

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

## **POLICIES, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**



**GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY**  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**2010**

**School of Social Work  
College of Community and Public Service  
Grand Valley State University  
(616) 331-6550**

*This Student Handbook has advisory status and does not supersede the GVSU Undergraduate or Graduate catalogs.*

**GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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**WELCOME STUDENTS**  
**STARTING GVSU SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

*“Welcome to the School of Social Work at Grand Valley State University!”*

The Grand Valley State University School of Social Work exists to train competent social workers at the BSW and MSW levels. To that end, we partner actively, consistently and intently with constituents to provide rigorous, ethical training consistent with the 2008 Council on Social Work Education standards. These standards require that we train social workers at the foundation and advanced levels prepared to competently demonstrate the 10 CSWE Core Competencies and their associated practice and / or advanced practice behaviors. Training within our program involves students directly in this process through an ongoing, comprehensive competency assessment model, beginning at orientation. The BSW and MSW curricula combine with our dynamic assessment process to assure that our graduates are competent, by CSWE standards, and in the contexts in which they practice. Our model is one of comprehensiveness, in competency training and in approach, as we employ the Generalist and Advanced Generalist models. These assure that social workers trained at GVSU are prepared to practice across contexts, within multiple systems simultaneously, and maintain a developmental, inclusive and ecological stance. Our team is committed to Adult Learning, empowering students to promote and receive simultaneously in a learning environment that continuously challenges each of us to uphold the ethics of our profession, promote diversity of all forms, incite a spirit of inquiry and an environment of student mentoring and support. To that end, we share accountability for exchange of information, accountability for our behaviors as professionals and students, and put forth the pages that follow as our guide in this pursuit. Our policies are designed to be dynamic and in service first to our profession and to our constituents in an effort to assure a competently trained workforce. We invite your feedback on the University and School-specific policies and encourage this as an ongoing dialogue in this shared adventure. In the spirit and legacy of the profession of social work, I welcome you to our program on behalf of our dedicated team of professionals. Welcome to the GVSU School of Social Work.

Gwendolyn Adam, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Director, School of Social Work  
Grand Valley State University

**ACCREDITATION STATEMENT**

The Grand Valley State University School of Social Work is accredited by the Commission on Social Work Education (CSWE). For further information regarding the standards of our program for implicit and explicit curriculum, please see the following link for further information on the 2008 Educational Policy and Academic Standards (EPAS): <http://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/> or <http://www.cswe.org/>

## **SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

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## **A. GVSU SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

### **NASW Code of Ethics**

Students will be expected to follow the ethical guidelines of the profession of social work as communicated through the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics. This can be found using the following link:

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

### **SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION STATEMENT**

The School of Social Work derives its mission from Grand Valley State University's mission of liberally educating students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies. Toward that end, the School prepares its students to attain social work practice and professional leadership; advance the field's knowledge of effective professional practice and education through research and evaluation; enhance and sustain the welfare and well-being of the citizens, organizations and communities of West Michigan, the state, the nation, and the world; and further the goals of the University and of the social work profession in this region and beyond.

All of the School's programs are grounded in the profession's body of knowledge, values and skills that support and enhance the opportunities, resources, and capacities of people to achieve their full potential; prevent and alleviate personal, interpersonal, organizational and societal problems; and improve the conditions that limit human development and adversely impact the quality of human life. The School celebrates and affirms the importance of diversity in all of its forms, and it supports the expansion of human rights, cultural competence, empowerment, social and political justice, civic participation and equality in West Michigan and around the world.

The School's legacy emphases on social justice and on meeting the significant professional workforce needs of an expansive West Michigan social services sector remain strong. A third distinctive feature of the School is its integration and promotion of domestic and international service learning opportunities that prepare of students for 21<sup>st</sup> century practice in increasingly global economic and social contexts.

### **GVSU School of Social Work Goals**

The School of Social Work's goals are derived from its mission to serve Western Michigan and the broader world through effective teaching, the provision of a professional curriculum rooted in the tenets of a liberal education, focused scholarship; an emphasis on diversity and social justice, and a commitment to serve individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in need.

The goals of the School also reflect and help operationalize Grand Valley State University's mission to educate students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies. Acknowledging the unique geographic position of the School within West Michigan, which has many impoverished rural, suburban and urban communities as well with a thriving core of philanthropic family foundations; these goals also reflect the School's longstanding commitment to promoting, achieving and sustaining social and economic justice, multiculturalism, and diversity through the efforts of its faculty, students and professional staff.

The School's goals further reflect its commitment to prepare competent and effective professionals, develop and promulgate social work knowledge, and provide leadership to human service delivery systems and the social work profession as a means of achieving its mission. Echoing the profession's history, purposes, and philosophy, these goals are based on a shared commitment to educate social workers for effective practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of the profession's knowledge, value, and skill bases; and, provide leadership and other key supports to the social services communities and the social work profession in West Michigan and beyond.

The School's overarching goals are:

1. The School of Social Work provides a generalist social work curriculum in a high quality learning environment that prepares BSW graduates for entry level social work practice that promotes social and economic justice and endeavors to address poverty and other social problems within organizational, individual, and community contexts within, but not limited to, West Michigan and the state of Michigan.
2. The School of Social Work provides an MSW foundation curriculum in a high quality learning environment that prepares students for success in the advanced generalist community social work concentration.
3. The School of Social Work provides an advanced generalist social work curriculum that prepares MSW graduates for autonomous social work practice that promotes social and economic justice and endeavors to address poverty and other social problems within organizational, individual, and community contexts within, but not limited to, West Michigan and the state of Michigan.
4. Graduates of all programs of the School of Social work exhibit a professional commitment to enhancing social justice, promoting human rights, ensuring the dignity and worth of all individuals, practicing with integrity, upholding one or more of the profession's *Code of Ethics*, incorporating diversity into their practice, and advancing the profession's reputation and knowledge base.

5. Graduates of all programs of the School have the knowledge, skills and values they need to create and/or identify and acquire new information about professional social work practice as such information becomes available throughout the course of their careers.
6. Graduates of all programs of the School are competent users of technologies and proficient consumers of training opportunities that support their lifelong professional development, and they are committed to remaining professionally and technologically proficient throughout the course of their careers in the social work profession.

The overarching goals of the **BSW Generalist Program** are:

1. Prepare students for entry into the social work profession as generalist practitioners.
2. Prepare students for continued professional development opportunities.

The goals for the **MSW Advanced Generalist Program** are:

1. To award the graduate degree to individuals who are not only skilled practitioners but also capable of assuming leadership and scholarly professional roles in the community, region, state, national and global communities.
2. To contribute to the ongoing development of professional social work knowledge and practice through research and scholarly inquiry that employ state-of-the-art technology.
3. To maximize the strengths and assets within local, regional, statewide, national and international social welfare and human services communities through direct participation in organizing, leading and participating in effective capacity building and social and political action activities.

## **STUDENT ADVISING AND MENTORSHIP**

The School of Social Work is committed to excellent advising and mentorship to students. Through the combined efforts of the faculty, staff and the College of Community and Public Service Advising Center, students are provided with comprehensive and centralized advising services. Faculty and staff offer students academic advising support:

- Degree planning including general education and major and minor requirements
- Development and review of degree progress plans
- Personalized course selection assistance
- Dissemination of Grand Valley policies and procedures
- Outreach and support to students in academic jeopardy

- Assistance with the creation of long-term goals, and
- Referrals to faculty mentors in the appropriate social work program

Students are also offered support for mentoring. Faculty members providing professional advisement and mentorship are expected to:

- Augment the information provided to the students by the CCPS Advising Center.
- Provide advice and counsel regarding the University and community, social work profession career/employment planning, special projects, practicum experiences.
- Provide advice and counsel to advisees when they are experiencing academic difficulty.
- Advocate on behalf of the student/advisee to find appropriate solutions to academic problems.
- Support and protect the rights of students by informing them of grievance procedures.

#### BSW program:

Upon declaration of social work as a major, students will be assigned a faculty mentor to assist the student with questions regarding the profession. In addition, students are encouraged to make contact with the College of Community and Public Service Undergraduate Advising Center.

<http://www.gvsu.edu/ccpsadvising/>

#### MSW program:

Each student who is admitted to the School of Social Work will be assigned a faculty advisor/mentor from the School of Social Work Faculty. Notification of this is included in the letter of acceptance to the MSW program.

