specialized and advanced standing students** in total each semester). The recordings, with comments, will be reviewed by the Field Seminar Instructor in Tevera and will be discussed during the site visit.

**Purpose of Process/Journal Recordings:** Any encounter or interaction may be used for a recording - individual sessions with clients; family or group meetings; staff meetings, community or home visits, interactions with professionals and service providers, etc. The recordings may vary in detail, and students are encouraged to highlight some aspects of the interaction for discussion during the supervisory meeting (e.g., a challenging exchange). A

complete verbatim of an interview or meeting may be expected in some cases, especially if the student struggles in a certain situation and needs extensive feedback.

Students should write a summary paragraph that synthesizes what was accomplished in the session, and identify future goals or challenges which require the supervisor's feedback. The students should also include an additional paragraph critiquing their work before discussion with the Field Instructor. These two reflective paragraphs will provide the student with agenda items for supervision. Instructions for completing records can be found on the recording template.

The following provides additional information regarding the purpose of the recordings:

- Serve as a basic instrument in guiding learning, and helping students conceptualize and organize ongoing activities with various client systems.
- Clarify the purpose of the interaction or activity being recorded, and the role of the student in it. Provide a basic tool for stimulating conversation, self-awareness and critical reflection on a range of practice situations.
- Play an important role in providing direction and framework for the supervisory meetings. The major purpose is to help the student and the Field Instructor identify the student's strengths and areas for future growth.
- Enable the Field Instructor to evaluate the student's self-awareness and self-reflection abilities (i.e., cognitive and affective processes occurring during client interactions).
- Reflects the extent to which the student is able to integrate knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with specific practice situations.
- Provides "data" for end-of-the semester student evaluation.
- Process/journal recordings are educational tools that differ from agency client charts, and are not to be included in agency files.

**Process/Journal Recording Requirements:** Recordings are to be completed and submitted in Tevera to the Field Seminar Instructor per the syllabus due date. Recording submissions will be reviewed by the Field Seminar Instructor, in addition to being reviewed on a regular basis by the Field Instructor during supervisor meetings. Students will be notified if they are falling out of compliance with respect to submitting process recordings. Continued disregard for regularly submitting recordings may place students in jeopardy of failing the field education seminar.

Generalist practice year (first year field placement, Field Education Seminar I & II):

- 5 process recordings per semester. For the first 6 weeks, journal recordings may be written in lieu of process recordings.

Specialized practice year and Advanced Standing students (second year field placement, Field Education Seminar III & IV):

- 8 process recordings per semester. Journal recordings can be submitted occasionally; however, recordings of actual client contact should constitute the majority of the submissions.

Please remember that it is at the discretion of the agency to give students time to complete process/journal recordings during their field hours. If the nature of the work is such that this is not possible, students must complete the recordings on their own time. If the agency allows students to complete journal/process recordings during their field hours, this should amount to no

more than 2 hours per week. Time spent on completing recordings should be included in the students' weekly time log and should be listed as part of the students' weekly time.

**Instructional Use of Recordings:** We encourage Field Instructors to read the student's recordings and offer written feedback prior to the supervisory meeting and use them as an instructional tool. Field Instructors should keep in mind that the use of recordings is intended to meet identified learning goals and foster the student's professional growth.

The Field Seminar Instructors will track that regular submissions of process/journal recordings are submitted in Tevera and offer comments as needed to support a student with an issue or question. Prior to conducting an agency site visit, the Field Seminar Instructor will review a sampling of the recordings (at least two) in preparation for the visit. The Field Seminar Instructor will assess the student's work and progress, as well as the overall placement experience, and submit a field site visit survey through Qualtrics. The Qualtrics link will be provided to the field seminar instructors.

### Termination of a Field Placement and Dismissal from the Program

Students may be terminated from a field placement due to significant performance difficulties and/or serious ethical violations. In these instances, students will receive a failing grade in the field education seminar and be subject to dismissal. In the unlikely event that a student is dismissed from their placement mid-semester for reasons other than their professional performance (e.g., agency closure, supervisor-related difficulties, etc.), attempts will be made to match the student with an alternative field placement. If the program is unable to re-match the student, he/she/they will be given an opportunity to repeat the field placement and the field seminar in the subsequent academic year.

