

# **Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work**

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Graduate Program  
Student Policy Manual  
16<sup>th</sup> Edition  
2023-2024

**PLEASE NOTE: Current, updated policies apply to all MSW students regardless of year they entered into the MSW Program**

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*Welcome to Eastern Michigan University's School of Social Work Master's Program! We desire to support your educational growth and development as you prepare to enter the field as a master level professional and leader. Please know that we are committed to your education. We are here to support you!*

### **Faculty**

Faculty members are the heart of any academic program. The faculty members of the School of Social Work have wide-ranging interests and abilities and are dedicated to the profession of social work. Brief faculty educational and professional biographies can be found on the School of Social Work website at: <https://www.emich.edu/chhs/sw/faculty/index.php>.

### **Contact Information**

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## **Mission of the School of Social Work**

The Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work is age-friendly and student-supportive. It is founded on a commitment to social and economic justice and dedicated to advancing practices that are culturally responsive, anti-racist, and inclusive of all identities. Through the creation of strengths-based connections with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations, we:

- Attend to the vital roles of empowerment and interprofessional collaboration in combatting oppression and engaging communities to promote systemic change.
- Value, honor, and advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in all aspects of social work practice, including direct service, advocacy for equitable social welfare policies, and the fostering of community-based partnerships.
- Align our teaching, scholarship, and service with the core values of the profession.

The MSW program aligns with the School's mission of empowerment-oriented practice, is centered on collaboration, and is driven by the needs, strengths, and priorities of vulnerable, oppressed, underserved, and marginalized populations.

Grounded in the social work profession's values and ethics, graduates of our program advance:

- Critical thinking skills to respond to the increasingly complex challenges that impact our communities and promote social and economic justice
- Equitable practices that are culturally responsive, anti-racist, and inclusive of all identities
- Leadership skills in pursuit of social change

MSW students focus on one of 3 specialized areas of practice (Child & Family, Health and Aging, and Mental Health and Substance Use Recovery) as they enhance their skills, knowledge, and values to be leaders committed to the advancement of social justice-based practice through micro, mezzo, and macro prevention and intervention methods.

The MSW curriculum is grounded in a generalist practice perspective, which is defined as "the use of the problem-solving process to intervene with systems of various sizes, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities . . . the generalist operates within a systems and person-in-environment framework" (Boyle et al., 2009, p. 10).

## **Admissions Master of Social Work**

The Eastern Michigan University Master of Social Work program is designed for the working adult interested in advancing their knowledge and social work skills in working with oppressed and disenfranchised individuals, groups, and communities. The program is designed for part-time students and offers only evening and Saturday courses.

### **Admissions Requirements**

#### **Full Program**

A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university must be completed prior to matriculation. Candidates may apply while their degree is in progress, but degree completion demonstrated by an official transcript is necessary prior to beginning coursework in the MSW Program.

### **Advanced Standing**

A Bachelor of Social Work degree from a CSWE-accredited college or university or recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service must be completed prior to matriculation. Candidates may apply while their degree is in progress, but degree completion demonstrated by an official transcript is necessary prior to matriculation into the MSW Program.

### **Grade Point Average**

#### **Full Program**

A minimum GPA of 2.75 is required at the time of application. This GPA can be attained with a cumulative undergraduate or a completed graduate degree. A cumulative undergraduate GPA includes all college courses taken prior to receiving a bachelor degree.

#### **Advanced Standing**

A minimum GPA of 2.75 is required at the time of application. This GPA is attained with a cumulative undergraduate degree. A cumulative undergraduate GPA includes all college courses taken prior to receiving a bachelor degree. In addition, a 3.0 in the last sixty credits of the bachelor degree is required.

### **Conditional Status**

At the discretion of the MSW Program and the Graduate School, an applicant may be admitted as a conditional student. Conditional status is afforded to students accepted into the program needing to meet a particular condition to maintain enrollment. The three conditions are listed below:

#### **Full Program Conditional:**

In select cases, some applicants will be admitted on a conditional basis to the Full Program if they do not have the minimum overall GPA of 2.75. A limited number of exceptional applicants who have been working in the social work field for a substantial amount of time may be considered for conditional admission to the full program. Their condition is removed once they have completed nine credit hours of graduate work with a 3.0 or higher grade point average and grades of a C or better in all courses. This policy is consistent with the university-wide graduate school policy.

#### **Advanced Standing Conditional:**

Outstanding applicants with a demonstrated commitment to the profession and a conferred BSW, who have an overall undergraduate GPA of less than 2.75 and/or a GPA of less than 3.0 in their last 60 credit hours, will be considered for acceptance to the MSW Program. Once accepted, this Conditional status will be removed after the student completes nine credit hours of graduate courses at EMU identified through an Individualized Plan of Study and establish good academic standing with a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average. The nine credit hours of courses will be selected to address challenges as indicated in the applicant's undergraduate transcript. The student will complete these courses the first year of their program and will not move to Advanced Curriculum until the Individual Plan of Student requirements are met. Once accepted into the Advanced Curriculum, the student will be required to complete all Advanced Standing requirements including the 11 to 13 credits of electives (number of required elective credits varies by concentration). If the student does not achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher in the first nine graduate credit hours at EMU will have their admission rescinded automatically with no opportunity to appeal.