- All students are encouraged to set up an appointment to see their faculty advisor each semester.
- Faculty members will post office hours for advising, mentorship and professional questions.

### **EPAS CORE COMPETENCIES, PRACTICE BEHAVIORS AND ADVANCED PRACTICE BEHAVIORS**

Grand Valley State University School of Social Work curriculum is designed, in both the BSW and MSW programs, to teach the EPAS Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors. All core competencies are taught within the curriculum of the BSW program and the MSW Primary Foundation courses while the Advanced Practice Behaviors are taught to students within the MSW Advanced Generalist Concentration. All practice behaviors appropriate to each program are supervised and evaluated within the field practicum.

### **2.1.1 Core Competency: Identify with social work profession**

- a. Advocate for client access to the services of social work.
- b. Practice personal reflection and self correction to assure continual professional development.
- c. Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
- d. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance and communication.
- e. Engage in career-long learning.
- f. Use supervision and consultation.

#### **2.1.1 Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

**g. Continually employ and model conscious use of self, self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-correction in practice situations.**

**h. Adhere to and model professional roles and boundaries.**

**i. Advocate for client systems in a manner that addresses culturally influenced barriers to services presented by practitioners, organizations and larger systems.**

### **2.1.2 Core Competency: Apply ethical principles in practice.**

- a. Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
- b. Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/ International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles.
- c. Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts.
- d. Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

#### **2.1.2 Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

**e. Demonstrate leadership in applying ethical reasoning for problem resolution.**

**f. Systematically question statements of value and recognize the underlying ethics of policies, theories and models.**

### **2.1.3. Core Competency: Apply critical thinking in practice**

- a. Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom.

- b. Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.
- c. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

**Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

**d. Differentially select and implement strategies for assessment and intervention utilizing evidence based practice and best practice methods.**

**e. Produces practice-ready presentations and documents that could include case presentations, journal articles, grant applications, legislative brief/summary(ies).**

4. *Core Competency: Incorporate diversity into practice (2.1.4)*

- a. Recognize the extent to which a culture's structure and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, create, or enhance privilege and power.
- b. Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
- c. Recognize and communicate their understanding of importance of difference in shaping life experiences.
- d. View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

**Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

**e. Transform one's behavior in response to recognition of one's biases based in difference and culture**

**f. Modify and adapt mainstream knowledge and interventions to meet needs of diverse populations and that challenge oppression**

**g. Apply strengths and empowerment perspectives as practice approaches with diverse groups at multiple levels.**

**h. Examine one's role as the life-long learner in the area of diversity and culture.**

5. *Core Competency: Advocate for human rights and social justice (2.1.5)*

- a. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
- b. Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.
- c. Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

**Advanced Practice Behavior:**

**d. Demonstrate necessary skills to change social institutions to be more humane and responsive.**

**e. Identify weakness in various systems and develop and propose social policies that promote social justice.**

6. *Core Competency*: Engage in informed research **(2.1.6)**

- a. Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.
- b. Use research evidence to inform practice.

**Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

- c. Design and implement various steps in the research process.**
- d. Integrate qualitative and quantitative research in all aspects of advanced generalist practice.**

7. *Core Competency*: Apply knowledge of human behavior in the social environment **(2.1.7)**

- a. Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
- b. Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

**Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

- c. Differentially apply theories and frameworks of human behavior and the environment, recognizing underlying assumptions, values, strengths, and weaknesses of these theories.**

8. *Core Competency*: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-

being **(2.1.8)**

- a. Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being.
- b. Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

**2.1.8 Advanced Practice Behavior**

- c. Analyze, evaluate, formulate, and advocate for policies that respond to emerging local, regional, and societal trends to advance well-being.**
- d. Analyze specific policies and practices and their impact on diverse populations.**

9. *Core Competency*: Respond to contexts that shape practice **(2.1.9)**

- a. Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.
- b. Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.

### **2.1.9 Advanced Practice Behavior:**

**c. Analyze context and demonstrate the ability to initiate innovative and resourceful action with regard to emerging local, regional, and societal trends and needs.**

10. *Core Competency:* Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities **(2.1.10)**

- a. Substantively and effectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups organizations and communities.
- b. Use empathy and other interpersonal skills.
- c. Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.
  
- d. Collect, organize, and interpret client data.
- e. Assess client strengths and limitations.
- f. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives.
- g. Select appropriate intervention strategies.
  
- h. Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals.
- i. Implement interventions that enhance client capacities.
- j. Help clients resolve problems.
- k. Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients.
- l. Facilitate transitions and endings.
  
- m. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

### **2.1.10 Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

#### **Engagement**

**n. Adapt one's ability to engage diverse clients and client systems.**

#### **Assessment**

**o. Show increasing ability to independently conduct assessments as a continuing and dynamic process that guides goal and objective setting with clients and client systems at multiple levels.**

#### **Intervention**

**p. Differentially utilize a variety of evidence based tools and strategies with more depth and breadth to assess client systems at all levels and guide interventions.**

**q. Evaluate the multi-system dimension of client problems and design approaches that affect change at multiple client system levels.**

#### **Evaluation**

**r. Evaluate advanced generalist practice interventions across systems at multiple levels with diverse populations.**

**Professional Social Work Abilities**

Professional abilities are attributes, characteristics or behaviors that are required for success in the profession. Ten abilities were identified through a study conducted at UW-Madison in 1991-1992. The teaching and practice of “professional use of self” is an essential part of being a social worker. The expectation is for the student to develop increasingly professional skills.

**Students are expected to demonstrate behaviors consistent with professional standards. Failure to do so may result in remedial planning and consistent failure to exhibit professional behavior may result in delays or removal from the Social Work program.**

*Before completion of the School of Social Work Program, students are expected to demonstrate professional entry-level skills in these abilities.*

These intrapersonal behaviors are reflective of the EPAS core competencies and are aligned with the National Association of Social Workers [NASW] Code of Ethics.

The ten professional abilities and definitions are:

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1. Commitment to Learning  
The ability to self-assess, self-correct and self-direct; to identify needs and sources of learning; and to continually seek new knowledge and understanding.
2. Interpersonal Skills  
The ability to interact effectively with patients, families, colleagues, other professionals and the community: to deal effectively with cultural and ethnic diversity issues.
3. Communication Skills  
The ability to communicate effectively (i.e., speaking, body language, reading, writing and listening) for a variety of audiences and purposes.
4. Effective Use of Time/Resources  
The ability to obtain the maximum benefit from a minimum investment of time and resources.
5. Use of Constructive Feedback  
The ability to identify sources of and seek out feedback and to effectively use and provide feedback for improving personal interaction.

## 6. Problem-Solving

The ability to recognize and define problems, analyze data, develop and implement solutions and evaluate outcomes.

## 7. Professionalism

The ability to exhibit appropriate professional conduct and to represent the profession effectively.

## 8. Responsibility

The ability to fulfill commitments and to be accountable for actions and outcomes.

## 9. Critical Thinking

The ability to questions logically; to identify, generate, and evaluate elements of logical argument; to recognize and differentiate facts, illusions, assumptions, and hidden assumptions; and to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant.

## 10. Stress Management

The ability to identify sources of stress and to develop effective coping behaviors.

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Generic Abilities by the Physical Therapy Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison (1995). *Journal of Physical Therapy Education* 9(1).

The School of Social Work recognizes that professional behaviors are influenced through education and experiences and expect to see students engage in new skills in an appropriately developmental manner.

