



# Messiah University

## BSW Student Handbook

**DO**  
*justice*

**LOVE**  
*mercy*

**WALK**  
*humbly*

**WITH YOUR GOD**  
**Micah 6:8**

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**A Word From The Department Chair**

Dear Students,

Welcome to your journey with the Messiah University Social Work Department! The social work profession's mission is to support and equip people in their journey of growth and human flourishing. Social workers serve an important role in our society as well-trained professionals who meet the complex needs of people. Messiah's social work faculty focuses on developing and nurturing professional social workers who will serve people from diverse backgrounds with Jesus' compassion. We adhere to the nine core Social Work competencies defined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) while infusing a tenth, faith-based competency. During your time in the Messiah University Social Work program, you will find a supportive community that will encourage you in your endeavor of becoming a competent, ethical, and faith-integrated professional.

Thank you for the honor of embarking on this exciting journey with you. We are so happy to have you joining our social work community!

Grace & Peace,

*Ling Dinse*

Dr. Ling Dinse, MSW, LSW

Department Chair and Director of the Social Work Program

**Social Work Faculty**

**Ling Dinse, DSW, MSW, LSW**

Position: Department Chair and Director of the Social Work Program,  
Associate Professor of Social Work  
Education: Doctor of Social Work, Millersville University, Millersville, 2018  
Master of Social Work, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1996  
Bachelor of Arts, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1994  
Licensure Licensed Social Worker in Pennsylvania (1996 – Present)  
Research Interests: Intentional Dialogues  
Racism & Racial Relations  
Racial Reconciliation  
Caring for Human Trafficking Survivors  
Integration of Social Work and Faith  
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**Michelle George, MSW, LCSW**

Position: Social Work Field Director  
Associate Professor of Social Work  
Education: M.S.W., Temple University School of Social Administration, 1994  
BA in Psychology, Messiah University, 1988  
Clinical Social Work license for PA  
Board Certified Diplomat (BCD) in Clinical Social Work  
Professional Interests: Clinical Social Work and Counseling Practice  
Christian Counseling and Spiritual Formation  
Diversity and Reconciliation  
Personal interests: Spending time with family, hiking, hunting, gardening, kayaking, music,  
and reading  
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**Department Staff**

**Debbie Chopka**

Position: Administrative Assistant  
Education: Malone College, 1989 BS in Education K-8  
Personal interest: Scrapbooking, crafting, marriage ministry, walking, nature hikes,  
spending time with family & friends, and traveling  
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## **Mission, Goals, and Philosophy**

### **Messiah University Mission Statement**

Messiah University is a Christian University of the liberal arts and applied arts and sciences, which offers Departments leading to B.S. and B.A. degrees. The University is committed to embracing an evangelical spirit rooted in the Anabaptist, Pietist, and Wesleyan traditions of the Christian church. The mission of Messiah University is to educate men and women toward maturity of intellect, character, and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership, and reconciliation in church and society.

### **Mission of the School of Arts, Culture and Society**

The Mission of the School of Arts, Culture and Society is to prepare students to serve God in church, society, and their professions by applying their understanding of human thought, development, learning, social structures, and interactions to complex social issues and environments.

### **Social Work Department Mission Statement**

The mission of the Social Work Department at Messiah University is to offer a professional degree with a strong liberal arts foundation that trains graduates for ethical and competent generalist Social Work practice at the entry level and/or prepares them for graduate study. Guided by the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) as well as the mission and values of Messiah University, the Department integrates principles of the Christian faith with Social Work values, knowledge, and skill.

### **Social Work Department Goals**

1. To develop competent Social Workers who critically evaluate, self-reflect, and are self-aware of how their Christian faith informs their practice, while performing the duties of their vocation in a professional and ethical manner.
2. To develop Social Workers who engage the world to facilitate change through enhancing community and through actively engaging in issues to address social and economic justice in rural, urban, and international settings.
3. To develop effective Christian Social Work leaders in the provision of micro, mezzo, and macro programming who value integrity, service and, the importance of human relationships in addressing human needs and the issues of the disenfranchised.
4. To develop Christian Social Workers who value empowerment and the strengths perspective in the application of skills and knowledge of generalist Social Work with systems of all sizes, while ensuring respect for clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.

