



Master of Social Work Program

Student Handbook

Fall 2019

This handbook is the property of the Clarke University Social Work Department.

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CLARKE UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK
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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

This Master of Social Work (MSW) Program manual contains information important to faculty, students, and agency field supervisors. Students in the MSW program are responsible for the information in the handbook. All policies and procedures specifying rights and responsibilities of students contained in the Clarke catalog and student handbook apply to MSW students. The current university catalog and handbook contain explicit procedures for adjudication of students' rights.

History of the Social Work Program

Clarke University has a long history of providing Social Work Education which began in the 1960's. It was the first Social Work Program in Dubuque, IA. A cooperative social work program began informally in 1969 and formally in 1973 when Clarke and the University of Dubuque partnered to offer a social work major. Loras College joined the partnership in 1975. In 1995, as part of a self-study process, the Tri-College Social Work Program ended with the University of Dubuque withdrawing from the program. An application and self-study for reaffirmation as the Bi-College Program were submitted by Loras College and Clarke College and were accepted by the Council in 1995.

On August 22, 2008, the President of Clarke College, Joanne Burrows, SC, Ph.D., announced that the bi-college affiliation between Clarke College and Loras College would continue through 2008-2009 academic year beyond which Clarke College would continue to independently offer its Social Work program beginning in the fall of 2009. This decision was based primarily on the need to integrate and assess the general education outcomes in the upper-division courses and to address the challenges associated with reconciling two different calendars. The decision was welcomed as an opportunity to set a new course in the delivery of the Social Work Program at Clarke University.¹ It was determined that the program would be revised to strengthen its relationship to the mission of the university and to the community that it serves.

The BSW program received its initial accreditation in June 2013. The Master of Social Work program was approved by the Higher Learning Commission in October of 2013 to begin in the fall of 2014. In January of 2014, Clarke University's application for candidacy was approved by the Council on Social Work Education and received initial accreditation in March 2017

SECTION II: GENERAL INFORMATION

Master of Social Work Mission

The mission of the Clarke University Social Work Program is to educate students in practice methods, skills, and concepts that advance the empowerment and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. We develop mindful, engaged social workers who are prepared to competently serve their communities, responsibly engage in advocacy, and compassionately bend the arc of the university towards justice. This commitment flows from the mission of

¹ The name was changed to Clarke University in 2010.

Clarke University and the values of the social work profession. The program is enriched by our commitment to these themes:

- A focus on people's strengths
- The importance of cultural humility
- The advancement of social and economic justice
- The promotion of the Common Good

MSW Goals

1. Provide students with advanced interpersonal and critical thinking skills in order to engage effectively with others in change efforts.
2. Ground student in the values and ethics of the social work profession.
3. Develop student's capacities to work effectively within medical and mental health settings in order to meet the needs of diverse populations.
4. Provide opportunities for students to engage in real world settings that include inter-professional collaboration, and allows students to experience the importance of context in service delivery.

MSW Outcomes

The outcomes for the bachelor of social work students are based on the 9 core competencies provided by the Council on Social Work Education.

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

SECTION III: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

A. Nondiscrimination Policy

The Clarke Social Work Department follows Clarke University's nondiscrimination policy:

Clarke University does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, color, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or disability in its educational programs, admissions policies, financial aid, athletic, and other university administered programs. Clarke University complies with all pertinent state and federal regulations concerning affirmative action, non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity. Hate crimes will be referred to the City of Dubuque law enforcement for appropriate investigation and action.

(Clarke University Student Handbook).