# **1. Commitment to Learning**

## **Behavioral Criteria**

### Beginning Level

- Identifies priorities
- Formulates appropriate questions
- Identifies and locates appropriate resources
- Demonstrates a positive attitude (motivation) toward learning
- Offers own thoughts and ideas
- Identifies need for further information

### Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

- Prioritizes information needs
- Analyzes and subdivides large questions into components
- Seeks out professional literature
- Sets personal and professional goals
- Identifies own learning needs based on previous experiences
- Plans and presents an in-service, or research or case studies
- Welcomes and/or seeks new learning opportunities

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

- Applies new information and re-evaluates performance
- Accepts that there may be more than one answer to a problem
- Recognizes the need and is able to provide rationale for potential solutions to problems
- Reads articles critically and understands limits of application to professional practice
- Researches and studies areas where knowledge base is lacking

## **2. Interpersonal Skills**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

- Maintains professional demeanor in all classroom and clinical interactions
- Demonstrates interest in patients as individuals
- Respects cultural and personal differences of others; is non-judgmental about clients' lifestyles
- Communicates with others in a respectful, confident manner
- Respects personal space of client's and others
- Maintains confidentiality in all clinical interactions
- Demonstrates acceptance of limited knowledge and experience

Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

- Recognizes impact of non-verbal communication and modifies accordingly
- Assumes responsibility for own actions
- Motivates others to achieve
- Establishes trust
- Seeks to gain knowledge and input from others
- Respects role of support staff

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

- Listens to client but reflects back to original concern
- Works effectively with challenging clients
- Responds effectively to unexpected experiences
- Talks about difficult issues with sensitivity and objectivity
- Delegates to others as needed
- Approaches others to discuss differences in opinion
- Accommodates differences in learning styles

## **3. Communication Skills**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

- Demonstrates understanding of basic English (verbal and written): uses correct grammar, accurate spelling and expression
- Writes legibly
- Recognizes impact of non-verbal communication: maintains appropriate eye contact, listens actively

Developing Level (builds on preceding levels)

- Utilizes non-verbal communication to augment verbal message
- Restates, reflects and clarifies message
- Collects necessary information from the client interview
- Given feedback, produces organized written messages

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding level)

- Modifies communication (verbal and written) to meet the needs of different audiences
- Presents verbal or written message with logical organization and sequencing
- Maintains open and constructive communication
- Utilizes communication technology effectively
- Dictates clearly and concisely

## **4. Effective Use of Time and Resources**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

- Focuses on tasks at hand without dwelling on past mistakes
- Recognizes own resource limitations
- Uses existing resources effectively
- Uses unscheduled time efficiently
- Completes assignments in timely fashion

Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

- Sets up own schedule
- Coordinates schedule with others
- Demonstrates flexibility
- Plans ahead

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding level)

- Sets priorities, reorganizes as needed and has ability to say “No”
- Considers client’s goals in context
- Performs multiple tasks simultaneously and delegates when appropriate
- Uses scheduled time with each patient efficiently

## **5. Use of Constructive Feedback**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

- Demonstrates active listening skills
- Demonstrates a positive attitude (openness) toward feedback
- Critiques own performance
- Maintains two-way communication

Developing level (builds on preceding level)

- Assesses own performance accurately
- Utilizes feedback when establishing goals

Provides constructive and timely feedback  
Develops plan of action in response to feedback

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

Seeks feedback from others  
Modifies feedback given to others according to their learning styles  
Manages differences of opinions with sensitivity  
Considers multiple approaches when responding to feedback  
Utilizes self-assessment for development and learning

## **6. Problem-Solving**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

Recognizes problems  
States problems clearly  
Describes known solutions to problem  
Identifies resources needed to develop solutions  
Begins to examine multiple solutions to problems

Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

Prioritizes problems  
Identifies contributors to problems  
Considers consequences of possible solutions  
Consults with others to clarify problem

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

Implements actions leading to solutions  
Reassesses action plans  
Evaluates outcomes  
Updates problem-solving strategies with current research  
Recognizes need for continuous quality improvement

## **7. Professionalism**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

Knows the NASW Code of Ethics  
Demonstrates awareness of state licensure regulations  
Abides by facility policies and procedures  
Projects professional image  
Attends professional meetings  
Demonstrates honesty, compassion, courage and continuous regard for all

Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

Abides by NASW Code of Ethics  
Abides by state licensure regulations  
Identifies positive professional role models  
Discusses societal expectations of the profession

- Acts on moral commitment
- Involves other health care professionals in decision-making
- Seeks informed consent from patients

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

- Demonstrates accountability for professional decisions
- Treats patients within scope of expertise
- Discusses role of physical therapy in health care
- Keeps patient as priority

## **8. Responsibility**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

- Demonstrates dependability
- Demonstrates punctuality
- Follows through on commitments
- Recognizes own limits

Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

- Accepts responsibility for actions and outcomes
- Provides safe and secure environment for clients
- Offers and accepts help
- Completes projects without prompting
- Budgets time wisely

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

- Directs clients to other professionals when needed
- Delegates as needed
- Encourages client accountability

## **9. Critical Thinking**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

- Raises relevant questions
- Considers all available information
- States the results of scientific literature
- Recognizes “holes” in knowledge base
- Articulates ideas

Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

- Feels challenged to examine ideas
- Understands scientific method
- Formulates new ideas
- Seeks alternative ideas
- Formulates alternative hypotheses
- Critiques hypotheses and ideas

Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

Exhibits openness to contradictory ideas

Assesses issues raised by contradictory ideas

Justifies methods selected

Determines effectiveness of theoretical and applied methods

Recognizes own biases and suspends personal judgment

Encourages others to think critically

## **10. Stress Management**

### **Behavioral Criteria**

Beginning Level

Recognizes own stressors or problems

Recognizes distress or problems in others

Seeks assistance as needed

Maintains professional demeanor in all situations

Developing Level (builds on preceding level)

Maintains balance between professional and personal life

Demonstrates effective affective responses in all situations

Manages feedback (+/-) appropriately

Establishes outlets to manage stressors

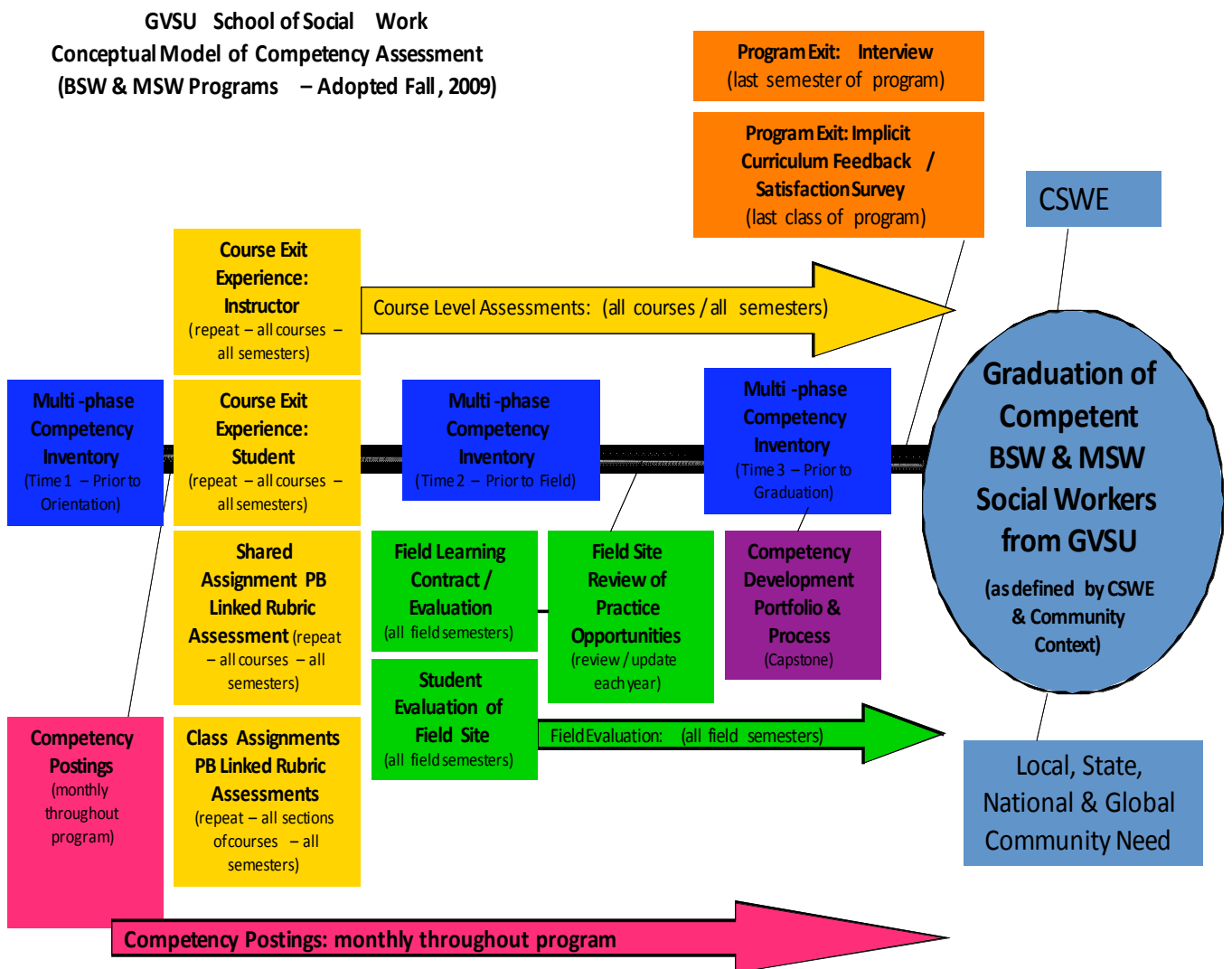
Professional Entry Level (builds on preceding levels)

