GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
BSW PROGRAM

HANDBOOK FOR SOCIAL WORK MAJORS
2015-2016

Department of Social Work
10340 Democracy Lane, Suite 300
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Phone: 703.993.4247
Fax: 703.934.2193
Website: socialwork.gmu.edu
Email: socw@gmu.edu

Michael Wolf-Branigin, Chair, Department of Social Work
mwolfbra@gmu.edu; 703.993.4229

Sharolyn Dugger, Director of Field Education
sdugger@gmu.edu; 703.993.6044

Emily Ihara, BSW Program Director
eihara@gmu.edu; 703.993.2023

Vicki Kirsch, MSW Program Director
vkirsch@gmu.edu; 703.993.6028

Elaine Ervin, Administrative Assistant for Field Education
swfield@gmu.edu

Vannary Khov, Administrative Program Specialist
vkhov@gmu.edu; 703.993.2030

Le Anne Wiesnewski, Administrative Assistant for Student Affairs
socw@gmu.edu

The Department of Social Work is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) at the Baccalaureate and Master's levels.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission and Philosophy........................................................................................................6
  Department of Social Work Mission and Philosophy .......................................................6
  College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) Mission and Philosophy .....................6
History of the Department of Social Work ...........................................................................7
Program Information...........................................................................................................7
  Program Accreditation .....................................................................................................8
  Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Social Work Competencies and Practice Behaviors ........................................................................................................8
  Departmental Advisory Committees ................................................................................10
  Program Assessment ........................................................................................................10
  Academic Advising .........................................................................................................10
Student Information and Responsibilities .........................................................................11
  Knowledge of University Policies ....................................................................................11
  Academic Integrity and the Honor Code .........................................................................11
  Professional Standards and Behavior .............................................................................11
  Official Communication with Students .........................................................................13
  Diversity Statement ........................................................................................................13
  Office of Disability Services ...........................................................................................14
  University and Social Work Program Sexual Harassment Policy ....................................14
  Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy ...........................................................14
  Student Requests for Academic Actions ........................................................................15
  Office of the Ombudsman ...............................................................................................15
Social Work as a Major .......................................................................................................16
  Generalist Practice .........................................................................................................16
  Personal Requirements ...................................................................................................16
  Is Social Work the Right Major for You? ......................................................................17
  General University Requirements ..................................................................................17
  Transfer Credits .............................................................................................................17
  Prerequisites ...................................................................................................................18
Admission to Major ............................................................................................................18
Curriculum & Course policies ............................................................................................20
  Course Sequencing ........................................................................................................20
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Semester</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Requirements</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis Course</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Syllabi</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Papers, Late Exams, and Incompletes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from Social Work Classes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiorecording in Classes</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading Policy</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in Groups</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning and Field Education</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Service-Learning Experience</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Field Practicum</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunizations and Fees</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Background Policy</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grievance Procedures</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Policy</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug-Free Departmental Policy</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibited Behavior</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Status Review</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy for Terminating BSW Students from the Social Work Program</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Responsibility</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Tardiness (Reiterated)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for Graduate School or Employment</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Affiliations</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Ethics</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict of Interest Policy</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Life</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Student Association (SWSA)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor Societies</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The John J. Hughes Scholarship</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Resources</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Libraries .......................................................................................................................... 36
After Graduation .............................................................................................................. 37
   Employment .................................................................................................................. 37
   Graduate School .......................................................................................................... 37
   Advanced Standing ...................................................................................................... 37
Tips & Tricks .................................................................................................................... 38
Department of Social Work Faculty/Staff Profiles .......................................................... 39
   Full-Time Faculty ......................................................................................................... 39
   Administrative Staff ..................................................................................................... 46
   Adjunct Faculty for the BSW Program (Fall 2015) ...................................................... 47
Appendix A ....................................................................................................................... 48
   Advising Worksheet for Social Work Majors: 2015-2016 Academic Year .............. 48
Appendix B ....................................................................................................................... 49
   Field Placement Questions .......................................................................................... 49
Welcome to the Department of Social Work at George Mason University!

The undergraduate Social Work Program began in the early 1970s with one faculty member and approximately 15 students. We have since grown to a faculty of 17, many adjunct faculty members, and over 200 undergraduate students with a declared major of social work. Both the BSW and MSW programs are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Over the years, our students have become successful social workers, administrators, advocates, lawyers, clergy, and educators. All have left our program prepared to face the world of work and some to further academic success. They were grateful that the social work curriculum and faculty demanded commitment, hard work, and professionalism.

The faculty and staff would like to welcome you to our major. We hope that this handbook will help smooth the way and answer questions you may have about the Department of Social Work. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of faculty, staff, and students in the development of this manual, and faculty and staff for updates and revisions.

Your advisor, the BSW Program Director, and the Chair of the Social Work Department are available to assist you with academic and other concerns you may experience during your student days at George Mason University.

We are pleased that you have selected social work as a major. Best of luck!

Sincerely,

Emily Ihara
Emily S. Ihara, Ph.D., MSW
BSW Program Director

Michael Wolf-Branigin
Michael Wolf-Branigin, Ph.D., MSW
Chair
MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Department of Social Work Mission and Philosophy

Our mission is to promote human well-being by ensuring economic and social justice, as well as human rights for all. We work to meet these goals:

1. By providing an academically rigorous education that develops social work leaders and practitioners who engage in critical thinking. We seek to develop effective social work leaders, scholars, and practitioners who both challenge injustice and institute interventions grounded in theory and science. With a campus located in an area of enormous cultural plurality, we seek to train leaders, practitioners, and scholars equipped to serve diverse populations.

2. Conducting applied social science research that aims to solve personal and social problems, and investigates systemic inequities in power and unequal access to resources. We seek to identify and develop effective interventions based on scientific theory.

3. Engaging in public service that cultivates community partnerships, enhances capacity, and provides technical expertise to human service organizations caring for diverse local, national, and global communities.

We build upon a foundation of generalist social work knowledge and skills that emphasizes empowerment, inclusion, and systems transformation.

The mission of the BSW program is to prepare entry-level generalist social work professionals who will demonstrate ethical leadership in innovative multidisciplinary practice, social reform, and research in diverse communities. Students are provided a range of opportunities to develop a broad knowledge and skills base consistent with the systems and strengths perspectives. They are expected to practice using core social work values and to examine and resolve ethical dilemmas. Classroom and field experiences prepare students to be competent in the use of new technologies and in culturally sensitive, generalist social work practice.

College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) Mission and Philosophy

Through the integration of research and education, the College of Health and Human Services prepares students to be leaders in their professions, organizations, and communities.

The College of Health and Human Services values a sound general education that enables students to develop analytical and creative thinking and to make well-founded ethical decisions. Graduates will practice in a variety of roles in settings that are complex, multicultural, and international. The college encourages diversity in its student
body and provides interdisciplinary and innovative professional education that is well grounded in philosophy, science, and technology.

The college embodies a learning community where faculty and students share the responsibility for learning and where education occurs in student and faculty interaction within and beyond the walls of the college. The faculty are actively engaged in research and scholarship, linking the academy and the world through interdisciplinary activities and contributing to the development of knowledge and excellence in professional practice.

HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

The BSW Program was established in the early 1970s as part of the Department of Sociology in the College of Arts and Sciences. In 1985, the Department of Social Work moved to the College of Professional Studies, which, with the addition of the Social Work Program, became the College of Education and Human Services, housing the Departments of Education, Health and Physical Education, and Social Work. Changes within the College of Education and Human Services led to the formation of the Graduate School of Education in 1991. The Department of Social Work and the Department of Health, Sport and Leisure Studies (formerly the Department of Health and Physical Education) organized into the Department of Human Services. Through a large endowment to the Social Work Program received in 1992, the Child Welfare Center was approved and began operation in the fall of 1993 with the appointment of the Elisabeth Shirley Enochs Endowed Chair in Child Welfare. The Endowed Chair position remains but the Department of Social Work no longer houses the Child Welfare Center. In 1997, the Social Work Program became part of New Century College. In the fall of 2000, all programs in New Century College became part of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). In 2002, the department added an MSW which offers full-time and part-time study, Advanced Standing, and concentrations in Social Change and Clinical Practice. In 2006, the Department of Social Work became part of the newly formed College of Health and Human Services. Currently, the Department of Social Work is comprised of 17 full-time faculty and approximately 200 BSW students and 150 MSW students. Our Field Education Program works with more than 200 agencies in Northern Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia that serve as field placement and service-learning sites for our students.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Department of Social Work is located off of the Fairfax Campus (about 1.5 miles from campus) at 10340 Democracy Lane, Suite 300, Fairfax, VA  22030). The mailing address is:

4400 University Drive, MS 1F8
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
There are a suite of offices located on the Fairfax campus that are available to social work faculty and students during designated faculty hours. Please contact the individual faculty to inquire about availability to meet at this location (Robinson Hall B, Room 475).

**Program Accreditation**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) regulates the quality of social work programs through a process known as “accreditation.” Both the BSW and MSW Programs at George Mason University are accredited. Any questions regarding accreditation should be directed to the Department Chair.

**Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Social Work Competencies and Practice Behaviors**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Social Work Practice Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior | Social workers:  
- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;  
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;  
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;  
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and  
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.                                                                                       |
| 2 Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice   | Social workers:  
- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;  
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and  
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.     |
| 3 Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice | Social workers:  
- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and  
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.                                                                                     |
| 4 Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice | Social workers:  
- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;                                                                                          |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Social Work Practice Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and • use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Engage in Policy Practice</td>
<td>Social workers: • Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services; • assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; • apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
<td>Social workers: • apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and • use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
<td>Social workers: • collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies; • apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies; • develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and • select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
<td>Social workers: • critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies; • apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies; • use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes; • negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and • facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</td>
<td>Social workers: • select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes; • apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes; • critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and • apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Departmental Advisory Committees

The Department of Social Work has two external committees – the Program Advisory Committee and the Field Advisory Committee – that act as a link between the department and area human service agencies. Both committees include faculty and student representatives, in addition to community practitioners. These committees provide guidance to the Department related to curriculum development and field education, and assist with program assessment and community relations. They meet several times throughout the year. Each has a BSW student representative, appointed by the faculty.