## **Integration of Faith and Learning Goal**

A unique characteristic of the Department is the goal of connecting faith development with competent, ethical, and professional Social Work practice. The Social Work Department at Messiah University aims to prepare Christian Social Work students toward maturity of Christian faith, intellect, and character in preparation for lives of service and leadership.

## **Social Work Program Core Competencies and CSWE Accreditation**

### **Department Competencies**

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
10. Apply Christian Faith Development Principles to Inform and Guide Competent, Professional and Ethical Practice.

### **Accreditation**

In the spring of 2007, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) granted full, independent accreditation to the Social Work Department at Messiah. Prior to that, the Department was accredited in collaboration with Temple University. The Department was re-accredited by the CSWE in 2019 for another eight years. Graduates of the Messiah University Social Work Department are eligible to apply for advanced standing, which reduces the number of credits required to obtain a master's degree.

## **Community Advisory Committee**

### **Mission of the Community Advisory Committee**

To promote a reciprocal and continuous relationship between the Social Work Department and members of the practice community and to assist in the ongoing evaluation of educational goals and objectives, curriculum, and practicum experiences to enhance Social Work education at Messiah University.

### **Role of the Advisory Committee**

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The community advisory committee will offer consultation on curriculum and issues relating to Department policy and practices. The committee will meet at least one time each semester and be composed of 12-20 members including all full-time Social Work faculty, two student representatives from the Social Work Department, and at least eight professional Social Workers.

### **Assessment of the Social Work Department**

The Department of Social Work regularly engages in formal and informal evaluations to assess student's progress toward Department goals, related competencies, and practice behaviors. Informal evaluation consists of feedback solicited by faculty as students are advised and engaged in informal meetings. This allows faculty and students the forum to discuss integration of Christian faith into practice and allows for observation of students' professional and personal growth. Students are regularly given the opportunity to informally meet with faculty through the open door policy, which enables students to meet with faculty any time faculty are in their office, regardless of posted office hours.

Formal evaluation of student progress toward Department goals and course objectives, competencies, and related practice behaviors is ongoing and occurs at regular intervals. Data on student progress is collected through student performance on class assignments, formal admission to the major, practicum evaluations, senior portfolio, graduating student exit interviews, and alumni surveys. Data collected is used to evaluate Department effectiveness in developing competent generalist practitioners. The information is also used to identify areas of Department strengths and areas where improvements can be made.

## **Curriculum**

### **Curriculum Overview**

The Social Work curriculum is designed to reflect the educational goals and objectives of the Department. Students must successfully complete all required courses to graduate. Courses with prerequisites are noted. Further information on curriculum may be found at: [Social Work Curriculum](#)

### **Social Work Major— (70 credits)**

- SOWK 099 Professionalism in Social Work (1)
- SOWK 120 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare (3)
- SOWK 221 Human Behavior in the Social Environment (3)
- SOWK 250 Social Work Practice with Individuals (3)
- SOWK 251 Field Experience: Social Work Practice with Individuals (1)
- SOAN 356 Social Inequality (3)
- SOWK 360 Social Work Practice with Families (3)
- SOWK 361 Field Experience: Social Work Practice with Families (1)
- SOWK 372 Social Work Practice with Groups (4)
- SOWK 382 Topics in Social Work (3)

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SOWK 385 Introduction to Research in Social Work (3)  
SOWK 420 Social Welfare Policy and Social Change (3)  
SOWK 475 Social Work Practice with Communities and Organizations (3)  
SOWK 476 Field Experience: Social Work Practice with Communities & Organizations (1)  
SOWK 484 Preparations for Field Practice (1)  
SOWK 485 Seminar in Social Work Practice (3)  
SOWK 490 Field Practice in Social Work (12)  
SOAN 101 Introduction to Sociology (3)  
PSYC 101 Introduction to Psychology (3)  
HIST 142 US History Survey Since 1865 (3)  
BIOL 158 Human Biology (4)  
STAT 269 Introductory Statistics (3)  
ECON 110, 117 or 120 Economics (3)

### **Departmental Expectations**

#### **Procedures for Admission to the Major**

Each Social Work student is expected to apply to the Messiah University Social Work Program. Applications are due in the beginning of spring semester of sophomore year and instructions can be found the Messiah University website at: [Messiah University Social Work Application](#).