Prioritizes multiple commitments

Responds calmly to urgent situations

Recognizes and tolerates ambiguities in the social environment

## Processes used for evaluating academic and professional performance.



The conceptual model of competency assessment, shown above, indicates the many ways data related to curriculum, teaching and learning are gathered and evaluated in GVSU's School of Social Work. These processes are essential to evaluate the education processes of professional competencies and practice behaviors and data are evaluated and used to revise and improve curriculum resulting in students who are better prepared to contribute to the profession of social work.

Students complete multiple assessments beginning at the time of orientation, monthly online competency postings, complete course exit experience evaluations at the end each class, contribute to the data base through submission of “shared assignments” and electronic submission of individual course assignments and participate in the development of field practicum learning contracts, multiple field assessments and the development of electronic comprehensive competency portfolios.

## **School of Social Work Curricular Policy**

### **1. GVSU Student Code Link: Rights and Responsibilities**

The expectations of students are outlined in detail in the GVSU catalogue, specifically enumerated in the Student Code\*. This can be found using the following link: <http://www.gvsu.edu/studentcode/>

Regarding GVSU “Student Rights and Responsibilities” the GVSU Student Code states the following:

*“Section 100.00: INTRODUCTION.*

*A University is charged with a specialized purpose in that it must seek, disseminate and use knowledge in pursuing truth. The pursuit of truth is a sensitive undertaking that flourishes only under special conditions or circumstances. To create and sustain these special conditions, the academic community has long upheld these beliefs:*

- *That freedom of inquiry and freedom of expression are indispensable elements of academic life;*
- *That a thoughtful and reasoned search for truth can be conducted only in an atmosphere free of intimidation or coercion;*
- *That respect for the rights of others is essential;*
- *That tolerance for differing opinions is a fundamental requirement of the open forum;*
- *That adaptation and change are necessary processes for preserving and renewing an institution; and*
- *That neither violence nor the threat of violence has any place inside the academy.*

*Accordingly the University recognizes the following rights as limited or regulated by the following responsibilities, by constitutional and statutory duties of the University, and by duly adopted University policies and regulations. Most of such regulations are to be found within this Student Code.”*

<http://www.gvsu.edu/studentcode/index.cfm?id=A9435AC7-FF46-F38C-A71CD6D72B6E8D3C>

Students can refer to this website for information on many topics including:

Student Conduct  
Rules and Regulations  
Judicial Process  
Student Grievance Procedures outside the School of Social Work  
Plagiarism

## **2. Academic Credit**

Grand Valley State University School of Social Work does not award academic credit for student's life experiences or previous work experiences.

## **3. Repetition of Curriculum**

In accordance with CSWE Educational Policies and Academic Standards, BSW graduates entering the MSW program do not repeat curriculum that has been mastered in their BSW programs.

## **4. Transfer Credit**

The School of Social Work determines the award of credit for previous academic coursework to address the issue of redundancy. It is noted that:

- The maximum of 30 semester hours of transfer credit for graduate courses completed with a grade of B or better at another CSWE accredited MSW program.
- Course waivers are issued to eliminate needless duplication, and to enhance student learning, but not to circumvent policies, practices and standards, established by the CSWE, the University, and the School of Social Work faculty.
- Coursework from an accredited SW program may be accepted when the student demonstrates proficiency through; examination of the transcript, reading of the course descriptions submitted by the student from the completed coursework to determine course content, and the student success in the course as noted by the GPA. The Director of the program may recommend the credit be accepted and waive the GVSU program requirement to avoid redundancy.
- Transfer credits are not granted for courses completed more than five years before enrollment in the Grand Valley MSW program or for courses taken toward the completion of another degree.

## **5. Academic Honesty**

The GVSU Student Code states “The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles....” Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. Offering the work of someone else as one’s own is plagiarism.

“Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.” Details of GVSU policies and rules regarding academic honesty are described in the GVSU Catalog ([www.gvsu.edu/catalog](http://www.gvsu.edu/catalog)) General Academic Policies and Regulations, and Student Code.

The School of Social Work considers violations of rules regarding academic honesty to be a serious offense, which may result in lowering a grade on an assignment or test, failure of an assignment or test, failure of the course or dismissal from the social work program.

## **6. Student Grievance Procedure**

“The grievance procedure may be used to resolve any student complaint except those covered by a specific university procedure”. 2009-2010, GVSU Student Code

Section 400.01 definition of grievance

“A grievance is a student’s formal complaint concerning an incident, policy or condition within the institution. This process can not be used by a student to grieve the actions of another student”. GVSU Student Code

Within the School of Social Work, students with a complaint regarding incidents, policies or conditions may follow the following steps to find resolution.

- The student seeking to grieve an incident concerning a faculty member should first discuss the issue with the faculty involved to attempt to find resolution. Students should seek resolution through counsel with their student advisor regarding ambiguous concerns.
- If resolution is not found, the student should inform the director of the appropriate program, BSW or MSW, in writing regarding the grievance. The grievance should be a complete and specific account of the incident and include names, dates, location, evidence and the remedy the student seeks.

- The program director may use their discretion in the formation of faculty committee to review and make a recommendation to the program director. Those named in the grievance may be asked to respond.
- The student will be notified in writing within 5 working days of the faculty committee recommendation.
- Grade appeals must be submitted immediately after receipt of the final grade and/or no later than the first day of the subsequent semester. See GVSU catalog [www.gvsu.edu/catalog](http://www.gvsu.edu/catalog)

## **7. Appeal Procedure**

If the student is not satisfied with the recommendation of the committee, they may file a written appeal within 10 working days to the next level of administration, in this case, the Director of the School of Social Work (unit head). The appeal should contain any new information which the student may have and a clarification of old information. The Director may also gather additional information and will respond within 15 working days of receiving the information with a decision to the student.

If the student is not satisfied with the recommendation of the Director, they may appeal to the Dean of the College, in writing within 10 working days. The Dean's office will notify the student regarding their decision within 10 working days of receiving the appeal.

## **8. GVSU Academic Review**

### **Bachelor Students:**

The GVSU academic review procedure, including probation, dismissal and appeal for undergraduate students is highlighted in the College of Community and Public Service website.

*While the university requires an overall GPA of 2.0 to maintain good academic standing, please note that the BSW student is required to maintain an overall 3.0 GPA in Social Work courses.*

<http://catalog.gvsu.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=636#UndergraduateAcademicPolicies>

### **Master Level Students:**

A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher must be earned in the entire degree program in order to graduate. A graduate student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 after completion of nine hours of graduate level coursework will be placed on academic probation.

Such students must achieve at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average after the next nine hours of coursework to remain in the program. A cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or below after nine hours of graduate level coursework means automatic dismissal from the university.

Students who have been academically dismissed may apply for readmission after one year. Students who wish to appeal their dismissal should direct a written appeal to the dean of the appropriate college. Appeals for dismissal made by non-degree students must be directed to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

For additional information, please link to the GVSU catalog.

<http://catalog.gvsu.edu/content.php?catoid=13&navoid=477>

## **9. School of Social Work Academic Review**

- The response to students who fail to demonstrate academic success, professional or ethical behaviors will be the appointment of an academic review committee. This committee will be appointed to investigate the circumstances.