Program Assessment

The Department of Social Work is continually evaluating the BSW Program in order to make it the best program possible. As students, you will be asked to participate in this evaluation process through a series of program assessments. Examples might include standardized tests, interviews, self-assessments, exit interviews, and alumni surveys. The resulting data will be aggregated and used by the faculty, the Program Advisory Committee, and the Field Advisory Committee to evaluate the Program’s strengths and challenges on a regular basis. We appreciate your cooperation.

All graduating students are assessed for competency using an integrative case study interview assessment. Graduating students will be expected to be able to demonstrate the CSWE competencies listed above through this integrative interview assessment (written and oral).

Academic Advising

Every student with 60 or more credits in the BSW Program is assigned a faculty academic advisor according to the student’s last name. Please see the website for specific assignments. To request a change of advisor, please submit the “Request for a Change of Advisor” form signed by both the previous advisor and the new advisor. Students should consult with their advisor before registering for classes each semester. The advisor can also assist a student with interpretation of departmental or University policies and help ensure that a student is on track for graduation. Finally, your advisor is a wealth of knowledge about the social work profession, so feel free to share your thoughts and concerns about the program, your interests, and your career goals.
STUDENT INFORMATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Knowledge of University Policies

Each student is responsible for knowing and following George Mason University’s rules, regulations, requirements, and academic policies. The catalog is the normal repository of policy statements, but corrections, changes, or interpretations may be distributed by other means, including electronic publication. Students are subject to the university’s stated policies on a variety of matters including, but not limited to, adherence to the honor code and proper use of email/electronic media. These policies are available at: http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/masons-honor-code/ and http://itu.gmu.edu/policies/index.cfm

Other university policies are available at http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Academic Integrity and the Honor Code

George Mason University shares in the tradition of an honor system that has existed in Virginia since 1842. The Honor Code is an integral part of university life. On the application for admission, students sign a statement agreeing to conform to and uphold the Honor Code. Students are responsible, therefore, for understanding the code’s provisions. In the spirit of the code, a student’s word is a declaration of good faith acceptable as truth in all academic matters. Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute Honor Code violations. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty must report all alleged violations to the Honor Committee. Any student who has knowledge of but does not report a violation may be accused of lying under the Honor Code. Please see the Office of Academic Integrity’s website (http://oai.gmu.edu) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process.

Professional Standards and Behavior

The Department of Social Work has established these minimum standards for professional standards and behavior expected of all students:

- **Attendance**: Students are expected to attend classes, practicum and service learning, and related meetings.

- **Punctuality**: Students are expected to be punctual to classes, practicum/service learning, and related meetings and activities.
• **Communication**: Students are expected to initiate communication, using sufficient skills in spoken and written English, with faculty, supervisors, clients and staff that appropriately convey ideas and feelings.

• **Interpersonal Skills**: Students will demonstrate the ability to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals.

• **Motor and Sensory Skills**: Students are able to attend and perform class and practicum requirements.

• **Respect**: Students will demonstrate respect in professional relationships.

• **Self-Awareness**: Students will demonstrate self-awareness.

• **Diversity Awareness**: Students will demonstrate awareness and responsiveness to diversity.

• **Collegiality**: Students will demonstrate collegiality and collaborative interactions.

• **Course Engagement**: Students are expected to appropriately engage in class activities/discussions.

• **Written Expression**: Students are expected to strive for a high level of written expression.

• **Initiative & Reliability**: Students will demonstrate initiative, reliability and dependability.

• **Responsiveness to Feedback**: Students will demonstrate evidence of motivation to improve themselves.

• **Compliance with Professional Requirements**: Students are expected to comply with the professional behaviors and conduct specified in the BSW and MSW policy, handbook, and field manuals.

• **Quality and Quantity of Work**: Students are expected to strive for high quality work and to meet assignment guidelines.

• **Professional Appearance**: Students will display professional appearance that does not interfere with professional relationships/responsibilities.

• **Critical Thinking Application**: Students will demonstrate an ability to comprehend information to complete tasks satisfactorily.

• **Stress Management**: Students are expected to recognize and manage current life stressors through appropriate self-care and supportive relationships with colleagues, peers and others.

• **Emotional and Mental Capacities**: Students will prevent personal and professional issues from impairing judgment and performance, and impacting professional responsibilities.

• **Professional Commitment**: Students will exhibit a commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics.
Official Communication with Students

George Mason University and the Department of Social Work use email to provide official information to students. All communication from the University, the Fairfax campus, and the Department of Social Work will be directed to the George Mason University email address only. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. Information regarding how to access your email and Blackboard can be found at http://www.gmu.edu/resources/students/.

All students are also expected to keep the Department of Social Work informed of their current phone number and mailing address. Every student is expected to check their Mason email account daily when school is in session, and weekly during vacations. The Department of Social Work will not keep track of students' personal email addresses.

Diversity Statement

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.
Office of Disability Services

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS (http://ods.gmu.edu).

University and Social Work Program Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be condoned in any form at George Mason University or in the Department of Social Work. This policy is part of the university effort to maintain a learning and work environment free from sexual harassment. While this problem can seriously affect all members of an educational community, sexual harassment can be particularly devastating for our student population. A sexual harassment experience can affect a student’s well-being, impair academic progress, and even inhibit the attainment of career goals. This problem can likewise affect employees and applicants for either employment or admissions to the university in the same manner. Therefore, George Mason University must move to eliminate this problem from our community.

Using the definitions of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the U.S. Department of education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), the university defines sexual harassment as follows: “Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute harassment when (1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s academic performance or employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions about academic evaluation, employment, promotion, transfer, selection for training, performance evaluation, or selection for academic awards or benefits, etc.; (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment or substantially interferes with a student’s academic or an employee’s work performance.”

Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy

George Mason University and the Department of Social Work are committed to a learning environment that supports tolerance and values diversity. The policy on equal opportunity and affirmative action is as follows:

George Mason University and the Department of Social Work are an equal opportunity and affirmative action institution and the Department is committed to the principle that access to study or employment opportunities afforded by the university and program, including all benefits and privileges, be accorded to each person—student, faculty, or staff—on the basis of individual merit and without regard to race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, veteran status, disability, sexual or political orientation, sex, or age (except where sex or age is a bona fide occupational qualification).
Student Requests for Academic Actions

All requests for academic actions, such as special permissions or exceptions to published academic regulations, must be submitted through the student’s advisor or the BSW Program Director. Request forms and instructions on how to initiate an academic action are available on the Registrar’s website: [http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/](http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/).

Office of the Ombudsman

The ombudsman is a neutral, independent, informal, and confidential person who listens to student academic concerns, provides advice and referrals, and helps students resolve academic conflicts. The ombudsman is an advocate for fairness and the equitable treatment of students and operates independently of all formal grievance processes at the university. Meetings with the ombudsman are confidential. The ombudsman does not overturn academic actions but may recommend academic policy changes, where appropriate. Please visit [http://ombudsman.gmu.edu/](http://ombudsman.gmu.edu/).
SOCIAL WORK AS A MAJOR

Generalist Practice

The BSW Program at George Mason University prepares students to enter the field of social work in generalist practice. Generalist practice involves a mastery and conceptual understanding of an ecological model of the interactions of individuals (micro), family and groups (mezzo), and communities, organizations and society (macro); competency in the use of interviewing, assessment, and intervention skills in promoting social change and empowering clients; and restoring, maintaining, and enhancing social functioning. Social work students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the National Association of Social Workers’ (NASW) professional code of ethics including delivery of appropriate services and responsiveness to diverse population groups.

Personal Requirements

- Commitment to working with people (including fellow students, clients, co-workers, faculty, and supervisors) and be able to assume a variety of tasks and responsibilities.
- Ability and willingness to make adjustments between your personal and professional life. Social work as a profession is not necessarily a 9-to-5 job, as people’s problems are unpredictable and may not occur during normal working hours.
- Ability to examine and understand your own biases and remain open to working with a variety of people and situations that may challenge these biases.
- Ability to handle criticism and use it for self-improvement; ability to be self-critical, open to change, adaptable, and flexible.
- Commitment to learning. The major requirements and course work are demanding, and each student is expected to keep current with all course requirements.

Despite the demands, the work is rewarding. The opportunity to work directly with clients in your SOCW 311 class and the senior field practicum allows you to experience some of the work that is involved in a social work career. These experiences in the field should be looked upon as an opportunity to closely examine whether this profession meets both your personal and career expectations.

If you have any reservations or doubts about your future as a social worker, these questions may help you decide whether social work is the appropriate career choice for you.
Is Social Work the Right Major for You?

- Do you find it difficult to participate in or lead class discussions?
- Do you find yourself incompatible with fellow social work students? (These will be your colleagues after you graduate.)
- Do you find it difficult to talk in front of a group?
- Do you have difficulty meeting deadlines or time constraints?
- Do you tend to procrastinate and not take your work seriously?
- Do you have strong personal biases about certain ethnic groups, personal or religious beliefs, or certain populations?
- If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you should discuss with your advisor your readiness to enter the social work field at this time.

General University Requirements

All Mason requirements are outlined in the University Catalog, which can be accessed online at [http://catalog.gmu.edu](http://catalog.gmu.edu). Forty-five credit hours of 300-level or above courses must be completed to graduate. Note: Required 300 and 400-level social work classes meet this requirement of 45 upper level credits. Students must have a total of 120 credits to graduate from the university. The BSW Program does not give college credit for previous work or life experiences.