B. MSW Academic Policies

Students should consult the current catalog and course syllabi for the most up to date policies regarding:

1. Class attendance and dismissal from class
2. Withdrawal from a course

Grading System: Course grades employed at the university are assigned on the basis of criteria appropriate to each discipline, such as: research papers, written and oral examinations, oral presentations, projects, lab reports, and class participation. Assigned values employed in permanent student records are as follows:

- A (4.00 pts.) Outstanding performance
- A - (3.67 pts.)
- B+ (3.33 pts.)
- B (3.00 pts.) minimum performance for all Social Work courses
- B - (2.67 pts.)
- C+ (2.33 pts.)
- C (2.00 pts.) Less than satisfactory performance
- C - (1.67 pts.)
- D+ (1.33 pts.)
- D (1.00 pts.)
- D - (0.67 pts.)
- F (0.00 pts.) Failure — Minimal achievement level not met
- FA (0.00 pts.) Failure due to non-attendance
- WP Student withdrew passing
- WF Student withdrew failing
- W Administrative Withdrawal
- I Incomplete

Grades of W, WP, and WF are not computed into a student's GPA.

C. Academic Advising

Each student in the MSW program is assigned a faculty advisor to assist with academic needs, course registration, referrals to support services, and to serve as mentor. Faculty advisors meet with first year MSW students near the fall semester midterm to provide students with feedback from all of their faculty members regarding their academic and overall performance in the program. Advisors use a Professional Behavior Rubric to present this feedback to the student.

D. Admission Requirements

The following are required to be considered for admission to the MSW:

1. Prerequisite classes: Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Psychology, Biology, and Statistics.
2. Completion of any undergraduate program from a regionally accredited college or university. Must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in major field of study.

3. To be considered for the Advanced-Standing Program, must have completed an undergraduate degree from a social work program (accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)) within the last seven years. Course grade of a B in undergraduate social work courses and a C in statistics will qualify students for advanced standing status. A bridge course is required for those who earned their undergraduate social work degree more than seven years ago.
4. A two to three page essay reflecting the following: Applicant's interests and professional goals; and Applicant's knowledge and commitment to the profession of social work. This essay will be used to evaluate knowledge and commitment to the profession of social work as well as writing and thinking abilities.
5. A listing of Social Work related employment or volunteer experience.
6. Three highly qualified recommenders to complete and submit a recommendation form. At least one recommender must be able to confirm your academic ability and one must confirm your professional ability or potential as a social worker.
7. Have official transcripts sent to Clarke University.
8. Complete an in-person or skype interview.
9. If applicable, a minimum TOEFL PBT score of 550 or IBT score of 80 if English is not a first language.

E. Field Education Admission Requirements

Field education is required for all students in the Clarke University Master of Social Work Program. Students must meet the following criteria to be admitted into the field education program. Criteria for admission to the generalist-year of field education for full-time students includes being accepted into the MSW program, completion of the entrance to field education form, and passing a criminal background history check 30 days prior to beginning field education. The Director of Field Education reviews the entrance to field education form and works with the student to secure a placement. For part-time generalist-year students, maintaining a grade point average of 3.0 or higher and demonstration of professional behavior (via rubric) is also considered part of the criteria for admission to field education along with the other items previously mentioned.

Criteria for admission to field education for specialized practice-year placements includes completion of the entrance to field education form, a GPA of 3.0 or higher, at least acceptable demonstration of professional behavior (based on the mid-term rubrics reviewed with advisor), and passing a criminal background check 30 days prior to beginning field education. The demonstration of professional behavior means that students have the basic abilities to acquire professional skills, mental and emotional abilities, professional performance skills and scholastic performance outlined later in this manual. The rubrics are reviewed by the Director of Field Education. If additional review is necessary the student's advisor and MSW program director are included in the review.

Similarly, criteria for admission into the field education program for advanced-standing students includes admission into the MSW program, completion of the entrance to field education form, and passing a criminal background history check 30 days prior to beginning field education.

Upon meeting field admission requirements, students meet with the Director of Field Education. During this meeting, students are asked to further discuss areas of interest for their field practicum and any accommodations needed, and typically identify two or three potential field placement sites. The Director of Field Education informs each agency about interested students, verifies their interest in hosting a student, and reminds them interview process. Agency professionals are encouraged to treat their appointment with the student as a job interview. Students are then provided the contact information and are responsible for emailing their resume, scheduling and completing their interviews, and notified the director of field education once they have completed their interviews.