### Student-Initiated Concerns Regarding Field Placements

Concerns regarding field placements may also originate from students. Keep in mind that conflicts and disagreements routinely arise in professional settings, and most can be resolved informally. To effectively address field-related concerns, the following stepwise procedure should be followed by the student. The goal is to resolve the issue quickly and to promote a positive relationship between the student and the agency staff.

**Step 1:** *Speak to the Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor at the agency.* Many issues can be resolved at this level. Candidly but respectfully describe the problem and ask for guidance to achieve resolution.

**Step 2:** *Speak to the Field Seminar Instructor.* The Instructor is there to assist students and facilitate communication between all parties. Describe the problem and the steps taken thus far, and ask for feedback and guidance.

**Step 3:** *Speak to the Field Education Director.* If conversations with the Field Instructor/Task Instructor and the Field Seminar Instructor were not effective in resolving the issue(s), schedule an appointment with the Field Education Director and ask for guidance regarding next steps.

**Step 4:** *Speak to the MSW Program Director.* In the unlikely event that the problem cannot be resolved at the Field Education Director's level, schedule an appointment with the MSW Program Director. Describe the issue and the steps taken thus far, and ask for guidance.

## Providing Feedback on the Field Program

### Student Feedback on the Field Program

Students are expected to provide feedback on an ongoing basis directly to the Field Instructor and/or Task Instructor about their experiences in the agency. Recognizing that this can be challenging in some situations, students may provide feedback to the Field Seminar Instructor and discuss any difficulties with assignments, supervision or other agency-related issues. The Field Seminar Instructor will provide feedback and recommendations for an appropriate course of action. If a serious or urgent field-related issue arises, the Field Education Director may also be notified. Students should promptly bring any field-related concerns to the attention of the Field Seminar Instructor and/or the Field Education Director to avoid potential disruption.

At the end of each academic year, students will also complete a questionnaire regarding their experiences with the placement site. Students are encouraged to use this anonymous venue for providing valuable feedback to the program. The information collected will be used by the Field Education Office and the MSW Program Director in making decisions regarding future use of agencies and instructors and other necessary improvements. If a student wishes to provide confidential feedback directly to the MSW Program Director, they may schedule an appointment to do so at any time.

### Field Seminar Instructors' and Field Seminar Instructors' Feedback on the Field Program

Field Seminar Instructors are also given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding their experiences, the field seminar class and general field policies. This feedback is solicited during an end-of-year survey of all Field Seminar Instructors in the spring semester of each academic year. The information solicited during the meeting is reviewed by the Field Education Director and the MSW Program Director and used to improve the field program.

To foster ongoing communication between the agencies and the field office, Field Instructors, Task Instructors and Field Seminar Instructors are invited to participate in monthly virtual meetings where program updates are shared, strengths and challenges in field settings are discussed and Field and Task Instructors build a community of support where they can connect with one another about common field and supervisory challenges.

## Montclair State University Policies and Procedures

### Notice of Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Montclair State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, gender, disability, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and veteran status, and provides equal access to its online programs, services and activities.

### Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty is any attempt by a student to submit 1) work completed by another person without proper citation or 2) to give improper aid to another student in the completion of an assignment, such as plagiarism. No student may intentionally or knowingly give or receive aid on any test or examination, or on any academic exercise, that requires independent work. This includes, but is not limited to using technology (i.e., instant messaging, text messaging, or using a camera phone) or any other unauthorized materials of any sort, or giving or receiving aid on a test or examination without the express permission of the instructor. Specific policies regarding academic dishonesty are available at: <http://www.montclair.edu/dean-of-students/student-conduct/code-conduct/#academic-dishonesty>