ENGH 302 is required for all Mason students. Social Work students should register for the Social Sciences (SS) section. A student may test out of the course by submitting written papers to the English Department. Students wishing to test out of ENGH 302 should request the paperwork from the English Department, which cites the specific requirements for petitioning and exemption from ENGH 302. These will be reviewed for grammar, punctuation, and content by the English Department.

If a student is unfamiliar with the American Psychological Association’s (APA) style and formatting of writing, ENGH 302 is a necessity, and students should take this course as early as possible. All written work for social work classes should use the style and format specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition) unless otherwise specified by your instructor. The library and the bookstore have the *APA Manual of Style* (6th edition). This book is required for the BSW program.

Transfer Credits

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) and George Mason University have agreed to specific transfer of credits for those students who have successfully completed coursework at NOVA. All academic counselors/advisors at NOVA have
access to the social work transfer sheet which outlines the liberal arts courses that will transfer directly to George Mason University and will fulfill the liberal arts requirements for a major in social work. Transfer credits from other colleges and universities are evaluated for acceptance by the Registrar’s Office when a student is admitted to Mason.

Students may request that prior coursework be reviewed for potential credit beyond what is received in the initial transfer credit evaluation. The Transfer Credit Re-Evaluation Appeal form is available at http://admissions.gmu.edu/documents/transferCreditReEvalAppealForm.pdf. Complete the form, attach the catalog course description and syllabus to the form, and submit it to the corresponding Mason department to request a review. The faculty of that department will determine whether credit can be given for the course in question.

If a student feels that a social work course he or she has taken at another accredited undergraduate social work program meets the course requirements for one of the social work courses at Mason, the student may follow the same procedure and present the syllabus to the social work faculty for review. Every effort will be made to grant credit for course material already successfully completed. Field practicum credits may transfer as general electives, but are not accepted by the Social Work Program in lieu of field practicum requirements at Mason. The social work faculty will make a final decision about the appropriate content and level of a transfer social work course.

Prerequisites

English composition, English literature, biology, math, history, psychology, sociology, philosophy, religion, fine arts, communication, global understanding and computer science are all very important liberal arts prerequisites to the required social work courses. These courses should be taken in the student’s first two years and before beginning the social work classes.

ADMISSION TO MAJOR

Students interested in the social work field usually declare social work as a major when applying to the university, but declaring social work as a major does not automatically admit the student to the Social Work BSW Program. Students must be admitted to the major before being considered for senior field placement. The application to major is combined with the application for the senior field practicum and is typically due at the end of January (before the fall of the senior year).

- In order to be admitted to the social work program, students must:
  a. Have completed at least 45 credits with a cumulative GPA of 2.50 or higher;
  b. Have completed or be registered in BIOL 103, ENGH 101, SOCI 101, and PSYC 100;
c. Earned at least a C in SOCW 200, SOCW 357, SOCW 361, and at least two of the following courses (SOCW 311, SOCW 312, SOCW 375, SOCW 380, SOCW 390); and

d. be enrolled in all other required 300-level SOCW courses

- Students must be admitted to the major AND must complete all 300-level SOCW courses before beginning the senior field practicum. Students who do not complete all of the required SOCW courses with a C or better, will not be placed in the senior field practicum.

Students who do not have a 2.50 cumulative GPA at the time of application will have their application returned and are advised to reapply when the required GPA is attained. Students who have difficulty achieving a 2.50 GPA for admittance to the social work major should consider getting special tutoring or re-evaluate their decision to major in social work. Students should see their advisor to discuss academic plans. Students who have difficulty maintaining a 2.50 GPA once admitted to the major should see their advisor for academic support.

Although some students may be conditionally admitted to the major, the admission decision is contingent upon maintaining or achieving a 2.50 GPA by the end of the semester. Students not meeting this and all other requirements will not be admitted to major. There is no admission to major in the summer. Students who were unable to meet the required GPA of 2.50 for admission to major, but who are within the range of 2.40-2.49 and have completed all other requirements to be admitted to major, may be allowed to take courses during the first summer session only (Session A) in an effort to acquire the required GPA for admission of 2.50 and continuance into senior year. Students must provide two copies of written notification of their above intent: one copy to the BSW Program Director and one copy to their advisor.

The student's application for Admission to the Social Work Major will be reviewed by social work faculty members who will then recommend the action to be taken. The decision is based on the quality of academic and field performance as well as on personal performance for the profession of social work. The faculty may require a personal interview before a decision is made. The BSW faculty will evaluate student performance periodically and may require a student to withdraw from the program when, in their judgment, performance is not satisfactory.

Each student receives a letter informing him or her of the decision that has been reached. Questions should be brought to the attention of the BSW Program Director. A student may appeal a decision by submitting a written statement of appeal to the BSW Program Director. The appeal must be submitted within seven (7) working days of receipt of the denial of admission.
CURRICULUM & COURSE POLICIES

Course Sequencing

Since several of the Social Work courses are taught in sequence to one another, it is very important for you to understand the nature of the sequencing and to be sure that you register for courses in the proper order. Some courses are taught only in the fall semester. Other courses are taught only during the spring semester. You need to meet with your advisor to ensure that you have the appropriate course sequence and that you will meet all requirements by the deadlines. Non-adherence to recommended courses of study may delay the start of your senior field practicum. Please see course titles and prerequisites below. An advising worksheet with the recommended order of courses is provided in Appendix A.

Note: ALL 200 and 300-level Social Work courses must be completed before beginning the Senior Field Practicum.

Courses taught in **Fall** only:
- SOCW 357
- SOCW 361
- SOCW 452
- SOCW 453
- SOCW 471

Courses taught in **Spring** only:
- SOCW 358
- SOCW 362
- SOCW 390
- SOCW 454
- SOCW 456
- SOCW 472

Courses taught in **Fall** and **Spring** semesters:
- SOCW 200
- SOCW 311
- SOCW 312
- SOCW 375
- SOCW 380

(Typically, 2-3 social work electives are taught during the Fall and Spring semesters).

Summer Semester

A limited number of social work courses are taught in the summer. Course offerings change each summer so students should check the summer school class schedule when it becomes available.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits and Prerequisites</th>
<th>When to Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 200</td>
<td>Introduction to Social Work</td>
<td>3 credits No prerequisite</td>
<td>Freshman, sophomore, or first semester of junior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 311</td>
<td>Building Professional Social Work Skills</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td>Fall, junior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 312</td>
<td>Knowledge Building for Helping Professionals</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td>Spring, junior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 357</td>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200, SOCI 101, and PSYC 100</td>
<td>Fall, junior year Take with SOCW 357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 361</td>
<td>Lab: Methods of Social Work Intervention</td>
<td>2 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td>Fall, junior year Take with SOCW 357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 358</td>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention II</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 357 and SOCW 361</td>
<td>Spring, junior year Take with SOCW 358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 362</td>
<td>Lab: Methods of Social Work Intervention II</td>
<td>2 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200; SOCW 357; SOCW 361</td>
<td>Spring, junior year Take with SOCW 358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 375</td>
<td>Human Behavior and the Family Life Course</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200, BIOL 103, PSYC 100, and SOCI 101</td>
<td>Fall or spring, junior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 380</td>
<td>Changing Social Policies and Systems</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td>Fall or spring, junior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 390</td>
<td>Analytic Methods for Social Work Research</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td>Spring, junior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 452</td>
<td>Senior Seminar I</td>
<td>2 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200, 311, 312, 357, 361, 358, 362, 375, and 380 and recommendation of faculty</td>
<td>Fall, senior year Take with SOCW 453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 453</td>
<td>Senior Practicum I</td>
<td>3 credits Prerequisites: SOCW 200, 311, 312, 357, 361, 358, 362, 375, and 380 and recommendation of faculty</td>
<td>Fall, senior year Take with SOCW 452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Number</td>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Credits and Prerequisites</td>
<td>When to Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 471</td>
<td>Research in Social Work</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Fall, senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200; SOCW 312; ENGH 302;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Corequisites: SOCW 452; SOCW 453; Statistics (SOCW 390, STAT 250, SOCI 313, PSYC 300)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 454</td>
<td>Senior Seminar II</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
<td>Spring, senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 452, 453, 471</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 456</td>
<td>Senior Practicum II</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Spring, senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 452, 453, 471</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 472</td>
<td>Integrative Methods in Social Action and</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Spring, senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td>Social Change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 452, SOCW 453, and SOCW 471</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 400-level</td>
<td>Social Work Electives</td>
<td>6 credits (2 courses are required)</td>
<td>Each semester, 2-3 Social Work electives are offered on a rotating basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Synthesis Course**

The University requires that all students successfully complete a University approved synthesis course. SOCW 375 (Human Behavior and the Family Life Course) has been designated a synthesis course and can be taken by students in any major.

**Course Syllabi**

Students are responsible for accessing course syllabi prior to the start of classes. Instructors will post the course syllabus prior to the beginning of class on the Blackboard site of your course. Students who prefer a paper copy of the syllabus may request one from the Department of Social Work.