This review committee may consist of:

1. BSW or MSW Program Director.
  2. The student's Academic Faculty Advisor.
  3. Other appropriate faculty members.
- The committee will review all of the information available on the student and determine if the student meets the criteria for dismissal.
  - If the student is in jeopardy of dismissal from the program, the committee will determine if the student should be immediately dismissed from the program or if a remedial plan should be implemented.
  - If a remedial plan is designed with a student in jeopardy of dismissal, a contract will be written and signed by the student and the committee members which outlines the specific requirements the student must follow to regain good standing.
  - Failure to follow the outlined requirements in the contract will result in dismissal from the program.
  - When the contract's procedures have been satisfactorily completed, the student will be returned to good standing.

## **10. Leave of Absence**

If a student must take a leave of absence due to reasons of illness or family responsibilities, etc. the student should submit a letter to the Director of the BSW or MSW program indicating the reason for such a request, and when the leave will begin and end. Leaves are generally granted for one year and hold in abeyance the academic time needed to graduate. If time is needed beyond the time requested, students should notify the program director in writing. Students may be asked to demonstrate competence in coursework previously completed prior to reentry.

It is the student's responsibility to follow university rules regarding leaves of absence, such as withdrawing from enrolled classes.

### **11. Dismissal from the University**

The School of Social Work is under no obligation to assist students who have been dismissed from the University, whatever the reason for their dismissal. However, the School may initiate a process to decide whether or not to support the student's application for readmission to the University. During this process, the School may decide not to support the student's appeal for readmission to the University. The student then may appeal for reinstatement without the School's support.

### **12. Dismissal from the Program**

Gross failure to uphold the professional behaviors, ethical or legal standards necessary to obtain a social work license may lead to a remedial plan or dismissal from the School of Social Work.

### **13. Felony or Misdemeanor Conviction**

The application for licensure as a social worker asks questions about: felony conviction, misdemeanor conviction punishable by imprisonment for a maximum term of two years, misdemeanor conviction involving the illegal delivery, possession, or use of alcohol or a controlled substance (including motor vehicle violations), and treatment for substance abuse in the past 2 years. The Michigan Board of Licensing reviews applications for licensure and will decide about moral fitness. The Michigan Board of Licensing may refuse to grant a social work license to the applicant. Before beginning the Social Work program at GVSU, the student who has a concern about licensure may contact the Michigan Board to ask for clarification of the policy and pre-certification of moral fitness.

Please see the GVSU School of Social Work Field Manual to see how a felony or misdemeanor may impact some field placements.

## **B. MSW PROGRAM**

## **Overview**

In 2009, the School's mission and its MSW program goals were revised to meet the 2008 EPAS by incorporating measurable and observable professional competencies and professional practice behaviors to create an improved framework for evidenced-based practice. As in many other professions, such as medicine, nursing and psychology, the gold standard in education has become preparing students to provide services that have been grounded by substantial, rigorous research. Future teaching in all school of social work must now focus preparing students to demonstrate the professional skills that have such an evidence base and have been endorsed by CSWE. Students who can demonstrate such skills and behaviors in the MSW program will be prepared for roles in employment and civic engagement.

## **Foundation Curriculum**

The primary purpose of the Foundation Curriculum is to provide the foundational knowledge essential for effective and competent professional social work practice from an Advanced Generalist perspective. The foundation content is consistent with the values and ethics of the social work profession. Human behavior and the social environment content emphasizes the knowledge and skills needed for social work competence with problems that occur in the interface between people and their social environments and institutions, as well as examines client strengths. Moreover, consistent with the Advanced Generalist perspective, each foundation course includes relevant content about the role of social policy, social research, social work practice, human diversity, and populations-at-risk. Advanced Generalist social workers are also concerned with societal conditions in their efforts to improve the quality of life and employ knowledge and skills regarding social policy and service delivery systems to improve social and economic justice.

The foundation curriculum addresses the necessity for the broad range of social work skills needed to strengthen the adaptive capabilities of individuals and to influence social and physical environments to be more responsive to human needs. Students completing the Foundation Curriculum develop the knowledge, values, and skills that transfer from one setting, population-at-risk, geographic area, and social problem to another. The goal of the Foundation Curriculum is to ensure students achievement of the Behavioral Benchmarks associated with each practice behavior.

Courses in the Foundation Curriculum expose students to new advances in practice knowledge through an integrative approach to Generalist social work practice, beginning to build a bridge from the Generalist method to Advanced Generalist approach to social work practice. Assessment and intervention on three levels, individual, environment, and societal, along with skill development in a variety of methods, individual, family, group, organizational, and community, is stressed in each foundation course. This model of social work practice illustrates a multi-level approach to Generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students learn the general problem-solving method of social work practice, along with acquiring an introduction to Advanced

Generalist skills to be further delineated in the concentration curriculum described below.

### **Advanced Generalist Concentration**

As Jones and Pierce (2006) have noted, advanced generalist models such as Grand Valley's are built on a liberal education foundation that promotes the use of critical thinking skills and conscientious application of advanced practice social work knowledge, skills, values and ethics. Here, as in other schools of social work, the advanced generalist serves a dual purpose. First the model integrates the advanced practice skills concentration curriculum to equip graduates to meet the diverse demands presented by unique social service delivery system; second it provides the context (or implicit curriculum) for an effective program students in which the program achieves its goals. The School's advanced generalist concentration is designed to:

- enhance the depth and breadth of practice in a multi-method, multi-level, and theoretically grounded perspective;
- refine and shape advanced practitioners through acquisition of professional competencies to assess, intervene, and evaluate within all systems and within all practice environments;
- affirm that human problems derive from a complex interplay of psychological, social, cultural, economic, political, biological and physical forces;
- prepare students to effectively intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities;
- expand and enhance the foundation of generalist social work core competencies with advanced knowledge and practice behaviors;
- acquire advanced skills in leadership, collaboration, administration, advocacy, assessment, problem solving, intervention, cultural competency, communication, collaboration, community building, program evaluation, organizational management, policy analysis, and scientific inquiry.

The integration of professional practice skills within this curriculum model results in mastery of social work's core competencies and advanced generalist practitioners are proficient in a wide range of interventions, skills, roles, theories, systems and settings.

### **MSW Study Options**

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<sup>1</sup> Jones, J. B., & Pierce, D. (2006). The medium is the message: Development of a praxis-based comprehensive project model in an advanced generalist MSW program. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work* 26(1/2), 51-72.

The School of Social Work offers students several options for completing the degree that include:

- Regular admission full-time: curriculum must be completed within 2 years
- Regular admission part-time: curriculum must be completed within 4 years
- Advanced standing full-time: curriculum must be completed within 3 consecutive semesters – summer entry only
- Advanced standing part-time: curriculum must be completed within 6 semesters - any semester entry

### **M.S.W. and M.P.A. Degree Programs**

The Schools of Social Work and Public and Nonprofit Administration offer prospective students the option to pursue both graduate degrees offered by these units (MSW and MPA). This entails taking coursework in both disciplines in order to be well prepared to seek middle- and upper-level management position in either public or private human service organizations. Those earning the two degrees will attain the knowledge, skills and values of the social work profession with the advanced administrative and technical expertise developed through the study of public administration to become leaders in their organizations and communities. Currently, Grand Valley State University policies enable a student to pursue the MSW degree as the first master degree and the MPA degree as a second master degree by completing 21 credits in the MPA program.

For additional information about admission and curriculum regarding this combination of degrees, please check the following link to the GVSU catalog:

[http://catalog.gvsu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=14&poid=2292](http://catalog.gvsu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=14&poid=2292)

## MSW Foundation and Advanced Generalist Concentration Requirements

### Primary Foundation: Required PRIOR to Advanced Concentration Courses

Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 600	Cultural Competency for Social Work	3	4, 5.	
Required	SW 601	Foundations of Social Work Practice	3	1, 2.	
Required	SW 603	Integrated Methods	3	3, 10.	
Required	SW 610	Social Welfare Policy and Services I	3	8.	
Required	SW 620	Human Behavior & Social Environment	3	7, 9.	
Required	SW 690*	Social Research I	3	6.	

\* BSW graduates may test out of this course.