### **Fresh Start Program**

The Fresh Start Program is available to students who are returning to Graduate School and have requested to have their EMU Graduate cumulative GPA adjusted. A student admitted under this condition must achieve a graduate GPA of at least 3.0 at the end of the semester in which they complete their first 9 credit hours at EMU. A student who does not meet this requirement will have their admission rescinded automatically with no opportunity to appeal.

### **Graduate Record Examinations (GRE)**

The GRE is not required for admission.

### **Personal Statement**

Applicants complete a personal statement that speaks to their readiness for graduate studies and connection to our mission and program.

### **Recommendation Letters**

Three professional recommendation letters are required. Strong letters would be from professionals who speak to the applicant's academic strengths, professionalism and/or readiness for master level social work.

### **Experience**

Professional experience in the human services field, both paid and unpaid, is weighed in the decision-making process. This includes paid work experience, volunteer experiences, and internships.

### **Admissions Process**

1. All applications to the MSW Program in the College of Health and Human Services, are submitted through the School of Social Work CAS system. Begin your application process at:  
<https://socialworkcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>
2. Once an application is complete (a complete application includes all transcripts, the personal statement, employment/volunteer form and three professional recommendations), the School of Social Work verifies, processes, and reviews the application. The following describes the review process in the School of Social Work:
  - a. Overall GPA is verified and calculated.
  - b. Last 60 credits GPA is calculated.
  - c. Work and volunteer experience is verified and calculated.
  - d. Each application is sent out for two reviews. Reviewers from the School of Social Work read the application and issue points using a formal rubric which includes the applicant's connection to the EMU School of Social Work mission, evaluation of personal and professional characteristics, and academic ability.
    - i. If the point spread between the two reviews is more than ten points, the application is sent out for a third review.
  - e. Once the reviews are completed, the application is sent to the Admissions committee for a decision. The committee reviews the rubrics, GPA and work history to arrive at their decision.
  - f. Students being considered for GPA conditional admissions will also be interviewed by the admissions team prior to arriving at a decision.
  - g. Applicants are notified; decisions are not open for appeal.

### **Notification of Decision**

All applicants are notified of a decision by email generated through the CAS application system. No decisions are given by phone call. Any conditions associated with admission and steps for removing the condition are articulated in the decision notification.

### **Transfer Applicants**

If an applicant is currently in another EMU graduate program and is interested in obtaining an MSW, the student must complete the formal application process as outlined above to be considered for the MSW Program. If accepted, some courses may transfer in as electives dependent on the date the course was taken and on the relevance of the course to the social work curriculum. Discretion for transfer credits lies with the MSW Program Director.

If an applicant has been accepted into and attended another MSW program, the applicant must complete the formal application process as outlined above to be considered for the EMU MSW Program. In addition, the applicant must submit a letter from their current/previous MSW Program stating that they left the program in “good standing.” Only students in “good standing” will be considered for the EMU MSW Program.

### **Criminal History**

The application for admission to Eastern Michigan University requires disclosure of criminal and disciplinary history. The School of Social Work does not specifically require background checks for applicants into the School of Social Work. Applicants with a history of criminal conviction(s) may apply and be considered for acceptance into the School of Social Work. It is recommended that an applicant with a legal/criminal history contact the MSW Program Director to discuss potential barriers to becoming a fully licensed MSW practitioner. Due to the nature of certain crimes, the program will advise the applicant to contact the State of Michigan Licensing Board to determine whether the history of legal/criminal behavior will preclude them from becoming licensed. Additionally, the MSW Program Director will discuss with the Placement Field Office whether the nature of the offense may automatically prevent the student from being placed in an agency to complete their field placement. The applicant will be informed of known limitations in placing them for their field placement; each agency, however, establishes their own protocols related to criminal checks, drug testing, etc. and have the right to require students to meet these expectations for placement.

Students with a criminal history are often concerned with disclosure of a criminal history and the impact it might have on their success. While the school neither solicits information nor discriminates against students with a criminal past, many field placements have laws or policies that govern the hiring of/or use of interns with specific criminal histories. Any student with a history of criminal activity is encouraged to contact the field office to ensure placement options consistent with their concentration. Further, they are encouraged to contact the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs at <https://www.michigan.gov/lara/> to ensure licensure upon completion of their degree.

### **Appeal of Decision of Acceptance/Denial into the EMU MSW Program**

There is no appeal process. Decisions are final. If applicants are interested in re-applying for a future year, they are encouraged to do so by reapplying to the Master of Social Work program and updating their application materials.

## Curriculum

### Overview

The curriculum of the MSW Program at EMU provides students with the skills needed to be successful leaders and practitioners, with emphasis on working with individuals, families, groups, communities, organizations, and social systems. The advanced generalist program focuses on providing students with theory and practice skills that can be used in a variety of systems. These skills will be used to promote social justice for society's most oppressed and vulnerable populations, including but not limited to: families in poverty; neglected and abused children; those with severe mental illness and/or chronic substance use disorders; and, older persons at risk for institutional care, poverty, and illness.

The MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and offers a "Full Program" consisting of a generalist practice foundation for students entering without Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree from CSWE-accredited programs. The "Advanced Standing Program," which is for students entering with a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree from a CSWE-accredited program, consists of core/required specialization courses and electives. The core courses include 14-16 credit hours of advanced content, including social justice work with oppressed populations, social policy, research, and field work. Each specialization (Child and Family Services, Health and Aging Services, and Mental Health Substance Use Recovery Services) has required theory, policy, and practice courses and applies an empowerment approach to the fields of practice and client populations.

### Specializations

The MSW Program is a field of practice program. At the advanced level, course work and field placement must match the student's specializations. Currently, the following three specializations offered are:

**Child and Family Services:** This specialization focuses on preparing students to work with infants through adolescent age individuals in settings, such as: community prevention programs; child and family agencies (including CMH agencies delivering infant and children's mental health services); protective services; foster care and adoptions; juvenile outreach; youth residential facilities; domestic violence prevention programs; homeless shelters; schools; and, family court settings.

**Health and Aging Services:** This specialization prepares graduates in developing skills and expertise for working in collaborative, interdisciplinary health and/or aging-related settings. Graduates will work with individuals and their families across the lifespan in a variety of settings, including: hospital and other health care settings; community-based clinics, hospice and home care; long term care facilities; integrative health settings; Veterans facilities; human service settings; caregiver support settings; and, community and policy settings.

**Mental Health/Substance Use Recovery Services:** This specialization prepares students to work with youth in transition and adults in a variety of community mental health settings, residential treatment agencies, psychosocial rehabilitation, substance abuse treatment programs, group homes, consumer-run programs and clubhouses, advocacy groups, and family support services.

## **Length of the Program**

The EMU Graduate School policy states that all MSW requirements must be completed within six years from the first course taken to meet requirements of the Program of Study. Exceptions to this requirement may be requested by students who need an extension due to extraordinary and/or unavoidable extenuating circumstances (please see the [Graduate School policy](#)). Please seek advising from the School of Social Work in the event that you: receive an incomplete; must withdraw from a course; or, stop-out.

The length of time required to complete the MSW degree depends upon undergraduate preparation, as outlined below:

**Full Program Students:** This program is designed to accommodate the needs of part-time students who do not have a social work bachelor degree. Further, BSW graduates accepted into the program as a conditional non-degree student will also complete the full program. The full program is 61 credits of both FOUNDATION and ADVANCED level coursework and can be completed in 3 years and 8 months, provided the student enrolls in 6-8 credits per semester.

**Advanced Standing Students:** Students may qualify for the advanced standing program if they: (1) hold a BSW degree from a program accredited by the CSWE; (2) have at least a 2.75 overall grade point average (GPA) from their undergraduate coursework; and/or, (3) have at least a 3.0 GPA for their last 60 undergraduate credits. The advanced standing program is 35 credits of ADVANCED level coursework and can be completed in approximately 1 year and 8 months if students enroll in 6-8 credits per semester.

## **Plan of Study (POS)**

All students must have a “Plan of Study” (POS). This POS is a required document and is a contract between you and the School of Social Work that lists each course students must take sequentially for completion of the program. Further, it clearly outlines which semester and year each course must be taken. The POS serves two purposes: 1) It acquaints students with the degree requirements they must fulfill and provides them with a plan by which these requirements will be met; and, 2) It is the instrument used in the “checkout” audit when students apply for graduation. MSW students develop their POS at the required MSW new student orientation. This form is completed prior to the beginning of studies and must be signed by both the student and by an authorized faculty advisor (the MSW Student Services Coordinator or the MSW Program Director). ***Students will be solely responsible for any unauthorized or undocumented changes in their course sequence.*** Students deciding to change their POS should meet with the MSW Student Services Coordinator and/or MSW Program Director to make an informed decision.

Students should be aware that the MSW Program has a ***fixed sequencing*** of courses and that all core courses are offered only one time per year. This means that courses should be taken in the order in which they appear on the POS. Students are not allowed to take courses out of sequence. Any unauthorized or undocumented changes in the course sequence and/or confusion in the POS may result in administration problems, delays in completing the program, and interference with the graduation process.

***It is the responsibility of the students*** to register for the correct courses in the sequence and scheduled semester identified in the POS. If a student decides to: (1) stop out; (2) withdraw from courses; (3) receive an “Incomplete” or a grade below requirements; or, (4) change their course

of study for any reason, it is recommended that the student make an informed decision by first meeting with the MSW Student Services Coordinator and/or MSW Program Director.

### **Coursework**

The Graduate School mandates that all MSW requirements be completed within six years of the date of entrance into the program. The Full Program requires 61 graduate credits and the Advanced Standing Program requires 35 credits.