**Class Attendance**

Class attendance in the Social Work Program is required. Social work education depends heavily on the processing of information, interactions with others, and the application and practice of professional skills. Students who miss class will miss crucial opportunities that cannot be compensated for by copying a classmate’s notes or reading the book. Common courtesy suggests that students who must miss or be tardy to a
class notify their instructors ahead of time. It is the responsibility of the student to find out what he or she missed when absent, and to make up any outstanding class work. In the BSW Program, students can be penalized for unexcused absences. The following statement or something similar will appear on each syllabus:

*Students are expected to come to every class and to participate fully. The BSW program director will be notified whenever a student has more than 2 unexcused absences.*

**Late Papers, Late Exams, and Incompletes**

All assignments are expected to be submitted by the due date and time specified in the syllabus. The BSW Program policy for late assignments is a 10-point deduction if received within one week of the due date. Any work submitted after one week will not be accepted or graded. If you are aware of circumstances that may inhibit your ability to submit an assignment on time, discuss your situation with your instructor immediately. Exceptions to due dates are rare and are at the sole discretion of the instructor. Exams must be taken on the date scheduled. Anticipated conflicts should be shared with the instructor as soon as they are known, so that alternate arrangements can be made. Rescheduling of exams is at the discretion of the instructor.

**A student must ask for a grade of Incomplete, and a faculty member may assign an Incomplete in the following cases:**

Student has not completed the required field work hours and is expected to be able to complete the assignment by the end of the 9th week of the following academic semester, and/or due to serious extenuating circumstances, the student is not able to take the final examination or complete a major project by the due date.

Both faculty and student must sign the Contract for Completing an Incomplete. A copy of the form can be obtained in the Department.

**Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from Social Work Classes**

Each semester’s *Schedule of Classes* includes a calendar that specifies the deadlines for adding and dropping courses, and withdrawing from the University. Typically, the deadline for adding and dropping a course (without tuition penalty) is 7 days after the start of each semester. Please check the Registrar’s website for specific deadlines. To drop or add a course during this timeframe, access your schedule via the Mason Patriot Web system. Students must be officially registered for a course in order to receive credit. Likewise, a course will remain on the student’s official transcript unless the course is dropped within the university timelines. Withdrawal from a course after the deadline – or withdrawal from the entire semester – may be granted by the Department Chair and the Dean’s Office only for non-academic reasons. Your faculty advisor can assist you with this process.
**Audiorecording in Classes**

Out of courtesy and respect to your classmates and your professors, please ask for permission before recording lectures or discussions. At times, discussions in social work classes may cover sensitive material, and students and professors have the right to know if they are being recorded. Please discuss any concerns you have with your professor.

**Grading Policy**

The BSW program has a grading scale that is used by all instructors. Grades are assigned according to the following numerical breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>58-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>69-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79-81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opportunities for extra credit are only offered to the entire class, not individuals, and are up to the discretion of the instructor.

**Working in Groups**

Many of the social work classes use small groups as a vehicle for learning. Small groups provide an opportunity for working with fellow students on a joint learning project. This sometimes makes accomplishing the task more efficient and the finished project more comprehensive. However, when one or more students do not carry out their share of the responsibilities, it creates conflict and controversy within the group. Nonetheless, the experience teaches tact, diplomacy, patience, stress management, respect for others, and similar skills that are useful in working in teams in the profession, and translate well to life experiences. Students need to learn to be team players and groups offer this opportunity. Some good strategies for working in groups include the following:

- Assign tasks and responsibilities to each individual at the initial group meeting. Be clear as to what the expectations are of each individual group member. Phone numbers and email addresses should be exchanged during the initial meeting.
- Give members warning if you feel they are not meeting their responsibilities.
- Let the professor know when a group member continues to be unresponsive and/or irresponsible.
- When asked by the professor to grade the performance of fellow students within the group, be fair, but firm.
- Confronting someone about his or her failure to be responsible must be handled
delicately, and the student who is confronted has to accept criticism in the constructive manner in which it is intended.

- Letting a fellow student’s failures slide is not doing yourself, your group, and his/her future clients any favors.
- Try to focus on the positive points of each member, and remember to give praise when praise is due. Not every student can present well, nor can every student write well, but every group member brings a uniqueness to the composition of the group. When assigning tasks within the group, make use of everyone’s talents.

**SERVICE LEARNING AND FIELD EDUCATION**

All social work students are given the opportunity to integrate classroom knowledge with hands-on experience in agency settings. In the interest of attaining a social work degree, students should seek a variety of field experiences when considering placements. Both the junior service-learning experience (in SOCW 311) and the senior field practicum experience are rewarding, yet demanding, especially the senior-level practicum that makes outside employment difficult. If the student must work, this should be discussed with the student’s advisor. Field placements require a schedule that may not conform to academic holidays. If a student is employed (or has been employed) in a social service setting, has done volunteer work at an agency, has been a client at a social service agency, or has another relationship with staff at the agency that may present a conflict of interest, that particular agency or organization cannot be used as a junior service-learning experience or senior field practicum site.

If you do not have a current resume, you should begin to work on it as soon as possible and continue to update and improve it on an ongoing basis. You will need to have a professional and polished version by the time you apply for the Senior Field Practicum. University Career Services has several resources to assist you with creating a resume, preparing for interviews, and other career advice: [http://careers.gmu.edu/resources/](http://careers.gmu.edu/resources/).

**Junior Service-Learning Experience**

All Social Work majors are required to take SOCW 311, *Building Professional Social Work Skills*, which has as a course requirement a minimum of 40 hours of service-learning experience (3 credits). The service-learning experience will allow the student to gain exposure to a human services setting with the purpose of improving interpersonal and communication skills within a social work framework.

**Senior Field Practicum**

Students must complete the Admission to Major and Senior Field Practicum Application. You will be notified by email at the end of the fall semester or beginning of the spring semester if you are eligible to apply. This application determines student readiness for
field work and explores various senior practicum options based on previous field and life experiences. Student input on the application is considered when making the field practicum assignment. The student should expect to hear from the Social Work program regarding the senior field practicum during the summer before beginning the senior field practicum. The student should then set up an appointment to interview with the agency. The student has the option of conferring with the Director of Field Education should any concerns arise. The agency has the option of accepting or not accepting the student.

The student is only permitted to go to two interviews at two agencies or organizations. If a student is denied placement due to student reasons, two different times, the student will be terminated from the program. Please note that the field application for the senior-level practicum is a separate application process from the Application to Major. You must be admitted to the major first before you can begin your senior field practicum.

Appendix B gives examples of questions students should pose during their interviews for field placement.

**SOCW 452 and 454 - 2 semesters, 4 credits total**
Students participate in a senior seminar once a week with their field liaison who facilitates the integration of classroom teaching and field practicum experience.

**SOCW 453 and 456 - 2 semesters, 6 credits total**
Working a minimum of 16 hours per week in a community agency. Learning is provided through supervision on site with a designated field instructor, active participation in service delivery and/or administration, and interaction with client systems.

**Immunizations and Fees**
All students who are enrolled in a course involving a field placement (SOCW 453 and SOCW 456) must have an annual tuberculosis screening (PPD) and the entire hepatitis B immunization series in accordance with U.S. Public Health Service recommendations. The hepatitis B series takes about 7 months to complete and is a lifetime immunization; you should begin the immunization process when you are enrolled in SOCW 311. The cost of the immunizations is the responsibility of the student. The majority of agencies used for field placements require fingerprinting, a criminal background check (may be more extensive than the university requirement), and/or a child protective services check. Any cost related to these requirements is also the responsibility of the student.

**Criminal Background Policy**
All social work students entering the junior or senior practicum are expected to notify the Director of Field Education of criminal charges which will be reflected in criminal background checks. Virginia State Criminal Code section *63.2-1719 identifies a list of “barrier crimes” which preclude students and employees from working in a number of
specific settings. Prior to beginning the placement process, students with prior convictions must provide a complete official copy of any and all convictions (i.e., rap sheet), and sign a consent form that allows the Director of Field Education to share information with appropriate field education faculty and prospective field instructors. Students should be prepared to discuss this with a prospective agency. Failure to comply with this policy or to sign a consent form for release of this information may result in the student being unable to receive a placement. Providing incorrect information on applications is considered application fraud and an honor code violation, and may lead to a student not being able to be placed in an agency. Students with a criminal history should understand that some agencies are unwilling and unable to host and supervise such students.

Depending on the specific charge, a student with a criminal history could find it difficult to obtain a field placement or employment in a human service agency. It is possible that a student with a criminal background would not be able to be placed in a field practicum or complete their degree program.

Grievance Procedures

The faculty recognizes that at times there may be a problem that is not easily solved, so the following grievance procedures have been instituted:

1. The aggrieved person, in most cases, should discuss the issue with the person they have a grievance against, whether student, faculty, or field instructor.

2. If the issue is unresolved at this level, the aggrieved person may, but is not required to, discuss this grievance with a student ombudsperson chosen by the student organization.

3. If the grievance is still unresolved, the aggrieved person should discuss the issue with their academic advisor.

4. If the grievance is still unresolved, the aggrieved person should discuss the issue with the BSW Program Director. Grievances related to field practicum should be discussed with the Director of Field Education prior to bringing the matter to the attention of the BSW Program Director.

5. If the grievance is still unresolved, the issue can go to the university ombudsman or to a grievance committee, which is selected by the following procedures:
   - The aggrieved person selects a member for the grievance committee.
   - The person who has the grievance filed against them selects a person for the grievance committee.
   - The Department Chair selects a grievance committee of three faculty members, according to university policy.
   - The grievance committee presents recommendations to the Department Chair.
• The Department Chair studies the recommendations in relation to existing administrative policies and procedures and issues a decision (see University catalog, Appeals Policies chapter).

6. If the issues are still not resolved, students may make an appeal to the Dean, College of Health and Human Services (See CHHS Appeals Process). Please note that students may not take their appeal to the college until every attempt has been made to resolve the grievance in the Department of Social Work, following the steps outlined above.

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

Consistent with policies and standards of George Mason University, the Department of Social Work supports and enforces the George Mason University Drug and Alcohol Policy. Students are expected to review and comply with the Mason Drug and Alcohol Policy and the Department of Social Work Policy in their entirety.