### ADVANCED GENERALIST CONCENTRATION

Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 622	Psychopathology and Social Deviance	3	3, 4, 10.	
Required	SW 662	Substance Abuse and Social Work Practice	3	4, 7, 10.	
Required	SW 693	Social Research II	3	3, 6.	
<b>Select 1 of 4</b>	SW 612	Social Policy: Families & Children	3	8, 9.	
	SW 614	Social Policy and Mental Health	3	8, 9.	
	SW 630	Social Work: Global Service Learning	3	8, 9.	
	SW 631	Domestic Cross Cultural Service Learning	3	8, 9.	
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 670	Social Work Practice with Individuals	3	4, 10.	
<b>Select 1 of 2</b>	SW 672	Social Work Practice with Groups	3	4, 7, 10.	
	SW674	Social Work Practice: Families and Children	3	1, 4, 7, 10.	
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
<b>Select 2 of 4</b>	SW 660	Grant Writing & Resource Development	3	5, 6, 10.	
	SW 676	Community & Social Planning	3	4, 7, 10.	
	SW 678	Human Services Administration and Supervision	3	5, 6, 10.	
	SW 679	Program Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation	3	5, 6, 10.	

### FIELD EDUCATION COURSES

Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 650	Field Education I (Foundation)	3	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 651	Seminar I (Foundation)	1	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 652	Field Education II (Advanced Concentration)	3	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 653	Seminar II (Advanced Concentration)	1	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 654	Field Education III (Advanced Concentration)	3	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 655	Seminar III (Advanced Concentration)	1	1 - 10.	

### MSW ELECTIVE COURSES

Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
<b>Select 1</b>	SW 613	Human Rights & Social Work	3	5, 6, 10.	
	SW 630	Social Work: Global Service Learning	3 or 4	8, 9.	
	SW 631	Cross Cultural Service Learning	3	8, 9.	
	SW 665	Aging in Contemporary Society	3	4, 8, 9.	
	SW 667	Holistic Practice in Social Work	3	6, 10.	
	SW 671	Social Work Practice in Health Care	3	4, 10.	
	SW 673	Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents	3	4, 10.	
	SW 675	Child Welfare and Family Services	3	2, 4, 5, 8, 9	
	SW 660	Grant Writing and Resource Development	3	5, 6, 10.	
	SW 680	Special Topics in Social Work	3		
	SW 694/695	Master's Thesis	3/3		
SW 664**	School Social Work	4			

\*\*For School of Social Work Certification, this course is taken over and above the required 60 credits to graduate.

Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required/ Corequisite Field III	SW 640	<b>Seminar in Advanced Generalist Practice</b>	3	<b>1 - 10.</b>	

## MSW Advanced Standing - Advanced Generalist Concentration Requirements

Primary Foundation: Required PRIOR to Advanced Concentration Courses					
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 690*	Social Research I	3	6.	

\*BSW graduates may test out of this course.

ADVANCED GENERALIST CONCENTRATION					
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 622	Psychopathology and Social Deviance	3	3, 4, 10.	
Required	SW 662	Substance Abuse and Social Work Practice	3	4, 7, 10.	
Required	SW 693	Social Research II	3	3, 6.	
<b>Select 1 of 4</b>	SW 612	Social Policy: Families & Children	3	8, 9.	
	SW 614	Social Policy and Mental Health	3	8, 9.	
	SW 630	Social Work: Global Service Learning	3	8, 9.	
	SW 631	Domestic Cross Cultural Service Learning	3	8, 9.	
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 670	Social Work Practice with Individuals	3	4, 10.	
<b>Select 1 of 2</b>	SW 672	Social Work Practice with Groups	3	4, 7, 10.	
	SW674	Social Work Practice: Families and Children	3	1, 4, 7, 10.	
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
<b>Select 2 of 4</b>	SW 660	Grant Writing & Resource Development	3	5, 6, 10.	
	SW 676	Community & Social Planning	3	4, 7, 10.	
	SW 678	Human Services Administration and Supervision	3	5, 6, 10.	
	SW 679	Program Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation	3	5, 6, 10.	

FIELD EDUCATION COURSES					
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required	SW 650	Field Education I (Foundation)	3	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 651	Seminar I (Foundation)	1	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 652	Field Education II (Advanced Concentration)	3	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 653	Seminar II (Advanced Concentration)	1	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 654	Field Education III (Advanced Concentration)	3	1 - 10.	
Required	SW 655	Seminar III (Advanced Concentration)	1	1 - 10.	

MSW ELECTIVE COURSES					
Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
<b>Select 1</b>	SW 613	Human Rights & Social Work	3	5, 6, 10.	
	SW 630	Social Work: Global Service Learning	3 or 4	1 to 10.	
	SW 631	Cross Cultural Service Learning	3	8, 9.	
	SW 665	Aging in Contemporary Society	3	4, 8, 9.	
	SW 667	Holistic Practice in Social Work	3	6, 10.	
	SW 671	Social Work Practice in Health Care	3	4, 10.	
	SW 673	Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents	3	4, 10.	
	SW 675	Child Welfare and Family Services	3	2, 4, 5, 8, 9.	
	SW 660	Grant Writing and Resource Development	3	5, 6, 10	
	SW 680	Special Topics in Social Work	3		
	SW 694/695	Master's Thesis	3/3		
SW 664**	School Social Work	4			

\*\*For School of Social Work Certification, this course is taken over & above the required 60 credits to graduate.

Status	Course	Course Title	Credits	Competencies	Completed
Required/ Corequisite Field III	SW 640	<b>Seminar in Advanced Generalist Practice</b>	3	<b>1 – 10.</b>	

## **Admission Policies for Regular MSW & MSW Advanced Standing**

GVSU School of Social Work welcomes applications to the Master's program. There are two distinct admission dates that guarantee review:

- **February 1** for students applying for “advanced standing”
- **March 15** for students applying for “regular admission”
- Applications received later than these dates are not guaranteed review.
- The following standards are requirements for admissions:

### **I. Admission Requirements for Advanced Standing Students:**

#### Policies and Procedures for Advanced Standing

As described on the University website and in the University Catalog (2009, p. 718), the School of Social Work recognizes superior academic performance by students who have graduated from a Council on Social Work Education-accredited undergraduate social work or social welfare department or program within five years prior to enrollment in the MSW program. Advanced standing students are exempted from 15 hours of first-year core or foundation courses and may therefore accelerate their graduate study by completing only the remaining 45 hours of degree requirements in one calendar year

Specific courses exempted are SW 600, SW 601, SW 603, SW 610, and SW 620. All Advanced Standing students may take a 100-item diagnostic proficiency examination in research methods. A score of 75% or higher on the test will qualify the student for exemption from SW 690 Research Methods I. This reduces to 42 hours the degree requirements remaining for completion.

- Applicants must have an overall GPA no lower than 3.0 in their undergraduate coursework
- Official transcripts must note that the BSW degree has been awarded from a CSWE accredited program
- All BSW foundation coursework must have 3.0 or higher to receive credit
- Three professional letters of recommendation
- Applicants must submit a copy of the most recently completed field practicum evaluation
- Must demonstrate successful (3.0 GPA) performance across ALL areas of field with no major concerns

- If student cannot access a copy of their Field Evaluation, they must submit a letter from their most recent Field Instructor highlighting competency across EPAS standards
- EPAS Competency Question Response

### **Advanced Standing Graduate Eligibility Degrees**

Advanced standing is awarded only to graduates holding degrees from baccalaureate social work programs:

- Accredited by CSWE
- Recognized by its International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service
- Covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors

## **II. Admission Requirements for Regular Degree-Seeking MSW applicants:**

### Degree-Seeking MSW Applicants

Students who meet the following University requirements and the additional requirements of their chosen program are granted degree-seeking status.

- Submit the appropriate application for admission, including a recent resume, and a personal statement.
- Possess the baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
- Have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- Have a broad liberal arts background, as well as a minimum of 18 credit hours in social or behavioral science courses
- Official transcripts sent from each undergraduate and graduate institution attended.
- Enclose a non-refundable \$30.00 application fee.

### **Admission Policies for Regular MSW and MSW Advanced Standing**

Applicants for regular admission must demonstrate 18 hours of social science coursework and complete the social sciences checklist to indicate the courses that meet this requirement.

Undergraduate academic work must reflect a liberal arts foundation.

If the applicant does not meet requirements but believes there are circumstances or conditions that strengthen their application, they are invited to follow the appeal process as indicated below.