### **Foundation Level Courses (32 credit hours)**

All foundation courses must be completed prior to taking advanced level courses

- SWRK 505 Generalist Social Work Practice with Individuals (2 credits)
- SWRK 506 Theoretical Bases for Generalist Practice I (2 credits)
- SWRK 507 Theoretical Bases for Generalist Practice II (2 credits)
- SWRK 515 Generalist Social Work Practice with Families (2 credits)
- SWRK 525 Social Work Practice with Women and Girls (2 credits)
- SWRK 533 Introduction to Research Methods for Social Work (4 credits)
- SWRK 535 Social Work Practice with People of Color: A Strengths Perspective (2 credits)
- SWRK 545 Generalist Social Work Practice with Groups (2 credits)
- SWRK 565 Generalist Social Work Practice with Communities (2 credits)
- SWRK 571 Social Work Policy Analysis and Change (2 credits)
- SWRK 595/596 Generalist Field Experience I and II (8 credits)

### **Advanced Level Courses (13 Credits)**

- SWRK 610 Empowerment: Social Justice and Social Change (2 credits)
- SWRK 633 Research Methods for Agency Based Practice (3 credits)
- SWRK 695/696 Advanced Field Experience I and II (8 credits)

### **Advanced Specialization courses (9 Credits) - (Choose ONE Specialization Only)**

#### **Child and Family Services**

- SWRK 640 Policies and Issues: Children and Families (3 credits)
- SWRK 645 Child & Family Engagement/Assessment (2 credits)
- SWRK 646 Social Work Practice I: Children & Families (2 credits)
- SWRK 647 Social Work Practice II: Youth & Families (2 credits)
- SWRK 648 Advanced Practice with Organizations & Communities (2 credits)

#### **Health and Aging Services**

- AGIN 570 Biomedical Aspects of Aging (2 credits)
- SWRK 620 Policy Issues: Health and Aging (3 credits)
- SWRK 625/GERT 512 Applied Psychosocial Aspects across the Life Course (2 credits)
- SWRK 626 SW practice in integrated Health Care (2 credits)
- SWRK 627 SW practice with older adults (2 credits)

#### **Mental Health/Substance Use Recovery Services**

- SWRK 650 Policy Issues in Mental Health and Substance Use Recovery (3 credits)
- SWRK 655 Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment Planning (2 credits)
- SWRK 657 SW Advanced Practice: Substance Use Disorders (2 credits)
- SWRK 659 Mental Health Interventions in Social Work Practice (2 credits)

**Required Elective credits according to your specialization:**

**Full Program:** 7-9 elective credits.

**Advanced Standing:** 11-13 elective credits.

**Independent Study**

Independent studies are sponsored by full-time faculty and lecturers. Students may contract with a full-time social work faculty/lecturer to take a one, two, or three credit independent study course. While students may enroll in an independent study at any time during the semester (and there is no financial penalty for doing so), it is the policy of the School of Social Work that proposals must be approved by the end of the first month of each semester. Any exceptions must be approved by the MSW Program Director.

The Independent Study is designed for students who wish to study material in more depth than what is covered in existing courses or material that is not currently covered in existing courses. Students are required to design their own study proposals. They may obtain advice and assistance from faculty members. The independent study may also be used for empirical research or special training projects. *It is not to be used to study areas surveyed in existing courses.* Since each project is, in effect, a course for which credit is requested, ample time and thought should be given to the design of the Plan of Study.

The Independent Study Proposal will provide the following information:

1. A detailed description of the work the student is proposing to accomplish.
2. The learning objectives of the project and the necessary steps for achieving these objectives prior to the end of the semester in order to permit time for evaluation.
3. A timeline indicating when various steps of the project will be accomplished and when final assignments/products are due.
4. Supplemental materials such as bibliography, an activities schedule, or mock tables will be appended, if appropriate.
5. If the project involves the use of agency facilities, documentation providing agency approval will be included in the proposal.

**NOTE:** The scope of the Independent Study is commensurate with the amount of credit sought. A regular course entails fifteen hours of class attendance for each hour of credit plus homework such as assigned readings, examinations, and additionally required work such as term papers or field projects. The graduate school restricts the number of independent study credits to a total of **six** credits within the MSW degree.

***Steps needed for Independent Study Approval:***

1. Prepare three copies of the Independent Study Proposal, one for the supervising instructor, one for department files, and one for the student.
2. Obtain and complete the cover sheet for Independent Study Proposals in the Social Work Office, 319 Marshall. The cover sheet must be signed by the supervising instructor and approved by the MSW Program Director.
3. Bring the completed proposal and cover sheet to the social work secretary, who will then issue a section number and give the student permission to register.

**Field Placement**

The professional practicum is a critical component of graduate education in the MSW Program. Social service agencies and the School of Social Work have joined in designing and providing

opportunities for students to learn and practice in supervised field placement settings. In the field setting, students have the opportunity to make appropriate connections between practice, ethics, and their knowledge base. The field placement experience is intended to assist students in integrating knowledge and skills from all areas of the curriculum. **PLEASE NOTE: *The Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) mandates that students cannot substitute work experience for required field placement courses.*** See the MSW Field Manual for a more complete explanation of Field Placement policies.