*The abuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the campus community is not compatible with the goals of the university. Mason attempts to prepare individuals to act responsibly by defining standards of behavior and providing educational programs to create an awareness of drug and alcohol related problems.*

Use and/or possession of illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia are prohibited on the campuses of George Mason University. Violation of this community standard will be considered a serious offense. Implementation of this policy will be in accord with established university procedures as contained in the University Judicial Code.

The University Police will enforce all applicable local, state, and federal laws in accordance with established standing orders, procedures, and guidelines.

There will be a university judicial review of all reports of drug offenses occurring on campus. Action under the University Judicial Code will neither prejudice nor be prejudiced by action taken either in the criminal justice system or by the management of University Housing.

Any student found responsible for a violation of law or regulation involving illegal drugs may, at the discretion of the hearing officer, be required to undergo an evaluation administered by personnel of the University’s Office of Alcohol, Drug and Health Education prior to re-admittance to the University.

*George Mason University and the Department of Social Work consider alcohol and drug use (illicit or prescription drug abuse) a serious offense. The legal and health consequences of such actions to students or those in close proximity warrant immediate actions to prevent personal harm or harm to others.*
Drug-Free Departmental Policy

George Mason University’s Department of Social Work is committed to protecting the safety, health, and well-being of all students enrolled in the program and who are engaged in a field practicum experience. We recognize that alcohol abuse and illicit drug use pose a significant threat to our goals of preparing students for professional practice. We have established a drug-free workplace/practicum policy that balances our respect for individual students, clients and agencies with the need to protect against alcohol and drug use violations of university and agency policy. This policy applies to all students enrolled in a Department of Social Work class and/or involved in a practicum or community based learning experience within an organizational setting, as a part of a course representing George Mason University.

Social Work students are expected not to be under the influence of any illegal substance or any substance that impairs their ability to perform within the University and practicum environment. The Department of Social Work encourages students to voluntarily seek help with drug and alcohol problems from the appropriate professionals, using on-campus or off-campus resources.

Prohibited Behavior

It is a violation of our drug-free practicum policy to use, abuse, possess, sell, trade, and/or offer for sale alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants while enrolled in a practicum or community based learning experience. This includes over-the-counter prescription drugs that impair functioning. Students who fail a drug test as a condition of applying for or continuing in an agency practicum or community-based learning experience must immediately advise the Director of Field Education. As a condition for consideration of continuance in the program, students will need to sign a release of information to share the results of any failed drug tests with the Director of Field Education. Failure to do so will result in termination from the program.

Consequences

One of the goals of our drug-free practicum policy is to encourage students to voluntarily seek help with alcohol and/or drug problems. If, however, an individual violates the policy, the consequences are serious. Students may be subject to university judicial review and can be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

If a student violates the drug-free practicum policy, they will be withdrawn and terminated immediately from the practicum placement and the Department of Social Work. The student may reapply after one year and must successfully pass a pre-practicum evaluation that will include.
• Evidence of treatment to address drug/alcohol use, with documentation from providers.
• At least three clean drug tests, with the last one being no more than two weeks prior to re-admittance into a practicum experience.
• If criminal charges have been made, students must bring official documents detailing the status of the adjudication. If a felony charge has been made, the criminal background policy described in this manual will apply.

If a student violates the policy, he or she will be subject to simultaneous disciplinary action in both the Department of Social Work and the University (under current Mason Drug and Alcohol Policy) and may be required to enter rehabilitation. If a student fails to successfully complete rehabilitation, and/or repeatedly violates the policy, or fails to meet the terms of the pre-practicum evaluation (described above) he/she will be terminated from the Social Work major. Nothing in this policy prohibits the student from being disciplined or discharged for other violations within the agency, within the University, or through local law enforcement. Non-compliance with any remediation plan developed to assist the student will result in termination from the Department of Social Work.

**Assistance**

The Department of Social Work recognizes that alcohol and drug abuse and addiction are treatable illnesses. We also realize that early intervention and support improve the success of rehabilitation: Students are encouraged to self-identify if they are having problems with using drugs or alcohol. They should receive help from qualified professionals to assess the seriousness of suspected drug or alcohol problems and identify appropriate sources of help. Serving clients while impaired is a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics. CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) and WAVES (Wellness, Alcohol, and Violence Education and Services) on campus are also resources.

**STUDENT STATUS REVIEW**

Following receipt of notice of termination from the BSW Program, if a student can demonstrate that due process was not followed, the student may ask the Department Chair in writing to call a Student Status Review Committee (SSRC) to review the process. The purpose of the SSRC is to ensure that due process was given. Due process involves a determination of whether the departmental procedures and policies have been followed leading to a decision to terminate a student from the program. Requests for review by the SSRC must be made by the student directly to the Department Chair:
• The Department Chair will appoint two social work faculty members and a faculty member from the College of Health and Human Services to form a committee to review the procedures followed by the department and determine if due process was afforded to the student.

• The committee will send a recommendation to the Department Chair, who will make the final decision regarding due process and notify the student in writing of that decision.

• If the committee and the Department Chair concur that due process was followed, the termination decision will remain. However, if the committee and/or Department Chair find that due process was not followed, the Department Chair will take appropriate action to reassess the original termination decision in order for a student to be afforded due process.

• Students who desire to appeal the Departmental decision may follow the procedures outlined in the University catalog for appealing a decision made by the department.

Policy for Terminating BSW Students from the Social Work Program

(Please check the social work website for the latest update to this policy and the other policies discussed within this handbook: http://socialwork.gmu.edu).

To maintain the academic integrity of the program and to prepare quality social work practitioners, students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic performance levels and adhere to standards of professional behavior. Students who are unable to meet performance or behavioral standards will be terminated from the social work program. Grounds for termination include but are not limited to the following:

• The student fails to maintain the minimum grade point average (GPA) necessary to matriculate in the university (BSW Program).

• The student does not have the minimum 2.50 GPA for admission into the social work major. Students without the minimum GPA are not permitted to continue into the senior-level social work courses (please see University Catalog).

• Unsatisfactory field performance after repeating SOCW 453 or 456 no more than once and receiving a grade of Unsatisfactory.

• If a student interviews with an agency identified by the field director and the student is not accepted for placement due to student factors, the Director of Field Education may consider a second placement for the student. If the student interviews for a second placement and is not accepted for placement again due to student factors the field director will not seek a third placement for the student.

• The student is convicted of a felony during the educational program.

• The student uses, abuses, possesses, sells, trades, and/or offers for sale
alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants while in the classroom or enrolled in a practicum or community based learning experience. This includes over-the-counter prescription drugs that impair functioning.

- The student engages in sexual or otherwise proven misconduct with a client.
- Problematic behavior that impairs the student’s ability to maintain classroom or practicum roles.
- The student falsifies program or agency documents.
- The student violates a University policy (Honor Code, Sexual Harassment, Substance Abuse, etc.), resulting in suspension.
- The student fails or refuses to comply with remediation plans generated by the faculty in concert with the student.
- The student violates the NASW Code of Ethics.
- The student fails to comply with the criminal background policy. This policy requires that students, who have ever been convicted of a felony or failed a criminal background or drug test at their field agency, must sign release of information forms and provide them to the Director of Field Education.

The procedures for termination are as follows:

- The referring faculty member notifies the student and the Program Director (BSW or MSW) in writing of the behavior(s) that is grounds for termination. If the Program Director is the faculty member who is terminating the student, a second faculty member will be asked to consider the case of termination if the student requests an appointment in writing.
- The student can request an appointment in writing with the referring faculty member and the director of the program within 7 days of notification of intent to terminate the student from the social work program. The director of the program has 7 days from the receipt of the student’s written request to respond to the student. The student must provide a written statement explaining why he/she should not be terminated.
- If after hearing the student’s case, the referring faculty member and the Program Director determine that termination is not necessary, a remediation plan will be implemented (see #11 above). If the director of the program and the referring faculty determine that the student should be terminated the procedure follows below.
- The Program Director will inform the Department Chair of the outcome in writing within 7 days of the meeting. The student will receive a letter from the Department Chair verifying the outcome within 7 days of notification from the Program Director.
- If the student disagrees with the decision the student may follow the university appeals procedures.
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Attendance and Tardiness (Reiterated)

As part of your professional responsibility, you are expected to attend class, be on time, and stay for the duration of the class. Absences, tardiness, and early departure from class may result in poor class performance and are a poor reflection of professionalism. Exams are based in part on class material. Since many of the skills you will develop are taught and practiced in class, your presence is essential. You will not be able to recover lost experiences by reading someone else’s notes.

Recommendations for Graduate School or Employment

Before listing a faculty member as a reference, you must first check with the faculty member to determine if he or she is willing to provide a reference. If a faculty member agrees to write a reference letter, be sure to provide all appropriate forms, instructions, and a stamped envelope. Please be sure to give your recommender enough time (e.g., 3-4 weeks) in order to be respectful of his/her time.

Professional Affiliations

Students are encouraged to join the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), which is the professional organization that addresses the needs of social workers. There are three chapters in the DC metropolitan area: the Virginia Chapter, Metro Chapter (Washington, D.C.), and Maryland Chapter. When you join NASW you will be assigned to a chapter based on your preferred mailing address. Students are given the opportunity to affiliate with the chapter in their home state or in the state where their school is located. Applications for NASW can be found online at https://www.socialworkers.org/online-join/join.aspx. The cost for joining NASW is reduced for students. NASW provides identification with the profession, ongoing continuing education, networking with other social workers, legislative advocacy for the profession, liability insurance for students and professionals, a journal, and numerous other services.