### **III. Application Review Process:**

The application review process includes the following 3 phases:

1. Applicants submit all required application materials.
2. All applications are reviewed by teams made up of 3 faculty members using a standard rating checklist. Three “yes votes” result in admission, 2 “no votes” is an automatic decline, and 1 “no vote” and all appeal applicants are reviewed in phase 3.
3. Applicants in phase 3 are required to submit a written response to a social justice scenario and are evaluated on 2 criteria; critical thinking and writing performance. Three “yes votes” at this phase result in admission, 2 “no votes” result in an automatic decline, and 1 no vote results in the faculty team the recommending to the Director of Admissions a complete application file review and an applicant interview.
4. Applicants are informed in writing of their admission status in no more than 30 days after the beginning of the application review process.

### **Appeal Admission:**

- If do not meet basic requirements please complete “Appeal Admission Form” at the time of application.
- Highlight the areas that do not meet admissions criteria.
- Take this opportunity to provide a rationale regarding alternative criteria that strengthens your application.

Please see the GVSU School of Social Work website BSW and MSW program sites for application forms and further information: <http://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/>

### **Non-Degree Seeking Students:**

Applicants who are not seeking the MSW degree or have not completed all of the admissions requirements are considered to be Non-Degree seeking. These students may earn up to six social work credits in the School of Social Work by selecting up to two of the following courses: SW600, SW601, SW610 and SW620.

## **C. BSW PROGRAM**

### **Program Requirements**

The B.S.W. requires successful completion of 120 semester hours of college credit. The program is built on a foundation of liberal arts and 34 hours of required cognate courses and international courses. In addition, students must take 44 credit hours of coursework in the major, including the areas of human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social research, integrated methods in social work practice, and the field practicum in social work.

### Major Requirements

SW 150 Human Needs in Complex Societies (SS/C) (3 credits)  
SW 316 Interviewing in Social Work (3 credits)  
SW 317 Generalist Practice I (3 credits)  
SW 318 Generalist Practice II (3 credits)  
SW 319 Social Welfare Policy and Services (3 credits)  
SW 340 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I (3 credits)  
SW 341 Human Behavior and the Social Environment II (3 credits)  
SW 348 Field Practicum Laboratory (2 credits)  
SW 430 Social World Research (4 credits)  
SW 490 First Senior Level Field Practicum (3 credits)  
SW 491 Second Senior Level Field Practicum (3 credits)  
SW 492 Field Practicum Social Work Seminar I (1 credit)  
SW 493 Field Practicum in Social Work Seminar II (1 credit)  
SW 495 SWS Senior Seminar in Social Work (capstone) (3 credits)

Social Work Electives - six credits are required

SW 300 Pluralism in American Society  
SW 320 Children and Child Welfare Services  
SW 322 Health Care and Social Services  
SW 354 Social Work: International Service  
SW 380 Special Topics in Social Work  
SW 461 Multicultural Issues in Social Work Practice  
SW 499 Independent Study in Social Work (1 to 4 credits)  
Note: The student may take no more than four credits of SW 499.

International Relations Program - three credits are required

GPY 235 World Regional Geography  
HST 210 Empire, Culture and Conflict  
HST 331 Modern Latin America  
HST 337 The Islamic World  
HST 338 Modern Middle East  
HST 386 Europe Since World War II  
LAS 374 Revolution In the Americas  
PLS 211 Introduction to International Relations  
PLS 313 International Organization

PLS 327 Politics of Developing Countries  
SS 351 Family and Gender In the Developing World  
SW 354 Social Work: International Service (one time only)

Recommended free electives - students are not restricted to this list.

ANT 204 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology  
PA 270 Public and Nonprofit Administration  
PA 439 Community Analysis  
PHI 102 Ethics  
PHI 325 Ethnics in the Profession  
PSY 310 Behavior Modification  
PSY 315 The Psychology of Sex Differences  
PSY 316 The Psychology of Human Intimacy and Sexuality  
SOC 379 Love, Sex and Gender  
SOC 383 Sociology of Women  
SOC 390 Advanced Seminar on Social Issues  
SS 381 Death and Dying  
WGS 200 Introduction to Gender Studies  
WGS 300 Foundations of Feminism  
WGS 380 Special Topics in Women's Studies

For courses, curriculum, other degree related information, and faculty listings, please visit the Grand Valley State University catalog online at [www.gvsu.edu/catalog](http://www.gvsu.edu/catalog).

### **Admission**

All undergraduate social work majors must formally apply to the School of Social Work during the first semester of their junior year and when they are enrolled in SW 317, SW 319, SW 340 and SW 348. Application procedures are explicated in the first class session of SW 348 and application materials must be completed and submitted by September 30 of each year.

### **BSW Candidacy**

The School's BSW Candidacy admission procedures are administered by its BSW Director and the assigned faculty. Social work majors are encouraged to work with the Advising Center to be sure that all academic requirements are in place for Candidacy. They are also referred to seek advice advisement from the BSW Program Director. Students apply online for candidacy and field placements for the BSW program.

1. The complete "Application for Candidacy for the BSW Degree and Field Placement" are reviewed by the BSW Program Director and the BSW Committee.

2. The BSW Committee consists of assigned faculty with primary responsibility for BSW curriculum. This group meets to review applications and information related to academic progress in coursework.

3. The Committee may:

- a. award candidacy, or
- b. award candidacy with condition(s), or
- c. deny candidacy.
- d. request additional information, or
- e. require a personal interview

4. The BSW Program Director reports the Committee's decisions to the Director of the School of Social Work and seeks settlement of any disputes.

5. Applicants are notified in writing of the Committee's decision within three weeks of the application deadline.

6. The applicant denied Candidacy may appeal to the Director of the School of Social Work.

Accepted applicants are regarded as candidates for the BSW degree, while those who were not accepted are referred for advisement and counseling. The Candidate for the BSW degree must maintain the 3.0 cumulative average in the social work courses.

To be eligible for Candidacy students must have:

1. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 (4.0 scale)
2. Completion of the following components of the general education curriculum:
  - a. All Foundation Categories; except Mathematical Sciences
  - b. Cultures Category: US Diversity
  - c. Basic Skills Categories: WRT150 and MTH110
3. School of Social Work Pre-requisite Course Requirements (See chart below)
4. Earned a minimum grade of B- (2.7) and not have repeated the following courses more than once: SW150, PLS 102; PSY 303; PSY or SOC 360; SOC 280 or SOC384; SOC 382 or SW300; ECON210 or ECON211 or SOC 385.

NOTE: For students seeking candidacy in Fall 2010 or later grades earned at another institution in these courses will be considered for admission into the SSW and must meet the grade and repeat criteria indicated above.

Please review the College of Community and Public Service Advising Center website by using this link: <http://www.gvsu.edu/ccpsadvising/>

### **Degree Requirements**

The B.S.W. requires successful completion of 120 semester hours of college credit. The program is built on a foundation of liberal arts and 34 hours of required cognate

courses and international courses. In addition, students must take 44 credit hours of coursework in the major, including the areas of human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social research, integrated methods in social work practice, and the field practicum in social work.

Students who wish to major in social work must apply for candidacy status at the end of their sophomore year and must have a minimum overall grade point average of 2.5. A minimum overall average of 3.0 in major courses is required for continuation in candidacy status.