#### **Procedures for Major Honors**

Procedures for Senior Social Work Majors Honors can be found on the Messiah University website at: [Messiah University Social Work Honors](#).

#### **Electronic Portfolio**

Each Social Work student will maintain an electronic portfolio throughout their course work in the Social Work Department. The development of an electronic portfolio provides opportunities for the Social Work student to collect materials that exemplify the student's experiences and demonstrates mastery of Social Work competencies, ethics, and professionalism. The portfolio will be evaluated as a part of the course requirements for SOWK 485. Students are expected to retain course syllabi, primary competency assignments from each Social Work course, spiritual discipline assignments, ethical assignments for each course, and other documents and material that demonstrates student Social Work competency, ethical behavior, and professionalism. Collection of this material will begin when the student takes the first course in the major. Students are responsible for saving the material needed for the electronic portfolio at the end of each semester.



## **Tevera**

Each Social Work student will obtain the learning management system Tevera, which stores practicum timesheets and professional development experiences. This lifetime membership will transition with students who plan on attending master's degree programs. Procedures registration can be found at: [Tevera Registration Information](#).

## **Social Media**

If students identify themselves as a Messiah University student online, it should be clear that any views expressed are not necessarily those of the institution. In the event that opposing views arise on a social media feed, exercise professional judgment. Messiah University does not tolerate content from students that is defamatory, harassing, libelous or inhospitable to a reasonable academic/work environment. Social media may be used to investigate student behavior. This policy provides Messiah University Social Work students with rules for participation in social media.

*Therefore, it is the students' responsibility to refrain from any of the following:*

1. Using clients' name (any identifier including initials, agency name, etc.) and personal information in any way.
2. Disclosing confidential information about the University, its employees, or its students.
3. Stating personal opinions as being endorsed by the University.
4. Using information and conducting activities that may violate Messiah University academic or handbook policies, or may violate local, state, or federal laws, and regulations.

## **Writing**

It is expected that writing assignments are written to reflect university standards for organization, grammar, syntax, and mechanics. All papers must be typed, double spaced, and conform to the format of the American Psychological Association (APA) for margins, citations, and references. Students are required to purchase and refer to the most current Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for a complete explanation and guide to all types of documentation.

## **BSW Social Work Practicum Handbook**

Each Social Work should also have knowledge of and conform to applicable practicum policies found in the Messiah University practicum handbook prior to entering SOWK learning experience courses. Practicum handbook can be found on the Messiah University website at: [Practicum Handbook](#)

### **Malpractice Insurance**

The following information describes the Professional Liability Coverage that the University provides for students doing internships and/or practicum placements. It is your responsibility to determine if the coverage is adequate, or if additional coverage should be purchased.

Named Insured: Messiah University

Policy Period: Yearly renewal on September 1

Limits of Liability: The liability for each claim including expenses under this policy shall not exceed - \$1,000,000; and, subject to that limit for each claim, the total limit of liability for all claims including claim expenses under this policy shall not exceed the aggregate - \$3,000,000. Deductible: \$10,000

In most cases involving internships or practicums, cooperating agencies request proof of insurance. This proof is known as a “Certificate of Insurance.” All Messiah students, staff, and faculty who need a certificate of professional liability insurance for practicum experience; or a certificate of liability insurance for a business transaction or facility use, must complete a “Request for Certificate of Insurance Form” which can be found online at: [Request for Certificate of Insurance Form](#). All completed forms should be sent to [Operations@Messiah.edu](mailto:Operations@Messiah.edu) at least 3 business days in advance of the event or date needed.

In order to request a certificate, the student must provide the name of the agency, the contact person at the agency, that person’s mailing address, telephone number, and fax, as well as the dates the student is doing the internship or practicum. The student must also provide his or her name and the name of his or her faculty advisor. The insurance broker will be contacted, and the certificate will be issued to the requesting agency and to the University for the faculty advisor.