### Disability Resource Center

Montclair State University is committed to the full inclusion of students with disabilities in all curricular and co-curricular activities as mandated by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) will assist you in receiving the accommodations and services necessary to equalize access. The DRC provides assistance to students with physical, sensory, learning, psychological, neurological, and chronic medical disabilities. To learn about the Disability Resource Center and the Academic Adjustment Policy, see: <http://www.montclair.edu/media/montclair.edu/disabilityresourcecenter/academicadjustmentpolicy8.4.2014.pdf>

### Continuous Matriculation

Students who do not register for a credit-bearing course or who have not been granted an approved leave of absence in either the fall or spring semesters must register for a 0.5-credit Continuous Matriculation course (GRAD-MC1) in that semester and pay a continuous enrollment fee. This course is not part of the degree program, its credits do not count towards degree requirements, and is not assigned a grade. Students must register for the Continuous Matriculation course by the end of the Add/Drop period (the second week of the semester). Students who do not register for this course by the deadline will have a registration hold placed on their account. Students may enroll for up to 3 semesters of continuous matriculation. Students are still required to complete the program within the prescribed time limits (see Section: Time Limitation for Completion of Program of Study).

## Leave of Absence

***Students may request up to TWO leaves of absence\* for the entire duration of their graduate program.*** A leave of absence is considered ONE semester\*\*.

**\*Exceptions to the 2-semester leave of absence limit will be granted for pregnancy and/or military deployment.**

**\*\*By law, a student who requests leave for pregnancy can take up to two consecutive semesters (one year) at once.**

The leave of absence semester(s) will be excluded from the time limit for completion of a graduate program. Requests for a leave of absence must be submitted to The Graduate School using our online [Leave of Absence](#) form by the end of the Add/Drop period (the second week of the semester). No requests will be granted retroactively. There will be no exceptions.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from any registered courses. Students will be held accountable for any costs incurred for registered courses. **Students on a leave of absence are *not* required to register for the Continuous Matriculation course.**

**For students with loans:** The University is responsible for reporting student enrollment status to the US Department of Education (USDE) on a monthly basis. It is important for students to understand that if they take an official leave of absence from the university they will be reported to the USDE as not being enrolled during their leave.

The USDE provides information on loan repayment and grace periods on the following websites. If you have any questions, please contact [Financial Aid](#).

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/deferment-forbearance>

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/understand>

## Withdrawal Policies

MSW students who wish to withdraw from the program must notify their academic advisor and the MSW program director immediately. Follow the Graduate School [withdrawal policy](#).

- Students who wish to officially withdraw from Montclair State University must submit this [Withdrawal Form](#)
- Submitting the form will NOT withdraw a student from any registered classes. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw via NEST from all registered classes. Students will be held responsible for all tuition and fees incurred for registered classes.

### Title IX and Gender-Based Misconduct

Montclair State University, in accordance with State and Federal laws, prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace and in academic settings and does not tolerate sexual harassment of employees or students. Specific policies regarding sexual harassment and gender-based misconduct are available at <https://www.montclair.edu/sexual-violence/>

### Student Conduct

Montclair State University is committed to the overall educational and personal growth of its students. In order to facilitate this growth most effectively, it is essential to maintain an appropriate environment. The University establishes this set of policies, standards of behavior, regulations, procedures, sanctions and appeal processes. It is intended to prevent, limit and correct actions that may impede, obstruct or damage the educational environment, and threaten the maintenance of order. All students are expected to make themselves familiar with this code. Specific Policies regarding the Student Code of Conduct are available at: <https://www.montclair.edu/policies/student/student-conduct/code-of-conduct/>

### Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

CAPS is a department within the University Health and Counseling Services designed to provide free personal counseling and psychological services for MSU students, as well as referrals and consultations for faculty and staff. We are fully accredited by the International Association of Counseling Centers (IACS). The goals of CAPS are to allow students to make the most of their academic experience; help prevent future problems; help students develop to their fullest potential by learning new skills and resolving issues that may limit their performance; assist and support faculty and staff through consultation; promote wellness through workshops, presentations and major campus events, etc.

To make an appointment, students should call **973-655-5211**. Additional information about CAPS services is available at: <https://www.montclair.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services/about-caps/>