## GVSU BSW Generalist Social Work Requirements

Status	Course	Course Title	CR	Competency	Completed
<b>Fall Semester Year One – Freshman Year</b>					
Required	WRT 150 (Basic Skills)	Strategies in Writing	4		
Required	SW 150 (Gen Ed SS Y SW Core)	Human Needs in Complex Societies	3	1, 2.	
Required	SOC 201 (Gen Ed SS & SW Pre-req)	Introduction to Sociology	3		
Required	BIO 104 (Gen Ed LS/Lab & SW Pre-req)	Biology of People	4		
<b>Winter Semester Year One – Freshman Year</b>					
Required	MTH 110 (Basic Skills)	Algebra	4		
Required	PSY 101 (Gen Ed SS & SW Pre-req)	Introduction to Psychology	3		
Required	Gen Ed Course (Choose from Art, P&L, or Hst)		3		
Required	Gen Ed Course (Choose from Art, P&L, or Hst)		3		
Required	Gen Ed (Physical Science Non-Lab)		3		
<b>Fall Semester Year Two – Sophomore Year</b>					
Required	Gen Ed Course (Choose from Art, P&L, or Hst)	See General Ed Program for Course Info	3		
Required	Gen Ed Course (Choose a U.S. Diversity)		3		
Required	Gen Ed Course (Choose a World Perspectives)		3		
Required	PSY/SOC 360 (SW Pre-Requisite)	Social Psychology	3		
Required	PLS 102 (Gen Ed SS & SW Pre-req)	Amer. Government and Politics	3		
<b>Winter Semester Year Two – Sophomore Year</b>					
Required	PSY 303 (SW Cognate)	Psychopathology	3		
Required	SOC 280 or SOC 384 (SW Pre-req)	Social Problems or Sociology of Drug use/abuse	3		
Required	SOC 382 or SW 300 (SW Pre-req)	Minority and Ethnic Relations / Pluralism	3	SW 300: 4, 5.	
Required	ECO 210 or ECO 211 or SOC 385 (SW Pre-req)	Macro Eco or Micro Eco or Social Inequalities	3		
Required	Gen Ed Theme Course		3		
<b>~* Major Requirements *~</b>					
<b>Fall Semester Year Three - Junior Year</b>					
Required	SW 317 (SW Core)	Generalist Practice I	3	3, 4, 5, 10.	
Required	SW 319 (SW Core)	Social Welfare Policy and Services	3	8.	
Required	SW 340 (SW Core)	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3	7, 9.	
Required	SW 348 (SW Core)	Field Practicum Laboratory	3	1, 7, 9.	
Required	International Relations Course		3		
Required	General Elective		1		
<b>Winter Semester Year Three - Junior Year</b>					
Required	SW 316 (SW Core)	Interviewing in Social Work	3	1, 2.	
Required	SW 318 (SW Core)	Generalist Practice II	3	3, 4, 5, 10.	
Required	SW 341 (SW Core)	Human Behavior in the Social Environment II	3	7, 9, 10.	
Required	STA 215 (Gen Ed Math Sci and SW Major)	Statistics I	3		
Required	Gen Ed Theme Course		3		
<b>Fall Semester Year Four - Senior Year</b>					
Required	SW 490 (SW Core)	First Senior Level Field Practicum I	3	1 to 10.	
Required	SW 492 (SW Core)	Field Practicum Seminar I	1	1, 2, 3, 10.	
Required	SW 430 (SW Core)	Social Work Research	3	6.	
Required	SW Elective Course		3		
Required	General Elective or WRT 305 if needed		3		
<b>Winter Semester Year Four - Senior Year</b>					
Required	SW 491 (SW Core)	Second Senior Level Field Practicum II	3	1 to 10.	
Required	SW 493 (SW Core)	Field Practicum Seminar II	1	1, 3, 7, 10.	
Required	SW 495 (SW Core)	Senior Seminar in Social Work (Capstone)	3	1 to 10.	
Required	SW Elective Course		3		
Required	Gen Ed Theme Course		3		
Required	General Elective		3		
<b>Social Work Electives</b>					
Elective	SW 300	Pluralism in American Society	3	4, 5.	
Elective	SW 320	Children and Child Welfare Services	3	8	
Elective	SW 322	Health Care & Social Services	3	1, 3, 4.	
Elective	SW 354	Social Work: Global Service Learning	3	8, 9.	
Elective	SW 461	Multicultural Issues in Social Work Practice	3	4.	
Elective	SW 499	Independent Study in Social Work	1 - 4		

## **D. FIELD EDUCATION**

### **Field Philosophy**

In keeping with the most recent practice standards as outlined by the Counsel of Social Work education the Grand Valley State University School of Social Work recognizes the centrality of field education curriculum in addressing both foundation and advanced practice competencies at the MSW and BSW level respectively.

Field education curriculum provides students with an experiential and imitative learning opportunity to explore and use Social Work ideas, concepts and behaviors first encountered in the classroom. These learning opportunities are designed to further develop professional social work identity, self reflection and self awareness, and practice competence in each student. In each semester of field placement students develop concrete and measurable activities that address specific practice behaviors using the learning contract and assessment tool. The development and monitoring of these activities requires the collaboration of the student, the agency based field instructor and the university based faculty liaison. This model of collaborative competency based field education is implemented at both the BSW and MSW level.

Additional emphasis on the integration of coursework into the practicum is provided by the guided seminar coursework, providing students with the opportunity to actively reflect on the connection between classroom theory and agency application. Furthering the centrality and integrative nature of the field experience is the use of tenure and tenure track faculty actively engaged in teaching. Faculty ensures the reciprocal nature of the field practicum on courses and the field experience.

The School of Social Work is responsible for developing supervised student practice opportunities that allow for this integration of competencies and coursework in our communities. The field office is responsible for monitoring and reporting on aggregate student progress in practice so as to affect the development of curriculum that more fully prepares students for the realities of competent day to day practice. Field faculty works closely with directors of the BSW and MSW programs to review student preparation in courses and provides ongoing feedback regarding student and field instructor progress in attainment of competency in assigned professional practice behaviors.

### **Field Education Handbook Link:**

For further information on all policies and procedures related to BSW and MSW field education, please read the **GVSU School of Social Work Field Manual**,

available in the Field Education link on the School of Social Work website at:  
<http://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/>

## **E. STUDENT INFORMATION**

### **Disability Support Services (DSS)**

Grand Valley State University (GVSU) is committed to providing access to programs and facilities for all students, faculty and staff. GVSU promotes the inclusion of individuals with disabilities as part of our commitment to creating a diverse, intercultural community. It is the policy of GVSU to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended by the ADA Amendment Act (2008), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other applicable federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. GVSU will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

For further information, please see the GVSU link to the DSS website at:

<http://www.gvsu.edu/dss/index.cfm?id=6B84986F-C11E-96EE-2FBFBC8B49433A21>

### **Student Organizations**

The SSW supports the on-going activities of the Bachelor of Social Work student organization (BSWSO) and Master of Social Work student organization (MSWSO) and invites students of both programs to check the following websites for more information.

BSWO <http://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/bswso-8.htm>

MSWO <http://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/mswso-55.htm>

### **GVSU SSW List-serve**

The GVSUSSW list is an online discussion group provided for all faculty of the school of social work and students enrolled in School of Social Work classes. It is intended as a way of furthering communication between various parties on topics relevant to social work and specific to the GVSU School of social work.

TO SUBSCRIBE:

Send a message to [listserv@listserv.gvsu.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.gvsu.edu) Leave the subject line of the message blank. The first and only line of the message will read:

subscribe gvsussw

Please note there is a space between subscribe and gvsussw

TO UNSUBSCRIBE:

Send a message to [listserv@listserv.gvsu.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.gvsu.edu) Leave the subject line of the message blank. The first and only line of the message will read:

unsubscribe gvsussw

Please note there is a space between unsubscribe and gvsussw

Posts for distribution to all members of the list should be emailed to:

[gvsussw@listserv.gvsu.edu](mailto:gvsussw@listserv.gvsu.edu)

### **Scholarship Information**

The School of Social Work has long recognized the need for scholarships for social work students and has developed many opportunities for assistance. Please check this website link and watch for announcements on the SSW list-serve.

<http://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/school-of-social-work-scholarships-35.htm>

### **Financial Aid**

For a full review of all information and policies related to financial cost and aid, please see:

[http://catalog.gvsu.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=140#fina\\_aid\\_part](http://catalog.gvsu.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=140#fina_aid_part)

### **Assistantship Responsibilities**

<http://www.gvsu.edu/gsga/gs/index.cfm?id=B349D90C-DFDD-A347-3037065920B93734>

### **Grand Valley State University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs**

For the most up-to-date information regarding class scheduling for BSW and MSW courses, please check the online GVSU catalog.

[www.gvsu.edu/catalog](http://www.gvsu.edu/catalog)

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Campus Health Services

<http://www.gvsu.edu/campushealth/>

Department of Public Safety

<http://www.gvsu.edu/publicsafety/>

Career Services

<http://www.gvsu.edu/careers/>

Counseling

<http://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/>

Writing Center

<http://www.gvsu.edu/wc/>

Council of Social Work Education

<http://www.cswe.org/>

Michigan SW Licensing

<http://www.gvsu.edu/ssw/supervision-39.htm>

National Association of Social Workers

<http://www.socialworkers.org/>