### **Professional Behaviors**

#### *Accountability*

The student is accountable for...

- One’s own learning
- Adhering to deadlines (without reminders)
- Understanding Department & course requirements/expectations
- One’s own actions and civil communication
- Checking CANVAS and e-mails daily, since this is the main form of communication within the Department of Social Work
- Preparing for classroom and practicum experience

## Messiah University Department of Social Work

- Preparing for the classroom activities by completing assigned readings and class preparation activities
- Being awake, alert and engaged in learning activities and discussions

### *Character*

#### *The student will...*

- Advocate for the rights of all clients.
- Maintain client confidentiality
- Take appropriate action to ensure the safety of clients, self, and others
- Provide care for the client in a timely, empathetic, competent, and professional manner
- Communicate client care in a truthful, timely, and accurate manner
- Actively promote the highest level of moral and ethical principles and accept responsibility for personal/individual actions
- Promote excellence in Social Work by pursuing lifelong learning and professional development
- Demonstrate cultural competence and promote an environment that respects human rights, values, and choice of cultural, and spiritual beliefs
- Collaborate in every reasonable manner with academic faculty and clinical staff to ensure a professional environment and to promote the highest quality of Social Work practice
- Only practice Social Work at a level for which you have been adequately trained
- Refrain from any deliberate action or omission in the academic or practice setting that could create harm to self, faculty, staff, clients, or others
- Abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages or any substances in the academic and practice setting that impair judgment
- Strive to achieve and maintain an optimal level of personal, physical and emotional health
- Take responsibility for mental health needs for personal well-being and to create an optimal learning environment and to assure quality care for clients
- Seek personal treatment and support access to treatment and rehabilitation for impairment related to substance abuse and mental or physical health issues
- Uphold school policies and regulations related to academic and clinical performance, reserving the right to challenge and critique rules and regulations following Departmental and school grievance policy procedures

### *Confidentiality*

#### *The student will...*

- Maintain confidentiality of all clinical, health, or personal information obtained in clinical or practicum environments
- Maintain confidentiality regarding student records
- Sign and/or adhere to all Social Work related “Confidentiality Statements” including confidentiality statements outlined in course syllabi
- Remove all identifiable information from all evidence/artifacts posted electronically

*Communication*

The student will...

- Not use electronic communication (email, text messaging, phone calls, twittering, etc.) during class/practicum sessions
- Turn off and put away all electronic devices during classroom time unless otherwise approved by the professor
- Only use computers in the classroom at faculty discretion and only for classroom activities
- Communicate respectfully and formally with peers, faculty, staff, and other Social Work professionals
- Communicate the need for classroom/clinical accommodations regarding disabilities to the professor at the beginning of each semester
- NEVER be defensive, argumentative, hostile, condescending, uncivil, or disrespectful regarding language and communication
- Not use profane language or gestures
- Not use nonverbal expression of disdain or disrespect. Using such expressions is a form of incivility and is not acceptable behavior in any environment
- Discuss issues only with a person involved in the issue or in consultation with appropriate personnel
- Respond in a timely manner to faculty, practicum instructors, and Department administrative assistant
- Communicate proactively with faculty, practicum instructors, or the Department administrative assistant when an issue is recognized, rather than waiting until after the fact

*Competence*

The student is expected to...

- Students who receive lower than a C+ in any Social Work class are required to retake the class
- Earn a major GPA in all SOWK designated courses of a 2.7 or higher and cumulative 2.0 GPA or higher (**Please note that a 3.0 or higher GPA is required for most MSW Advance Standing programs**)
- Develop competencies addressed in each class through course assignments and build on competencies developed throughout the major
- Gain full competence in each of the nine competency areas identified by CSWE and gain full competency for the tenth competency related to faith development identified by the Messiah University Department of Social Work
- Perform clinical skills based on appropriate training
- Demonstrate thinking and clinical judgment in classroom, simulation, and practicum experiences
- Demonstrate cumulative competence for the most up-to-date APA documentation style
- Demonstrate competence in writing skills (APA format, grammatically correct, logical idea development, proof reading)
- Not interfere with the competency development of other students through sharing of assignments or course content that would compromise another student's learning

*E-mail Communication & Etiquette*

The student will...