To enter and remain in field placement, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of “B” (3.0) in their program. The MSW Program requires students to have a “C” or better in all required courses. Please note that all elective and other courses are included in this requirement.

The field placement for Full Program students consists of 900 hours of supervised field work in a social service setting designated by the Field Placement Director or Coordinator. Students complete 400 hours of field work in the second foundation year of the program in an agency setting able to provide opportunities for learning generalist social work practice skills. In the final advanced year, students complete 500 hours of field work in an agency which can provide specialized experiences in the student’s area of specialization. The field placement for Advanced Standing students consists of 500 hours of supervised field work in a social service setting designed by the Field Placement Director or Coordinator.

Field placement hours for Full Program students are completed during the Winter and Summer semesters in year 2 of the program and during the Fall and Winter semesters in year 4 of the program. Field placement hours for Advanced Standing students are completed during the Fall and Winter semesters in year 2 of the program. Specific arrangements regarding field hours are to be negotiated between the Field Instructor and students in the field placement contract, and must be approved by the Faculty Liaison. However, students cannot complete fewer than 12 hours or more than 20 hours per week in field placement without previous arrangement with the field director and course instructor.

To receive a passing grade of “B” or higher, students must satisfactorily fulfill all requirements and responsibilities in both the field placement and the field seminar course. Failure to attend the seminar course and/or to be in placement without proper notification and approval from the Field Instructor and Faculty Liaison will be grounds for dismissal from field placement and/or for a failing grade.

Students should review EMU policies concerning eligibility to receive an “Incomplete” grade. However, “Incomplete” grades are not normally awarded in field courses since seminar participation and field work must be performed concurrently. In the *exceptional* case where an “Incomplete” grade is awarded, students may need to repeat both their field placement as well as the accompanying field seminar in order to receive a grade. ***Note: Field hours accumulated in the Field Experience course where the “Incomplete” grade was received, will not be counted or rolled over when the course is repeated.***

Students who have repeated absences in the field seminar course and/or field placement setting without a valid reason or without informing and receiving approval from the Field Instructor and Faculty Liaison may be terminated from placement and/or receive a failing grade. Please review “Student Performance and/or Conduct Dismissal Policy” for actions taken when serious concerns about student performance arise during the course of their field placement and seminar course.

## **Immunizations**

Students are not required to have or show proof of immunizations to be accepted to or matriculate through the Master of Social Work Program. However, many field placements do require verification of immunizations. If an intern is required by the field placement to show verification or receive additional vaccinations, they must comply to receive the identified placement. This arrangement occurs directly with the student and the field placement site. The School of Social Work and field office do not facilitate this process. The IHA at EMU Health Center does provide immunizations for students and is a resource if needed.

## **School Social Worker Approval Process**

The Michigan Department of Education requires certain skills and competencies for social workers before they can practice in a public school setting as a School Social Worker. Students in the MSW Program may choose the option to work towards obtaining **temporary approval** as a School Social Worker by taking the three School Social Work courses as electives. Further, students **MUST** complete a field placement in a child and family agency in order to be eligible for the school social work certification.

School Social Work students take ***three required School Social Work courses in sequence, one course per semester, beginning in the fall term with the pre-requisite course and ending in summer term.*** In order to obtain **temporary approval** to work as a School Social Worker, the applicant must:

1. Complete a MSW degree
2. Complete coursework in the following:
  - SWRK 676 Social Work Services in Schools (3 credits). Fall Term elective at EMU and pre-requisite for the next two courses
  - SWRK 677 School Based Social Work Assessment (3 credits). Winter Term elective at EMU
  - SWRK 678 School Based Social Work Interventions (3 credits). Summer Term elective at EMU
3. Complete a 500-hour field placement in a ***setting with children and families*** and be supervised by a social worker with two years post-MSW practice experience.

When these criteria are met, **the graduate** requests a ***SSW 310 form*** from the EMU MSW Program office. The ***Information of Requirements Form for School Social Work*** must be completed at the time of request. Documentation must also be received that the student has completed all coursework requirements. If the school social work coursework was taken at a different university, the MSW program the student graduated from provides the SSW 310 form.

When a graduate begins a position as a School Social Worker, **it is the graduate's responsibility** to contact the MSW Program Office to secure the SSW 310 form. This process provides students with temporary approval for their first year of employment. After one school year as a School Social Worker, it is the responsibility of the student and the employer to contact the Michigan Department of Education to obtain **permanent approval**. Failure to do so could have a negative impact on the graduate's ability to become a fully approved School Social Worker. The entity that grants permanent approval to work as a School Social Worker is the Michigan Department of Education and **not** Eastern Michigan University.

### **Graduate Certificates (Dual Enrollment)**

Below is a listing of graduate certificate programs that may be of interest to MSW students. Students may elect to apply to a graduate certificate program while working toward their MSW degrees. While some certificate courses may be counted as electives toward the MSW degree, certificate work is above and beyond the Master of Social Work curriculum. Students interested in applying for a graduate certificate program must make provisions to integrate whatever courses they can within their MSW Plan of Study. **There may be scheduling conflicts with these certificates. It is the student's responsibility to conform to their MSW Plan of Study.** Students may need to return to school to complete their certificate after graduating from the MSW Program.