The student will have access to an electronic copy of the MSW Field Manual upon entrance into the MSW program via Moodle and the Source.

Students should be aware that past problems (including, but not limited to criminal conviction; substantiated complaints of child or vulnerable adult abuse; previous termination from paid or volunteer positions) may limit employment and field education opportunities. The most effective way to mitigate potential limitations is by being forthcoming about past problems and providing evidence that there have been successful corrective efforts.

SECTION IV: Standards for Social Work Education

Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance, Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance, and Academic Grievances²

A. Evaluating Academic Performance

The Clarke MSW Program evaluates the academic performance of its students in four general areas: basic abilities to acquire professional skills, emotional stability, professional performance skills, and MSW scholastic performance. Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a program. *Both professional behavior and scholastic performance comprise academic standards.*

Issues of mental health, substance abuse, anxiety, and severe stress should be confronted and managed before the student enters the MSW program. The admission, advising and academic review processes are designed to support student success in the MSW program.

1. Basic Abilities to Acquire Professional Skills

Communication Skills

Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.

Interpersonal Skills

Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the

² Adapted from The University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work

profession. These include self-awareness, compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others. A competent student takes appropriate responsibility for one's own behaviors and considers the impact of these behaviors on others.

Critical Thinking Skills

Exhibits sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field. Demonstrates grounding in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge, and research—including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge to professional practice.

2. Emotional Stability

Stress Management

Demonstrates the ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. This is demonstrated by asking for help from appropriate sources before situations escalate, being able to problem solve alone and with others, utilizing effective self-care, and processing with others appropriately.

Physical and Behavioral Health

Student seeks and effectively uses help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Student engages in counseling or seeks out support and help for personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health.

3. Professional Performance Skills

These expectations of students apply to the classroom, field practicum, and community while enrolled in the Clarke MSW Program.

Professional Commitment

Demonstrates a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession, as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics.

Professional Behavior

Demonstrates behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in classroom, field, and community. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect a professional presentation of self. Works effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. Advocates for him/herself in an appropriate and responsible manner and uses proper channels for conflict resolution. Shows a willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, and uses such feedback to enhance professional development.

Self-Awareness

Articulates and demonstrates knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences affect thinking, behavior, relationships, and social work practice. Accurately assesses one's own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice.

Ethical Obligations

Behavior in the program (including classroom and field) demonstrates adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the NASW Code of Ethics and the practice behaviors associated with the 10 core competencies.

4. MSW Scholastic Performance

Students must maintain a 3.0 in all MSW courses and are considered to be in academic difficulty if their overall GPA drops below 3.0. Students that receive less than a B- in a MSW course will be individually reviewed. Grades of C- or lower will not count towards graduation requirements. If the course is a program requirement, it must be retaken.

B. Accommodations for Disabilities

No otherwise qualified student shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the Clarke Bachelor of Social Work Program. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation to provide equal opportunity to meet academic criteria for professional behavior and scholastic performance.

Any otherwise qualified student with a disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify the Director of Academic Resource and Disability Services in the MARC at Clarke. The director will evaluate the disability documentation and accommodation request and will work with the student and the program to determine appropriate accommodations

C. Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance and Professional Behavior

Three levels of review may occur in addressing concerns in student's academic performance or professional behavior. The level of review depends upon the potential severity of the concern. For example, scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student will adhere to university's integrity policy.

Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, advisors, or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty and/or program directors will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow university procedures related to student performance issues.

Behavior that will result in a review and may result in a dismissal from the MSW program include:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under Scholastic Performance,
- Behavior in violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics,
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior,
- Any threat or attempt to harm someone else, and/or
- Committing a criminal act during the course of study.

Three Levels of Review

1. Individual Consultation

An individual consultation involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the MSW program meeting any of the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, that faculty member will:

- Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
- Apprise the Director of the MSW Program, Academic Advisor, and/or Director of Field Education of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student.
- Document dates and content of meetings with students.