- Use rules of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Use a relevant subject line to identify the topic and urgency of the email for the recipient
- Use professor's preferred name/title and always demonstrate respect in communication
- Use a consistent tone in the email that corresponds to and is consistent with verbal communication (The tone of voice of an email message is unclear, so write and read them carefully)
- Not use email messages for emotionally delicate, explosive, complex, or intimate communication as they can be easily misunderstood
- Respond to an email communication that requires a response from the student within 2-3 days, per the Messiah University Student Handbook

*Emotional Stability*

The student will...

- Respond appropriately to suggestions for improvement
- Accept constructive criticism
- Seek counseling and other services when needed

*Ethics*

The student will...

- Demonstrate moral and professional behavior consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics, the International Federation of Social Workers Code of Ethics, federal, state and local laws that govern Social Work behavior, Messiah University, and Social Work Department policies, and individual course expectations

*Interpersonal Conflicts*

The student will...

- Communicate directly with the individual involved in the conflict
- Reflect respect, integrity, and care in all forms of communication
- Seek assistance in resolving the situation by using the proper chain of command (instructor, course coordinator, dept. chair, school dean)
- Call campus security (717-691-60050 or "9-1-1" in cases of imminent danger)
- Report cases of sexual assault or harassment, or verbal/physical threat or actual violence, directly to the practicum supervisor and to campus security or the Upper Allen Police Dept. (The student is also expected to notify the course professor and Department chair ASAP)

*Professional Relationships*

The student will...

- Develop interpersonal skills sufficient for professional interactions with peers, faculty, other professionals, and different client populations
- Function collaboratively in groups
- Establish rapport and therapeutic relationships with clients, families, peers, faculty, and other professionals
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Participate in successful conflict resolution when necessary
- Appropriately represent faculty and the Department of Social Work in a professional manner

*Professionalism*

The student is expected to...

- Arrive to class, meetings, or placement on time and leave when scheduled
- Use class, meeting, or placement time effectively
- Inform faculty or field instructors of important information
- Inform faculty or field instructors ahead of time if going to be absent
- Demonstrate reliability and timeliness on assignments
- Be responsive to classroom and agency expectations
- Interact appropriately with peers, faculty, agency staff, and clients
- Complete assignments to the best of your ability and on time
- Complete all practicum hours and assignments

*Teamwork*

The student is expected to...

- Handle all interactions in a respectful and caring manner
- Contribute equally to the group process in conjunction with his/her team members
- Cooperate and collaborate
- Base decisions on consensus whenever possible

*Timeliness*

The student is expected to...

- Submit all course assignments on time
- Arrive on time to class or practicum placements unless discussed and/or excused by the faculty member prior to learning session
- Avoid procrastination.
- Adhere to scheduled appointments (advising, meetings, etc.)

**Professional Performance**

The student is expected to...

- Attend all classes
- Be punctual
- Come to class prepared (readings and assignments completed)
- Complete all assignments on time and to the best of your ability
- Participate actively in class discussions and activities
- Notify the instructor prior to class of illness or legitimate need to miss class
- Work collaboratively and cooperatively with others
- Demonstrate respect for others' opinions
- Demonstrate a willingness to understand and respect diversity regarding race, color, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation
- Use self-disclosure appropriately
- Demonstrate use of critical thinking skills
- Demonstrate consistency in written communication
- Articulate ideas, thoughts, and concepts clearly through effective oral communication

## **Cross Cultural Learning**

When a student is to leave on a semester long study abroad program, the student is expected to inform the Department of Social Work at the beginning of the semester prior to his/her semester abroad. If a student is to leave on a cross-cultural trip, the student is expected to inform the Department of Social Work four weeks prior to their departure. This communication is necessary to locate and contact the student if necessary while they are away for Departmental reasons. For all study abroad and cross-cultural trips, a student must inform the Department of Social Work when the student is leaving and where the student is going.