Professional Ethics

Students are expected to read and abide by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (see http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp). Violation of the NASW Code of Ethics is grounds for dismissal from the program.
Conflict of Interest Policy

The intent of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to ensure students the most objective learning environment, including evaluation of student performance in the practicum setting. Students are required to sign a conflict of interest statement before beginning their service-learning experience or field practicum. Students should not undertake a service-learning or field practicum experience in an agency where prior relationships exist. Prior relationships exist if a student is a former or current client of the agency, is a former or present employee of the agency, is a current or former volunteer at the agency, or has relatives or other close prior relationships with someone on staff at the practicum agency. Students are expected to immediately notify their classroom instructor and/or the Director of Field Education if such a relationship exists in placements being considered by the student (junior level) or offered by the Director of Field Education (senior practicum).

STUDENT LIFE

Social Work Student Association (SWSA)

The Social Work Student Association has been a vital part of bringing unity to the social work student body. In the past, the SWSA has conducted fundraisers to assist community groups, organized events to educate others about social work issues, and has established a student scholarship fund. The SWSA works to bring social work students together socially and provides students with mutual assistance in the field and classroom.

The leadership of the SWSA works to schedule meetings in order to accommodate both junior and senior schedules. Meetings may include speakers from area graduate schools, interesting community programs, and topics of special interest. Efforts are made to be responsive to student concerns, including forming study groups, sharing information about field placements, contacting alumni, and guiding sophomores, juniors, and seniors regarding department and course expectations. A representative from the SWSA is invited to attend regularly scheduled faculty meetings. All students are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in the Social Work Student Association. Election of officers takes place in the spring of each year. For more details about the SWSA, please contact Prof. Kathy Prudden and Dr. Cathy Tompkins, SWSA faculty advisors for the 2015-16 academic year.

Honor Societies

For students who excel academically, there are several honor societies to which they can apply for membership, such as Golden Key, Alpha Chi, and Phi Alpha, the Social Work Honor Society. A chapter of Phi Alpha, the Social Work Honor Society, was
established in 1990 and students have been inducted since its inception. An overall GPA of 3.50 is required to be invited to join this honor society. An invitation for membership is extended to students who qualify academically in May of the year the student will graduate. Students are encouraged to join these honor societies as they enhance their applications to graduate school and employment opportunities.

The John J. Hughes Scholarship

The John J. Hughes Scholarship was established in memory of the professor who began the Social Work Program at Mason. He was committed to helping those who demonstrated academic achievement, as well as those who overcame difficult odds in their lives but persevered in seeking to achieve their goals. An announcement about the application deadline will be sent through email. The recipient is selected on the basis of these criteria:

- Academic achievement
- Financial need
- Statement explaining the obstacles the student has overcome
- Statement explaining one achievement or contribution of which the student is most proud
CAMPUS RESOURCES

Many resources to augment a student’s college experience are available at Mason. For a complete listing of all resources, please refer to the website. Listed below are some of the resources most frequently used by students:

**Peer Empowerment Program**: SUB 1, Room 1400; 703-993-2377; [http://pep.gmu.edu/](http://pep.gmu.edu/)

**University Career Services**: SUB 1, Room 3400; 703-993-2370; [http://careers.gmu.edu/](http://careers.gmu.edu/)

**IT Services for Students**: [http://itservices.gmu.edu/services/services-students.cfm](http://itservices.gmu.edu/services/services-students.cfm)

**Student Financial Aid**: SUB 1, 1st floor; 703-993-2353; [http://financialaid.gmu.edu/](http://financialaid.gmu.edu/)

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**: SUB 1, Room 3129; 703-993-2380; [http://caps.gmu.edu/](http://caps.gmu.edu/)

**Student Health Services**: SUB 1, Room 2300; 703-993-2831; [http://shs.gmu.edu/](http://shs.gmu.edu/)

**Learning Services**: SUB 1, Room 3129; 703-993-2999; [http://caps.gmu.edu/learning-services/](http://caps.gmu.edu/learning-services/)

**Writing Center**: Robinson Hall A114; 703-993-1200; [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/)

**Office of Disability Services (ODS)**: SUB I, Room 2500, 703-993-2474; [http://ods.gmu.edu/](http://ods.gmu.edu/). If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please contact ODS.

**Libraries**

Students should be aware that there are libraries other than George Mason University’s Fenwick Library ([http://library.gmu.edu/](http://library.gmu.edu/)) and Johnson Center Library in the Washington metropolitan area that assist in finding appropriate resources for social work courses. The Catholic University of America, American University, and the Library of Congress, among others, are excellent resource centers.

American University  
Gallaudet University  
George Washington University  
Georgetown University  
Howard University  

Library of Congress  
NIH/NIMH  
University of the District of Columbia  
University of Maryland
AFTER GRADUATION

Employment

The BSW degree is considered the first professional degree in many agency settings. Many jurisdictions require that social workers be licensed before they can be employed, as is true in Washington, D.C., and Maryland. Virginia continues to have optional licensing. Be sure to investigate state licensing requirements. Personal references from social work professors are invaluable in acquiring professional positions in the field of social work. Students should keep this in mind while pursuing the social work major.

Graduate School

Students who wish to continue their studies in graduate school should apply early, especially if they are interested in advanced standing. Students should check and re-check to ensure that they have completed all the necessary requirements for application to graduate school and that all materials have been received by the graduate school(s) to which application is made. Students are advised to allow professors, agency supervisors, field liaisons, and advisors ample time to complete a letter of recommendation to the graduate school. Most advisors and professors are asked to write letters for more than one student. Out of courtesy, please provide your recommender with a packet that includes the signed release on the form for the recommendation letter, your most recent resume, and a brief statement about your career interests and plans for further study. If you are asking for multiple letters of recommendation from the same person, provide a cover sheet with the names of the schools, addresses, and deadline for the recommendation. Please be sure to give your recommender enough time (e.g., 3-4 weeks) in order to be respectful of his/her time.

Advanced Standing

Advanced standing may be an option for students who have completed the BSW in Social Work with a minimum 3.2 GPA for the last 60 credits and are recommended by the Social Work Program (check the requirements of each specific graduate school). The general guidelines used by faculty to recommend students for advanced standing include outstanding academic and professional performance in class and field work; ability to analyze and conceptualize the social work process; potential for successful MSW practice with the equivalent of one year of full-time study in the MSW program; and emotional maturity. Students should also note that advanced standing in a graduate school is not guaranteed even if all the school’s requirements have been met. Advanced standing usually means that the MSW can be completed in one academic year rather than two years, but check the school’s specific waiver.
TIPS & TRICKS

Here are some “tips and tricks” to help you survive – and thrive – in the BSW Program.

Get organized. Print a copy of each course syllabus and keep it with you. Track assignment due dates in your date book, on your online calendar (if you use one), and on your fridge at home.

Do the reading. Instructors expect students to have completed the readings assigned for each class. Check to see if recommended readings are on e-reserve before you rush out and buy them. If you find you do need to purchase them, try Amazon or other online book sellers. They may also have the best prices for required texts.

Start early. Start research for your papers immediately. Just settling on a topic often requires a fair amount of reading. Purchase APA formatting software. Use the library online databases, especially ProQuest, Psych Info, JSTOR, Social Work Abstracts, and Expanded ASAP. Don’t be shy about asking the reference librarians for help.

Develop expertise. If you have an interest in a particular topic, find opportunities to learn about it through classroom assignments, term papers, or outside events. Take control of your learning and build a knowledge base.

Ask questions. Don’t hesitate to ask questions in class, especially if the instructions for an assignment are unclear to you. Often your classmates have the same questions, but are reluctant to ask. If you’ve asked in class and are still uncertain, approach or email your instructor. They’ll be more than happy to clarify.

Keep copies. Keep a copy of everything you produce: your research notes, sources, personal contacts, assignments, and papers. You may want them again even when a particular course is finished. Rubbermaid containers work well!

Make the most of your junior service-learning experience and field practicum. Make a good first impression, ask questions, be on time, show initiative, and work hard. Even if it’s not your dream placement, it may be a blessing in disguise. Try to meet agency staff who are outside your team or department. Tag along to meetings whenever possible and request permission to attend outside events that could enhance your experience. If you are bored, volunteer for additional responsibility. Maintain an open channel of communication with your field instructor. Notify your field liaison or classroom instructor promptly if you experience any significant problems.
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY/STAFF PROFILES

Full-Time Faculty

Carol Cleaveland, Ph.D., M.S.S., Associate Professor
ccleavel@gmu.edu; 703.993.2597

Dr. Cleaveland, who joined the faculty in the fall of 2007, teaches courses in social policy, immigration and in community clinical practice. Her research focus is immigration, with particular interest in human smuggling of migrants from Central America and Mexico. Using ethnographic and other qualitative methods, she has been seeking to understand the processes of becoming an immigrant. Dr. Cleaveland began studying immigration in 2004, with an ethnographic study of Mexican day laborers in New Jersey. Her previous research was a longitudinal study of women in Philadelphia who had been forced off welfare and into the low-wage labor sector. She has published in both social work and interdisciplinary social science journals. She has been a social work practitioner in clinical settings since 1994, having earned both her PhD (2002) and MSS from Bryn Mawr College, where she received the Hathaway award for academic excellence. Prior to entering graduate school, she was a newspaper reporter. She has a BA (1980) in political science/print journalism from American University.

Valerie C. Cuffee, M.S.W., L.C.S.W., C.P.M., Instructor
vcuffee@gmu.edu; 703.993.2024

Professor Cuffee joined the full-time faculty in 2013. She has taught courses in the Direct Clinical Practice series, Communication and Technology, Organizational Leadership, and Social Policy. She has extensive administrative experiences developing, directing, leading and evaluating behavioral health, child welfare, domestic violence, intellectual and developmental disability, and substance abuse services for children and their families at the local and state levels. She also has extensive experiences building community coalitions and providing direct services. Professor Cuffee continues to serve on boards and committees addressing child and family issues. She is a graduate of Hampton University (BA, Psychology) and Norfolk State University (MSW). Professor Cuffee has been licensed to practice clinical social work in the Commonwealth of Virginia since 1993 and she received certification in 2000 from The George Washington University to practice as a public manager (CPM).