All students working on a MSW degree in addition to a Certificate (i.e. Gerontology, LTC Administration), are required by the Office of Admissions to submit a second application and fee to be enrolled in the Certificate Program. The certificate is considered a second diploma award.

**Gerontology:** This certificate emphasizes positive aspects of aging and addresses realities and myths of growing old. The result is an education that enhances the student's ability to work with and care for older people effectively and compassionately. This is an 18-credit hour program with coursework in multiple disciplines.

**Health Administration:** This certificate program prepares graduates to compete for health administration jobs in nursing homes, home health agencies, outpatient facilities, hospitals, public health agencies, health maintenance organizations and many other health care settings. This is a 12-credit hour program.

**Nonprofit Management:** This certificate is designed to develop competencies and practical skills for working professionals in public and nonprofit organizations, building management capacity of a nonprofit organization in the areas of (1) financial management, accountability, and legal and ethical issues; (2) fundraising, budgeting, and resource management; and (3) human resource management. This is a 14-15 credit hour program with coursework in multiple disciplines.

**Women's and Gender Studies:** This graduate certificate provides interdisciplinary and transnational academic study of gender as a social and cultural construct and its intersections with other dimensions of power such as sexuality, race, class, ability, and age. This is a 12-credit hour program.

### **Graduate Advising**

All matriculation and Plan of Study advising occurs with either the MSW Student Services Coordinator or the MSW Program Director. Further, to support the advising process the MSW Office provides consultation for any complicated situations and assists with Graduate School forms such as petitions, transfer of credit from other universities, and other forms. If a student is having any difficulty in the Program, needs to withdraw, "stop out" or change the POS for any reason, it is important to contact the MSW Office as soon as possible.

<b>MSW Program Office/MSW Program Director</b>
Provides approval and completes forms to transfer credits from another university and to waive any foundation courses based on prior BSW.

Orients students and faculty to MSW and Graduate School policies, procedures, curriculum, etc.
Assists with petitions to waive EMU Graduate School policies regarding length of time to complete the program, # of special topic number courses, etc.
Makes decisions on changing conditional admission to full admission once all criteria are met.
Review student's Plan of Study (POS) at the time of advisee's application for graduation and provide a signature and date on it (Records Office expects Application for Graduation forms to be submitted with a POS reviewed and signed within 30 days of the application).
Provide support regarding a personal crisis, if interfering with school; problem-solving, if necessary, regarding current options related to managing course and school responsibilities.
Assists with forms needed to change concentration, re-enter the program after an interruption of enrollment, major revision of POS, etc.
Discusses with student any major program-related decisions (e.g., changing concentrations, stopping out of school, changes in POS, taking electives at other Departments/Universities, changing to full-time or part-time enrollment).
Signs off on graduate audit forms, and resolves any outstanding issues blocking graduation.
Provides information regarding state social work licensing and processes paperwork to verify student status in the program.
Processes paperwork for MDE approval for School Social Work certification.
Provides approval for full-time enrollment or to re-enter the program after stopping-out.
Maintains contact with students who have stopped out of the program.
Provides information about campus resources, job postings, and events through the online listserv and the MSW bulletin board.
Performs all Academic Reviews.

Academic Review: Students needing representation for an Academic Review shall: (1) review the specific policy in the MSW Student Handbook; and, (2) request attendance by their advisor. In the event that the advisor cannot attend, the student can select an alternate faculty member or the MSW Faculty Grievance Representative.

Grade Grievance: Students needing advising for a Grade Grievance shall review the University Policy on Grade Grievance process and procedures. Access to an adviser may occur however, the grievance procedure allows the student to choose from an adviser within the faculty, outside of the School of Social Work, or the Ombuds Office. Students should consult University policies directly for guidelines.

### **Listserv**

The MSW Program hosts a listserv for MSW students. The Advising Listserv [MSW\_advising] is a required listserv as it provides a direct communication link from the MSW office to MSW students. Registration or course offerings, graduation updates, etc. are offered through this listserv. Please recognize this listserv [MSW\_advising] as an extension of program advising and read all disseminations sent via this listserv.

## **Registration**

Graduate students must register online for all courses using their [my.emich.edu](https://www.emich.edu) accounts. Registration will be blocked if students have past due accounts with the University. Instructions for registration are provided at: <https://www.emich.edu/registrar/registration/index.php>.

Courses **MUST BE** taken in the order in which they appear on the Plan of Study. Students are not allowed to take courses out of sequence due to pre-requisite requirements. **Any unauthorized or undocumented changes in the course sequence and/or confusion in the Plan of Study is not acceptable. If students register for classes not within their Plan of Study, they may be required to drop the course and may be subject to non-refundable charges/tuition. Further, moving out of sequence may interfere with the graduation process and may result in administrative problems. If you need to alter your Plan of Study, see the Student Services Coordinator or the MSW Program Director.**

Tuition is assessed for all credit hours for which a student is registered. Graduate tuition is assessed for all 500-900-level courses. Tuition rates per credit hour are subject to review at each Board of Regents meeting in June and may increase. The most current information regarding tuition and fees can be found online at: <https://www.emich.edu/sbs/basics/calculator.php>.