If a problem arises in field, the agency-based field supervisor will discuss concerns directly with the student and with the Director of Field Education. Please see the MSW Field Handbook for more information on this process.

In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews, pursuant to this section.

2. Director of the MSW Program Consultation

When concerns have not been resolved following an individual consultation, then the faculty member and student will meet with the Director of the MSW Program. Depending on the circumstances, the academic advisor may also be present. The Director of the MSW Program will:

- Gather information to determine the nature of the concerns.
- Work with the student and faculty to create a written plan to resolve the concerns, modify student behavior, and/or seek appropriate help.
- Document dates and content of meeting(s).
- Determine if a department consultation is necessary.

3. Department Consultation

When concerns have not been resolved following a Program Director consultation, the Director may recommend a department consultation. A department consultation involves the faculty member, student, academic advisor, department chair, MSW Program Director, and any faculty members who have had direct experience with the student in the classroom or field education. A department consultation is conducted when the student is being considered for dismissal from the MSW program.

The Director of the MSW Program and academic advisor will notify the student in writing of the concerns and meeting date with sufficient time to prepare for the meeting. They will convene a meeting with the appropriate faculty and the student to review information and written plans from the individual and Director of the MSW Program

consultations, and discuss and determine the current nature of the problem and identify alternatives for its remediation.

After the review, the members of the department consultation will determine the next steps; the Director of the MSW Program will inform the student of the decision in writing within 10 calendar days of the review. Decisions may include one of the following actions:

- Establish formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program. In these situations, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to remain in the program.
- Termination from the MSW program.

In any department consultation, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that these concerns have been discussed with the student and attempted to be ameliorated, where appropriate.

D. Academic Grievances

Students enrolled in the MSW program have the right to register grievances related to academic matters or professional behavior concerns including decisions that are the result of reviews outlined above. Students are assured freedom from reprisals for bringing a grievance.

Procedures for Handling Grievances

Students are encouraged to voice complaints about academic or professional behavior concerns through 1) direct contact with the professor; 2) the department chair; 3) the vice president for academic affairs. Formal recourse on all academic matters is printed in the Clarke University Student Handbook which is available online at http://www.clarke.edu/media/files/Student_Life/Student_Handbook/Student%20Handbook%202015-16%20FINAL.pdf or through the office of Academic Affairs. The student grievance procedure details students' rights and responsibilities as well as the steps to follow to lodge a complaint.

Students are strongly encouraged by the faculty to pursue the established university line of redress. The university policy serves to engage students in professional practice and empower them to advocate for themselves. In the Social Work Department, complaints about professors are discussed first with the person involved, and, if not resolved, the issue is discussed with the department chair (if appropriate). If the parties involved in complaint are unable to find a satisfactory resolution and further action is deemed appropriate, students must follow the procedure for their specific complaints as outline in the Clarke Academic Catalog or the Clarke University Student Handbook. If a students has a complaint and is unsure with whom to address the concern, the student may complete the Student Complaint Assistance Form, which can be found on the Clarke University website at <http://www.clarke.edu/form.aspx?ekfrm=26135>.

E. Termination

If termination from the MSW program is the outcome of the three level review process, the student would be informed by the Director of the MSW Program. In addition, the student would

receive a formal letter from the chair of the department and the Dean of Graduate Studies informing them of their termination from the MSW program.

Please refer to the MSW Field Manual for policies related to the review process and/or termination from field education.

SECTION V: CLARKE MSW PROGRAM CURRICULUM

A. Curriculum Sequence

The curriculum is constructed in such a way that the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession are introduced, reinforced, expanded upon, and integrated. The program is intentionally designed to offer coursework and field education concurrently. The majority of the students are able to complete the program following this design. Part-time students are offered the option of a summer block placement in order to stay on track to complete the program in three years. The following table illustrates the Program's generalist-year social work curriculum.