Molly Everett Davis, Ed.D., M.S.W., Associate Professor & Associate Field Director
mdavi7@gmu.edu; 703.993.2028

Dr. Davis is an experienced faculty member and Associate Field Director. Her research and writing interests are broad and include mental health policy, gerontology,
intergenerational practice, prevention, social work and technology, cultural competency, personal safety risk management and youth suicide prevention. She has an extensive background in building community coalitions and advocacy. Dr. Davis serves on numerous boards and committees. She is a graduate of Louisiana State University (BA, Psychology), Tulane University (MSW), and Florida State University (Ed.D., Higher Education Administration).

Sharolyn Dugger, M.S.W., L.M.S.W., Director of Field Education
sdugger@gmu.edu; 703.993.6044

Sharolyn Dugger joined the GMU Social Work faculty in 2015 as the Field Education Director. She received her MSW from the University of Kansas and practiced community social work for 13 years. She served in the non-profit sector of children and families, child welfare and developmental disabilities. She was the Associate Director of Field Education for the University of Kansas prior to joining George Mason University.

Karen D. Guillory, M.S.W., LICSW, LCSW-C, Instructor

Professor Guillory brings a wealth of teaching, training, clinical and research experience to George Mason University. Professor Guillory has worked in various areas of social work including forensics, outpatient mental health, school mental health, child welfare, and homeless services. She is a licensed clinical social worker in the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland. Professor Guillory has a specialization in the area of trauma and trauma treatment. She served as a member of a federal committee on trauma informed care and was invited to participate on a national committee on trauma-informed services. She worked as a Director of Women's Trauma and Forensics Team and as a Trauma Training Coordinator. In addition, she has worked on several trauma research projects and grants. Professor Guillory has conducted numerous workshops in the community, schools, government, and private agencies on trauma, vicarious traumatization, and various other topics related to mental health and co-occurring disorders. She co-wrote a trauma intervention which has been implemented in various agencies locally and nationally. She has served as visiting professor, lecturer, and adjunct professor in social work and sociology. Professor Guillory’s research interests include poly-trauma and cumulative trauma, women’s health, health and mental health care disparities, and culturally competent mental health treatment. Professor Guillory received her BA in psychology from California State University, East Bay and her MSW from California State University, Sacramento. She is completing her PhD in Sociology at Howard University with a specialization in medical sociology and criminology. She earned certificates in Trauma Treatment and Child and Adolescent Treatment from the University of Maryland School of Social Work Continuing Professional Education.
Emily S. Ihara, Ph.D., M.S.W., Associate Professor & BSW Program Director

eihara@gmu.edu; 703.993.2023

Dr. Ihara joined the faculty in the fall of 2006 and teaches courses on social policy and social justice, the social determinants of health, human rights, and ethics. Her research focuses on social determinants of health inequities across the life course, particularly for older adults, racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations. An overarching goal of her research is to inform the development of contextually-relevant policies and services for non-dominant populations using the social determinants of health framework. Current research projects include examining the effects of music and creative arts interventions on the health and well-being of older adults with dementia; integrating systems science methods that may be used as tools to forecast and test levers that affect system outcomes; and investigating dialysis patient experiences with different dialysis modalities. Dr. Ihara has worked as a researcher and policy analyst for various organizations and brings her extensive social work clinical experience in health and mental health arenas to her understanding of research and policy. Dr. Ihara is a graduate of UC Berkeley (A.B.), UCLA (M.S.W.), and the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University (Ph.D., M.A.).

Megumi Inoue, Ph.D., M.S.W., R.N., Assistant Professor

minoue2@gmu.edu; 703.993.2737

Dr. Inoue joined the faculty in the fall of 2014. Her research focuses on health and aging, and she is particularly interested in end-of-life issues and patients’ autonomy in health care settings. She is currently conducting research on the procedures for administering advance directives in Medicare and Medicaid-funded institutions. Dr. Inoue teaches Clinical Practice with Older Adults, Death & Dying, Research in Social Work, and Advanced Research in Social Work. Dr. Inoue received her Ph.D. in Social Work from Boston College, and her MSW from Washington University in St. Louis. Prior to coming to George Mason University, she worked as a social worker at a Japanese social service agency in Boston for three years while she was earning her doctoral degree. She also has twelve year practice experience as a registered nurse in Japan.

Vicki Kirsch, Ph.D., M.S.W., L.C.S.W., MSW Program Director & Assistant Professor

vkirsch@gmu.edu; 703.993.2897

Dr. Kirsch joined the faculty in 2010 and has a focus in trauma and recovery as well as issues of spirituality and sexuality. Prior to coming to GMU, Dr. Kirsch was Head of Training at the Counseling Center at Wheelock College, Teaching Associate in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and Clinical Coordinator at the Center for Women’s Development focusing on Trauma and Eating Disorders at Arbour-HRI Hospital. She previously held faculty positions at Emory University, the College of William and Mary, and at Goddard College. Dr. Kirsch is the faculty practice professor and in addition to a clinical social work practice focusing on a relational approach
offering EMDR and DBT to trauma survivors, works with the transgender population in the Northern Virginia area. Dr. Kirsch received her Ph.D. (Women’s Studies) from Emory University, her MSW (Clinical Practice) from Boston University, her MA (History of Religions/Sanskrit) from the Divinity School of the University Chicago, and her BA (Philosophy and Theology) from Georgetown University.

JoAnn Lee, Ph.D., M.S.W., M.P.A., Assistant Professor  
jlee120@gmu.edu; 703.993.8411

Dr. Lee, who joined the faculty in 2013, teaches courses on social policy, child welfare, and research methods. Her research focuses on the transition to adulthood for vulnerable youth, such as youth aging out of the foster care system. Prior to George Mason University, Dr. Lee was a postdoctoral fellow at Seattle Children's Research Institute, where she examined relationships between social contexts and youth behaviors. Her prior clinical work experiences include addressing substance use issues among juvenile justice and Asian American youth populations. She is a graduate of Stanford University (BA in Psychology), Columbia University (MSW/MPA) and the University of Washington (PhD).

Holly C. Matto, Ph.D., M.S.W., Associate Professor  
hmatto@gmu.edu; 703.993.6107

Dr. Matto (MSW, University of Michigan, PhD, University of Maryland) is Associate Professor in the College of Health and Human Services Department of Social Work at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Prior to that Dr. Matto was at VCU School of Social Work for ten years where she taught theories of human behavior, direct practice, and research methods in the master’s and doctoral programs. She has over 15 years of research and practice experience in the field of addiction science and has conducted treatment intervention studies with diverse clinical populations. Recently she conducted a clinical trial with Inova Fairfax Hospital and Georgetown University’s Center for Functional and Molecular Imaging that used neuroimaging technology to examine functional and structural brain change associated with behavioral health interventions for substance-dependent adults. In addition, she is engaged in research that examines the effects of an integrated music, imagery and movement intervention to improve mood and promote cognitive functioning in older adult residents living in a long-term care facility. She is most currently working on the prototype development of a wearable device to manage stimulus cues and reduce drug relapse by detecting neurophysiological reactivity and delivering a device-activated personalized music and imagery intervention (a STEAM-H: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math – Health Initiative).
Katherine Prudden, M.S.W., L.C.S.W., Instructor
kprudden@gmu.edu; 703.993.4246

Professor Prudden received her MSW from Virginia Commonwealth University, an
Advanced Professional Certificate in Expressive Therapies Studies from Lesley
University, and is an expressive therapy doctoral student at the European Graduate
School. Her clinical area of expertise is in sexual trauma, crime victimization, grief and
loss, and expressive therapies. She was an adjunct professor at George Mason
University for 8 years and joined the full time faculty in 2013. Professor Prudden has
worked in inpatient, day treatment, and outpatient psychiatric facilities, and a community
sexual assault program. She has a small private practice providing individual and group
therapy, and clinical supervision.

Dennis J. Ritchie, Ph.D., M.S.W., Professor
dritchi1@gmu.edu; 703.993.1951

Dr. Ritchie’s education and practice experience bridge the fields of social work and
special education (Ph.D. in Special Education and Rehabilitation with concentration in
Emotional Disturbance from Syracuse University, MSW with concentration in Health
from University of Pennsylvania, and BA in Liberal Arts from State University of New
York at Stony Brook). Practice experience includes providing consultation, education,
and direct services in school settings and over the past 23 years he has been actively
involved in international social work with a special interest in participatory action
research and the linkage between social work and human rights. He has been a visiting
professor at the University of Costa Rica, Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania, and
the National Autonomous University of Honduras as a Senior Fulbright Scholar. He has
held a number of professional leadership positions related to national and international
social work including, for example, serving on the Council on Social Work Education
(CSWE) Commission on Accreditation and the Global Commission and Committee on
Human Rights; chairing the CSWE Council on Global Learning, Research & Practice;
and chairing the NASW National International Social Work Committee. He has served
as national reviewer for all Fulbright Scholar applications, across all disciplines, to
Mexico and Central America. Dr. Ritchie’s scholarship includes collaborative research
with Central American and Mason colleagues focusing on issues related to child and
family welfare, children’s and women’s human rights, and the Latino immigrant
community. Prior to George Mason University, he held faculty appointments at Cornell
University and Nazareth College where he served as Social Work Department Chair.