## **Policies**

### **Social Work Policies**

A component of being professional is knowing, understanding and following agency policies and procedures. Students must follow the Messiah University policies outlined in the student handbook and student syllabi. Additionally, students are expected to review and follow the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics of the International Federation of Social Workers along with the policies and procedures outlined in each course syllabus, and the policies and procedures noted in the Messiah University Social Work Department handbook.

### **Policy Related to Not Offering Course Credit for Life or Work Experience**

The Social Work major does not grant students course credit for life experience or previous work experience. This Policy is established through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and therefore the Department of Social Work prohibits offering of course credit for life or previous work experience. Additionally, the Department cannot determine equivalency between life/work experiences and Social Work courses/practicum experiences. The Department also cannot determine and evaluate competency development through life experience or previous work experiences.

### **Messiah University Good Moral Character and Infractions**

Students are expected to have an academic and student life disciplinary record reflecting behavior consistent with the "Community Covenant of Messiah University". If a student is involved in an infraction of University or Departmental Policy, the student is expected to notify the Chairperson of the Department of Social Work Social Work to discuss the incident. When a student is involved in a university hearing and after the student's appeal procedures have been completed and the Academic and Student Life Offices have deemed disciplinary action necessary, these offices are expected to report students involved in the offense to the student's advisor and/or the Chairperson of the Social Work Department. In addition to the actions taken by the University, the Messiah University Social Work Chair and/or the Department of Social Work are charged with reviewing reported incidents and determining a Departmental course of action for the student involved. If in the judgment of the Department Chair and/or the Department of Social Work, a student's academic or disciplinary record reflects a substantial

disregard to the expectations for Social Work student conduct, the student will not be approved for admission to, or progression in, the Social Work major. Eligibility for entrance and continued enrollment in the Social Work major will be revoked immediately for behavior contrary to the *Code of Ethics*. In addition, students who are found to be ineligible to continue enrollment in the Social Work major must immediately withdraw (or will be withdrawn) from the Social Work major. An “F” may be the grade given if the student withdraws after the semester’s final date for withdrawal. Any student deemed by the Chair and/or the Department of Social Work as failing to meet the standards set forth for Social Work students may appeal this decision following the appeals process outlined within the Social Work Department.

### **Academic Policies Specific to the Social Work Department**

Social Work students are expected to meet the following Social Work specific requirements for graduation. Students are required to have a minimum of a 2.7 GPA in the major, a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 and a SOWK course specific grade of 2.3 or better. Any student not receiving a C+ or better in any SOWK course is required to retake the course and obtain a higher grade. Faculty may institute a process for remediation for any student not meeting any of these expectations while in the major. Procedures for handling these situations are similar to procedures for handling concerns regarding student professional performance and are listed below. Any faculty with concerns about student professional performance shall request a conference with other Social Work faculty to discuss the concerns.

*The following procedure will be followed:*

1. Faculty will meet to develop a plan to address the concerns. Actions described in the plan can include (but are not limited to): Student in difficulty notification, recommendation and plan for remedial action presented to student, contract with the student that designates the corrective action, signed by all parties (i.e. student, faculty).
  - In some cases the student may be recommended for dismissal from the Department of Social Work as part of the professional performance review.
2. The faculty will meet with the student to present the recommended written plan of action.
3. The student may appeal the decision by submitting a written proposal to the Chair of the Department of Social Work within 10 days.
4. If there is not satisfactory resolution, the student can further appeal to the school dean.



## **Professional Behavior Probation and Dismissal**

Behavioral infractions listed below for which Social Work students have been found responsible by the University will be reported to the Department Chair by the student and/or student's advisor. Social Work faculty will review reported incidents and determine a course of action for the student involved.

*Reportable infractions include:*

1. Any violation of the *Academic Integrity Policy* published in the current *Messiah University Student Handbook*. Violations of the *Academic Integrity Policy* include (but may not be limited to) the following offenses: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, misrepresentation of academic records, facilitating academic dishonesty, computer offenses, and unfair advantage.
2. A finding of responsibility by the Messiah University disciplinary process or an arrest by an off-campus police agency for any of the following offenses:
  - Underage drinking
  - Discriminatory behavior: racial and/or gender
  - Harassment behavior: abusive and/or sexual
  - Personal dishonesty: stealing and/or theft of services
  - Possession and/or use of illegal drugs
  - Campus possession of university-banned weapons (ex. Firearms)
  - Willful destruction of property
  - Initiating bomb scares and/or false fire alarms
  - Other incidents as identified by the Dean of Students