## **Transfer of Credit**

Many MSW students have taken courses from other universities. To be eligible for transfer of these courses to this program, graduate courses must meet the following requirements:

1. Course(s) must not have been taken more than six years prior to the student's graduation date. Courses over 6 years need to be recommended for approval by the MSW director, School director, and approved by the Graduate School
2. Course(s) must have been completed with a grade of a "B" or better
3. Course(s) must be from an accredited social work program
4. Course(s) must be approved by EMU's MSW office as relevant to the MSW Program
5. Student must be in good standing at their previous university
6. Students cannot receive course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

All transfer of course credits is solely at the discretion of the MSW Program Director and MSW Student Services Coordinator. Request for Transfer of Credit forms can be obtained from the Graduate School office or online at: [https://www.emich.edu/graduate/policies/trans\\_credit.php](https://www.emich.edu/graduate/policies/trans_credit.php).

## **Academic Load**

Four hours of graduate credit per semester constitutes part-time status. Students enrolled full-time in the MSW Program (e.g., over eight credits in a semester) must receive prior approval from the MSW Program Director. Since financial aid may require a certain number of credits each semester, students are responsible for ensuring compliance with their requirements. Please contact Financial Aid for specifications and requirements for aid (<https://www.emich.edu/finaid/>).

## **Course Registration**

Courses are offered weeknights and Saturdays. Some courses are offered in "non-traditional" formats including hybrid, all day/weekend, or every other week formats. Some course may be offered back-to-back; however, students should not anticipate this format in each semester of their program.

### **Overrides and Waitlists**

Students are encouraged to register at the opening of registration to secure their best schedule. All classes are capped to ensure a small class size for best learning opportunities. Overrides are not routinely given. Students are encouraged to select the “waitlist” option for desired courses while still registering for an alternative section when their first choice is not available. It is common for additional sections to be offered or for students to drop/add courses through the registration period to meet their needs. In the event that a student is on the waitlist and a space in the course they are “wait-listed” for becomes available, they will be contacted by the School of Social Work.

### **Auditing Courses**

Core courses cannot be audited. Electives may be audited provided the student submits a Request to Audit a Course form by the university deadline. Check <https://www.emich.edu/registrar/calendars/> for dates.

## **Program and Course Requirements**

### **Time Limitation**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) mandates that all MSW requirements must be completed in a timely manner. Consistent with University requirements, the School of Social Work requires the completion of course work **within six years from the date of entrance** into the program. Students experiencing extenuating circumstances may file a written petition to the Graduate School with support from the MSW Program Director for an extension to this requirement. However, only petitions from students who have a consistent outstanding academic performance history will be considered for this extension. Students who wish to temporarily stop-out during their program must notify the MSW Office in writing. This request must be submitted to the MSW Program Director (See “Stop-out” policy).

### **Course Schedules**

Students must complete their courses in accordance with their Plan of Study. Any alterations must be approved by the program office. Although our program is set up to offer students a choice between taking a specific required course on either a Saturday or in the evening during the week, this may not be an option for Foundation classes. University policies require a specific number of students to be enrolled in a class in order for it to run. If there are not enough students registered for one section of a course offered on Saturday or during the week, the course may need to be consolidated into one section. Once students have entered the advanced program years, two sections of a course may be offered depending on overall enrollment in the program. It is anticipated that students will be on campus two times per week to complete course requirements. Back-to-back classes may be periodically offered at different points in the program, but should not be expected. Off-site classes are also offered periodically, but are not a feature of this program. While some courses are offered on-line, there may be requirements for students to meet with instructors periodically throughout the semester.

### **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all of their classes and adhere to instructors’ course outline. Course instructors will explain their attendance policies early in the term. Excessive absences will lead to lowered or failing grades. Students who find it necessary to be absent from classes in order to observe major religious holidays may make arrangements with their instructors to make up missed work, including examinations. If satisfactory arrangements cannot be made with the instructor, students may appeal to the Director of the School of Social Work.

## Grades

Each instructor establishes their grading criteria. It is critical for students to know that in order to remain in the Master's program they must meet both the Graduate School and the School of Social Work requirements as outlined below:

- Letter grades are awarded from "A" through "F," with a "C" as the lowest passing grade in the MSW Program.
- Students are expected to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of "B" (3.0) during their entire MSW Program. Students not maintaining a GPA of 3.0 are placed on probation. Students remaining on probation for more than two consecutive semesters will be dismissed from the School of Social Work.
- Students must achieve a "C" or better in all courses. Students receiving grades lower than a "C" in *any course meeting their credit requirement* for graduation must repeat each course in the required sequence prior to entering (or continuing) Field Placement and in order to graduate from the program. Graduate level courses cannot be taken on a pass/fail basis.