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK – TWO YEAR (64 Credit) PROGRAM

First Year – Generalist Curriculum

Fall Semester

COURSE	Credits
SW 513 Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3
SW 515 Practice I: Social Work with Individuals	3
SW 530 Social Work Research I	3
SW 540 Social Work with Communities and Organizations	3
SW 599 Generalist Social Work Field Practicum I	4

Spring Semester

COURSE	Credits
SW 521 Practice II: Social Work with Groups and Families	3
SW 525 Diversity and Privilege	3
SW 581 Social Policy: Form and Analysis	3
SW 531 Advanced Issues in Practice	3
SW 599 Generalist Social Work Field Practicum I	4

Second Year – Specialized Practice Curriculum (Integrated Health)

Fall Semester

COURSE	Credits
SW 553 Psychopathology	3
SW 565 Motivational Interviewing in Social Work Practice	3
SW 602 Integrated Health I	3
<u>Integrated Health Specialization Courses*</u> SW 630 Crisis Intervention SW 631 Social Work and Problematic Substance Use SW 632 Domestic Violence SW 634 Advanced Clinical Practice SW 635 Non-Profit Management and Grant Writing SW 636 School Social Work	3
SW 699 Specialized Practice Social Work Field Practicum	4

Spring Semester

COURSE	
SW 603 Integrated Health II	3
<u>Integrated Health Specialization Courses*</u> SW 630 Crisis Intervention SW 631 Social Work and Problematic Substance Use SW 632 Domestic Violence SW 634 Advanced Clinical Practice SW 635 Non-Profit Management and Grant Writing SW 636 School Social Work	6
SW 650 Social Work Research II	3
SW 699 Specialized Practice Social Work Field Practicum	4

*Three Integrated Health Specialization Courses are Required

B. Field Practicum

Field practicum (placement and seminar) is an integral component of the learning process. Completion of field education is required at both the generalist and specialized practice levels of the program due to invaluable opportunity it provides students to transfer classroom learning to real world application. The generalist level field practicum offers students the opportunity to become competent, empathic, and value-based generalist social workers. While the specialized practice level field practicum allows students to strengthen and enhance their social work skills, knowledge, and application of theory within the program's specialization area of integrated

health. For additional information regarding the Field Practicum Program, please see the MSW Field Manual.

C. Life and/or Work Experience

The Clarke University Social Work Program does not give course credit for life experience or previous work experience. Each student's experience is unique and may be helpful in some areas of the MSW Program. These experiences, however, do not count for credit. Each student must complete all of the MSW courses to ensure that all skills, theories, and learning opportunities are covered.

SECTION VI: SOCIAL WORK STUDENT SERVICE/ASSOCIATIONS

All students have the opportunity for involvement at every level of university governance. Student representatives work on committees with faculty and administration regarding policymaking for academic life, and admissions. Students who have suggestions regarding the MSW Program are encouraged to contact the Chair of the Social Work Department.

A. Social Work Advisory Board

Members of this board include social work faculty, student representatives, at least one graduate of the social work program, local practitioners, and field agency supervisors. This committee meets once a semester to discuss curriculum changes, the field education program, and improvements that will enhance the quality of the education available to social work students.

The board provides an opportunity for agencies who supervise field placement students to voice their opinions and give input on social work preparation and skills necessary for a successful practicum experience. Student representatives are given the opportunity to actively participate in these meetings and be involved in the decision-making process regarding their education. The advisory board works closely with program faculty on program evaluation and accreditation self-study.

B. Social Work Student Club

Students in the BSW program are invited to participate in the Social Work Student Club. This is a student led organization supported by the Clarke Student Association (CSA) and a faculty sponsor. Roles, responsibilities, and sponsored events vary year to year based on the interests of the students involved. Members of the Social Work Club representing the BSW and MSW programs.

C. NASW - National Association for Social Workers

The development of a professional identity in students is not only desirable, but of the utmost importance. It is believed that the development of a professional identity impacts and enhances one's helping efforts and effectiveness as a generalist social work practitioner. To further develop and instill in students a professional identity, the Clarke MSW Program encourages students to become members and participate in the National Association for Social Workers as well as other local, state and national social work organizations.