## **Professional Behavior Appeals of Suspension or Dismissal**

If the student has previously gained conditional or full acceptance to the major, and/or is currently in a practicum placement, any violations resulting in disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion will result in immediate review by the Department of Social Work Chair and other faculty relevant to the situation to determine appropriate action (suspension or expulsion results in immediate action for a student in learning experiences). If the student has not applied for formal admission, the admissions committee will consider the disciplinary action during evaluation.

A student who fails to follow Departmental and University behavioral expectations will jeopardize admission to, and continuation in, the Social Work major. Social Work faculty are responsible for determining compliance with this policy, and may consider particular circumstances of student violations, including a student's prompt self-report of the violation, and any remedial effort made by the student.

If the Department determines that the student behavior warrants suspension or termination from the major, the student will receive written notice of the decision within 10 days of the Departmental meeting. The Department Chair will notify the Dean of the School of Business, Education, and Social Sciences of any decision to terminate a student from the major Department. Additionally, the Department Chair will work with the registrar's office to remove

the student from any Social Work course and the field coordinator will contact any practicum placement to handle placement concerns. Any student deemed by Social Work faculty as failing to satisfy Departmental policies or who has been terminated from the Social Work major may appeal within ten days of the Social Work faculty's decision to the Chair of the Department of Social Work, who shall render a final written determination within ten days of receiving the appeal. Students not satisfied with the decision may appeal to the Dean of the School of Business, Education, and Social Sciences within 5 days of the written determination of the Department.

### **Procedures for Dismissal from the Social Work Department for Academic and Professional Performance**

The Department of Social Work follows procedures for dismissing students for reasons of academic performance that are clearly stated in the *Messiah University Academic Catalog*. Students are informed of these policies during student meetings, during class discussions, and during review of policies contained in the *Messiah University Student Handbook*, *Messiah University Academic Catalog*, and review of the *Department of Social Work Student Handbook* at the beginning stages of their journey at Messiah and in the Social Work major. The expectation to know, understand, and follow Departmental policies is stated in every SOWK course syllabus. There are also course assignments related to reviewing these policies in beginning Social Work classes and practicum classes.

### **Conference Attendance Policy – Student Professional Development**

Professional conferences that are held during the year provide a forum for students to network and become engaged in the profession of Social Work and various professional organizations. Social Work faculty provide information about upcoming conferences and coordinate student attendance at such events to encourage students to attend professional conferences and workshops. Students are responsible for all transportation to and from the conferences and lodging while at the conference. Students are encouraged to volunteer at conferences to reduce fees.

## **Student Social Work Organizations**

### **Social Work Club**

The purpose of the Social Work Club is to encourage cohesion and identity within the Social Work profession through community service, establishing professional contacts, and encouraging one another in Christ. The club sponsors campus wide activities, service projects, and other activities that fulfill the purpose. Students who are declared Social Work majors are considered members of the Social Work Club. Non-majors are also welcome and encouraged to be active members and participants in Social Work Club activities. For more information, students may refer to the constitution and bylaws of the Social Work Club.

*The goals of the Social Work Club are to:*

## Messiah University Department of Social Work

- Promote Social Work on the Messiah University campus as well as into the surrounding communities
- Educate Social Work students about current events and trends in the Social Work profession
- Encourage interaction among the Messiah University Social Work majors
- Promote diversity and raise awareness of issues including racism, ethnicity, and culture
- Implement at least two events each semester on the Messiah University campus to promote awareness and education of the Social Work profession and the issues that surround Social Work
- Assist the community through at least two service projects each semester (totaling 350 collective community service hours per semester)
- Attend professional conferences (on availability) to educate ourselves about the Social Work profession and to have contact with experienced Social Work professionals
- Hold member meetings at least once per month in order to support cohesion of club members
- Receive prayer requests from Social Work students and professors
- Work collectively with other Messiah University organizations to organize activities promoting issues surrounding diversity