Sunny Harris Rome, J.D., M.S.W., Professor
srome@gmu.edu; 703.993.2072

Professor Rome has an MSW degree from the University of Michigan and a JD from
Georgetown University Law Center. Since joining the full-time faculty at George Mason
University in 1994, she has taught courses in Social Policy and Social Justice, Social

Steven R. Rose, Ph.D., M.S.W., Professor
srose@gmu.edu; 703.993.4204

Dr. Rose received the BA with honors from the City University of New York, the MSW from Washington University (St. Louis), and the Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Rose’s areas of specialized research competence include child, youth, and family services; social services in school and community systems; and group processes, interventions, and outcomes. He has served as principal investigator, co-principal investigator, evaluation consultant, and writer for many research grants and contracts. In addition to having published numerous articles in refereed journals, Dr. Rose’s published books include Task Groups in the Social Services (Sage, 1995), Group Work with Children and Adolescents (Sage, 1998), and Social Work with Children and Adolescents (Allyn and Bacon, 2003). He currently holds editorial positions with three academic and professional journals in social work and social welfare. Currently a Professor at George Mason University, Dr. Rose has previously served as a faculty member at the University of Vermont and Louisiana State University, as well as at universities abroad. He has held professional administrative, supervisory, and clinical positions in child, youth, and family services, education and school settings, and mental health organizations, and has also served as a consultant.

Catherine J. Tompkins, PhD., M.S.W., Associate Professor & Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies, CHHS
tompkin@gmu.edu; 703.993.2838

Dr. Tompkins joined the faculty in August, 2003 as the Director of the BSW Program. She is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work and the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies in the College of Health and Human Services. Dr. Tompkins teaches courses in research methods, human behavior,
gerontology, introduction to social work and social welfare policy. Her research areas include: caregiving for the frail elderly, interventions for dementia care, kinship care, emotional well-being and retirement, and strengthening undergraduate social work education. Prior to joining the faculty at George Mason University, Dr. Tompkins was the Faculty Development Coordinator for the John A. Hartford funded Faculty Development Project at the Council on Social Work Education, Strengthening Aging and Gerontology Education for Social Work. Dr. Tompkins received both her MSW and PhD from the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She was an assistant professor of Social Work and Gerontology at James Madison University from 1995–1998 and the Director of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education from 1998–2001. She is currently on the editorial board for three journals and serves on other local and national committees. Dr. Tompkins is a John A. Hartford Faculty Scholar in Geriatric Social Work.

Laura Cordisco Tsai, Ph.D., M.S.S.W., Assistant Professor
lcordisc@gmu.edu; 703.993.7017

Dr. Tsai joined the faculty in 2014. Her research focuses on human trafficking and economic empowerment interventions, with a particular emphasis on economically-oriented prevention and reintegration support programs for people at risk for trafficking and people who have been trafficked. As a mixed methods researcher, she integrates a variety of quantitative, qualitative, and participatory approaches in her research. Dr. Tsai has over 10 years of social work practice and research experience pertaining to human trafficking, gender-based violence, and economic empowerment interventions in ten countries, primarily the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, and Mongolia. She graduated from Brown University (B.A.) and Columbia University (M.S.S.W., Ph.D.).

Michael Wolf-Branigin, M.S.W., Ph.D., P.Stat., Professor & Chair
mwolfbra@gmu.edu; 703.993.4229

Dr. Wolf-Branigin’s current research focuses on complex adaptive systems and their application to social work practice in the substantive areas of addictions, human trafficking, and disabilities. His most recent work has been oriented towards the build environment and transportation issues for persons with disabilities. Dr. Wolf-Branigin received his BA in psychology and sociology from Western Michigan University’s Honors College, received a graduate diploma in economics from Stockholms Universitet, and completed his MSW in social program evaluation from the University of Michigan. After working more than two decades in the addictions and disabilities fields, he received his Ph.D. from Wayne State University in research and evaluation. He has consulted for governmental and non-governmental organizations in the United States, Ecuador, and the United Arab Emirates. For the past 17 years he has been an accreditation surveyor with CARF International. He has a recent book published by Oxford University Press, has written over 45 peer-reviewed articles, and currently serves on the editorial boards of several academic journals.
Administrative Staff

Elaine Ervin, Administrative Assistant for Field Education
swfield@gmu.edu

Elaine Ervin graduated from Mason with a Bachelor’s in Global Affairs in 2012. After graduating, she worked at CGI Federal and provided technical support to Federal clients. Most recently, she worked as a business analyst for Asurion, monitoring and analyzing customer service calls. In her free time, she enjoys playing piano, watching baseball, and practicing yoga. She is very excited to be back at Mason!

Vannary C. Khov, Administrative Program Specialist
vkhov@gmu.edu; 703.993.2030

Vannary C. Khov has worked for George Mason University since 1996 – in the College of Health and Human Services/Dean’s office from 1996 to 2003, in the Doctoral Division in the School of Nursing from October 2003 to May 2012, and in the Department of Social Work from May 2012 to the present. Prior to that, she was employed by the Embassy of Liberia, in Reston, VA.

Le Anne Wisnieski, Administrative Assistant for Student Affairs
socw@gmu.edu; 703.993.4247

Le Anne Wisnieski earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Old Dominion University and previously worked for the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C. for 10 years. Prior to joining the staff in the Department of Social Work, she spent her time volunteering at schools and within the community around Fairfax County.
## Adjunct Faculty for the BSW Program (Fall 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tina Abrefa-Gyan</td>
<td>SOCW 375 (online)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tabrefag@gmu.edu">tabrefag@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Balasco-Barr</td>
<td>SOCW 200</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pbalasco@gmu.edu">pbalasco@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Foreman</td>
<td>SOCW 452/453</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dforema1@gmu.edu">dforema1@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy George</td>
<td>SOCW 357; SOCW 361</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tgeorge2@gmu.edu">tgeorge2@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhavani R. Hamann</td>
<td>SOCW 200</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bhamann@gmu.edu">bhamann@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janine Harrigan</td>
<td>SOCW 452/453</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jharriga@gmu.edu">jharriga@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maura Moore</td>
<td>SOCW 452/453</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mmoorem@gmu.edu">mmoorem@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anita Rosen</td>
<td>SOCW 435 (online)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:arosen2@gmu.edu">arosen2@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanford Schwartz</td>
<td>SOCW 380</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sschwa11@gmu.edu">sschwa11@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Willis Warnke</td>
<td>SOCW 452/453</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kwillisw@gmu.edu">kwillisw@gmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A

Advising Worksheet for Social Work Majors: 2015-2016 Academic Year

[Before advising, please check the catalog for the year the student entered GMU]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST SEMESTER</th>
<th>SECOND SEMESTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 103</td>
<td>*NATURAL SCIENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ENGH 101</td>
<td>*COMM 100 or 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*QUANTITATIVE REASONING</td>
<td>*LITERATURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 101</td>
<td>*HIST 100 or 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL: 16</td>
<td>TOTAL: 15-16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THIRD SEMESTER</th>
<th>FOURTH SEMESTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>*ENGH 302 (Social Science)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 100</td>
<td>SOCW 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*IT 103 or other approved course</td>
<td>Introduction to Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
<td>*ARTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL: 15</td>
<td>TOTAL: 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIFTH SEMESTER</th>
<th>SIXTH SEMESTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 311</td>
<td>SOCW 312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Professional Social Work Skills</td>
<td>Knowledge Building for Helping Professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^SOCW 357 (Fall only)</td>
<td>^SOCW 358 (Spring only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention</td>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^SOCW 361 (Fall only)</td>
<td>^SOCW 362 (Spring only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention Lab</td>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention Lab II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 375</td>
<td>SOCW 380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Behavior and the Family Life Course</td>
<td>Changing Social Policies and Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
<td>SOCW 390 (Spring only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
<td>Analytic Methods of Social Work Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(or STAT 250, SOCI 313, PSYC 300)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL: 15</td>
<td>TOTAL: 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEVENTH SEMESTER</th>
<th>EIGHTH SEMESTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>^SOCW 452, Senior Seminar I</td>
<td>^SOCW 454, Senior Seminar II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^SOCW 453, Senior Practicum I</td>
<td>^SOCW 456, Senior Practicum II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 471, Research in SW</td>
<td>SOCW 472 RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW ELECTIVE (400-level)</td>
<td>Integrative Methods in Social Change and Social Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
<td>SOCW ELECTIVE (400-level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
<td>ELECTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL: 15</td>
<td>TOTAL: 13-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* University General Education Requirements
^ Must be taken concurrently

Classes offered in the fall only: SOCW 357, 361, 452, 453, 471
Classes offered in the spring only: SOCW 358, 362, 390, 454, 456, 472 RS

All required 300-level social work courses must be completed prior to beginning the senior field placement (SOCW 452/453).

A MINIMUM OF 120 CREDITS IS REQUIRED TO GRADUATE, 45 OF WHICH SHOULD BE 300/400 (UPPER LEVEL) COURSES. NOTE: PHED CREDITS ARE LIMITED TO 6.
APPENDIX B

Field Placement Questions

After students have been accepted into the major, the Field Education Department will refer students to a potential field placement site. In the interview, both student and the contact person at the site explore the appropriateness of this practicum assignment. Below is a list of questions that the student may wish to pose during the initial interview.

1. What kinds of activities and programs does this agency undertake?
2. What activities, tasks, and/or projects will I be able to undertake?
3. What specific skills will I be able to develop at this agency?
4. Does this agency have a particular theoretical approach to intervention?
5. What are the general characteristics of clients and communities served by this agency?
6. What is the approach to and the structure of supervision?
7. What amount of interaction would I have with other students and with permanent staff?
8. What opportunities exist for interprofessional collaboration or cooperation?
9. What types of in-service training or workshops and conferences will be available to me?
10. What types of cases and/or projects do you anticipate assigning to me?
11. What types of skills do you hope a student will bring to the agency?
12. How much independence and initiative do you expect me to demonstrate?
13. How are students helped to handle issues of diversity regarding age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability on both staff and client levels?
14. What are the hours of operation and is after-hours work expected of students?
15. What is the agency’s dress code?
16. What safety precautions should I be aware of?