### **Phi Alpha Honor Society**

- Recognizes and promotes scholastic achievement in an undergraduate Social Work Department that is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
- Encourages objectivity and awareness of current developments and practices in the various fields of Social Work
- Develops active communication and positive working relations among Social Work Departments, professional Social Workers, and the general public
- Stimulates interest in preparing for a career in Social Work
- Furthers research and study in Social Work
- Recognizes professional Social Workers and others whose service, contributions, and leadership are held in esteem

#### *Eligibility Requirement*

- Declared Social Work as a major
- Achieved sophomore status
- Completed 8 semester hours or 12 quarter hours of required Social Work courses
- Achieved an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- Achieved a 3.5 or higher-grade point average in required Social Work courses

## Messiah University Department of Social Work

\* Membership shall be available to all eligible persons without regard to age, gender, color, race, creed, ethnic or national origin, political or sexual orientation, or disability. Qualified persons may be inducted into membership in the spring semester for the following year. Any member may be expelled from membership for reasons of academic or personal conduct unbecoming of a student of Social Work, by the three-fourths vote of the chapter, after the Executive Committee has made a thorough investigation, and the member so charged has been granted an impartial hearing before the Executive Committee. Dismissal from the Social Work Department or University is cause for automatic recommendation for expulsion.

For more information, students may refer to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Phi Alpha National Honor Society, Lambda Psi Chapter

**Statement of Understanding**

At the beginning of each academic year, or as a condition for changing one’s major to Social Work, every Social Work major is required to thoroughly review the handbook, and then sign and submit the *Statement of Understanding Form* to the Department of Social Work Office (by the second week of the semester, or two weeks after declaring Social Work as your major).

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

As a Social Work student...

1. I understand that I am expected to adhere to the values, ethics, and standards of Messiah University, the Department of Social Work, and the profession of Social Work.
2. I commit myself to seeking increased understanding of the Christian faith.
3. I understand that as a Social Work student it is the student’s responsibility to be intentional about developing the competencies to practice Social Work.
4. I understand that it is the expectation of the Department of Social Work and of the profession to act in a professional manner at all times.
5. I realize that although I may be accepted to the Social Work major at Messiah University, if my professional development is not deemed satisfactory by the Department faculty or the University, the Department has the right and responsibility to request a reevaluation of my acceptance and suitability for the major.

My signature below indicates that I understand and agree to the expectations of a Social Work major, and that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by all policies and guidelines established by Messiah University and the Messiah University Department of Social Work. My signature also indicates that I authorize the Department to regularly review my progress within the major and to evaluate my academic and disciplinary records for the purpose of monitoring my eligibility for progression in the Social Work major. I understand that eligibility to continue at any time in the Social Work major is contingent upon satisfactorily meeting all stated expectations and progression in the major criteria.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date

### Goodness of Fit Policy

As a CSWE-accredited program, The Messiah University Social Work Program adheres to the University's Community Covenant and profession's ethical standards as outlined in the [NASW Codes of Ethics](#) in evaluating social work students' fit for the social work profession. This policy applies to students' ethical responsibilities in the following areas as stated in the NASW Code of Ethics:

1. [Responsibilities to clients](#)
2. [Responsibilities to colleagues](#)
3. [Responsibilities in practice settings](#)
4. [Responsibilities as professionals](#)
5. [Responsibilities to the social work profession](#)
6. [Responsibilities to the broader society](#)

Process:

1. Students will review and sign the Goodness of Fit form to acknowledge acceptance of the Goodness of Fit Policy.
2. The student's advisor will document and communicate concerns to the student and the Department Chair in accordance with the NASW's ethical responsibilities to colleagues under [sections 2.08 Impairment of Colleagues, 2.09 Incompetency of Colleagues, and 2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues.](#)
3. The student will develop a formal action plan with the support of the social work advisor and Department Chair to address the concern(s). Failure to follow the action plan may result in dismissal from the social work program.
4. The Social Work Program will follow Messiah University's policy on academic probation, eligibility, suspension, and dismissal as stated in the [Academic Policies](#).

I acknowledge that I have read and understand Messiah's BSW Program's Goodness of Fit Policy.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_