## Course Repeat

Eastern Michigan University Graduate School's policy on repeating courses permits students who receive grades of "B-, C+, C, C-, and F," to repeat a course if they so desire. Courses in the MSW curriculum may only be repeated once, and students may repeat no more than two different Social Work courses in which they achieve less than a "C" grade. Students receiving less than "C" in a repeated required social work course or in a third required social work course will be dismissed from the program.

A course should be repeated if it is out of date (more than six years old and cannot be validated).

## Incomplete Course Work

An incomplete grade of "I" may be awarded at the discretion of the instructor when illness or other unavoidable extenuating circumstances prevent completion of a course, provided that academic performance for the completed portion of the course (50% or more) merits a grade of B or better. If the required amount of work has not been completed due to illness, necessary absence or other satisfactory reasons, the instructor will: provide the student and the department head with a rationale for the "I" grade; specify the work required to remove the Incomplete "I" grade; and, specify the time by which the work must be completed. A student should never be awarded an incomplete for poor work or willful non-attendance of class. Departmental offices will maintain information about the work that the student must complete in order to remove an incomplete and receive a grade for the class. An incomplete must be replaced by a grade within one calendar year from the end of the semester or session in which the grade was given. The initiative for removal of an incomplete rests with the student. If not converted by the end of the one-year period, the incomplete will remain as a permanent part of the student's record. **Incomplete grades received in graduate-level thesis or independent study-type courses are not governed by these regulations.** The time for replacement of an incomplete grade may be extended with written approval. Graduate students must have the recommendation of the instructor, department head and approval of the Graduate Dean. The incomplete grade policies can be found at:

[https://www.emich.edu/graduate/policies/inc\\_course.php](https://www.emich.edu/graduate/policies/inc_course.php).

## **Withdrawal**

Graduate students are expected to follow University policy and procedures for withdrawal, both from individual classes and from the University. Nonattendance or nonpayment of tuition *does* not constitute withdrawal or absolve a student of academic or financial responsibility.

Students considering withdrawal should consult with their instructor(s) and should not stop attending class before receiving official notification that their withdrawal has been approved. If a student stops attending class without officially withdrawing and/or does not take the final examination, University policy requires that the instructor assign a grade of “F” for the course. Students who believe they have received an unearned “F” grade and who wish to appeal must do so during the following semester; no later appeals will be heard. Policies governing the refund of tuition and fees are to be found in the Tuition and Fees section of the Graduate Catalog. The class schedule should be consulted for the calendar regulating withdrawals.

***Withdrawal from All Classes:*** Students may withdraw from all classes (withdraw from the University) and receive a grade of W for all courses. This transaction is handled by the Office of Records and Registration. Such withdrawal may necessitate the updating of a student’s admission status and students in their first semester must notify their academic department and the Office of Admissions before re-enrolling. For University policy regarding withdrawal, please refer to: <https://www.emich.edu/registrar/registration/dropwithdrawl.php>.

**NOTE: Students who withdraw from one or more courses must meet with the MSW Student Services Coordinator to revise their Plan of Study.**

## **Stop-out Policy**

The School of Social Work will consider all requests for stop-out (temporary withdrawal from the program) for students in good standing. Good standing means students who have a minimum “B” and/ or 3.0 grade point average. Stop-out forms are available in the Social Work Office.

Students requesting to “stop-out” of the program must notify the MSW Office in writing. Notification includes:

- 1) Their plan and reason for stopping out
- 2) Tentative plan for resuming the program
- 3) Contact information

**Note:** If stopping out in the middle of a semester, students must follow university policies related to withdrawing and contact both their current instructors and the MSW Office.

Requests for stop-out that would require an extension of the six-year time limit of matriculation will be considered. All requests for stop out requiring extension of the six-year program will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the MSW office. If the MSW office believes the integrity of the degree has not been compromised by the stop-out window, they will advise specific to petitioning the University for the time to degree extension. Further, if the stop-out will result in the students needing more than six years to complete their degree, students must be approved through the Graduate School petition process and competency must be verified.

**Returning to the Program:** Students wishing to return to the program after a period of stopping out must complete the University’s “Change of Enrollment Form.” In addition, students must submit a written petition to the MSW Program Director requesting to be readmitted to the Program. This

petition must be attached to the University's "Change of Enrollment Form," and include the following information:

- a) Readiness to return
- b) Plan for completing the program
- c) Description of supports or changes that will allow for successful matriculation
- d) Accommodations that may be needed to complete the program. Please note that special accommodations will need to be arranged through the Office of Disability Services.

Students who stop attending classes longer than one semester without having completed the official "Stop-Out" request will be dropped from the MSW Program. Students in this situation, who wish to return to the MSW Program, must submit a written petition to the MSW Program Director requesting to be re-admitted into the Program. This petition must be attached to the University's "Change of Enrollment Form." Students must include in this petition points "a-d" listed above.

**Under no circumstances are "stopped out" students allowed to register for Social Work graduate courses without first meeting with the MSW Program Director or the MSW Student Services Coordinator. Readmitted students must meet with the MSW Student Services Coordinator to establish a new Plan of Study prior to registering for classes.**

### **Academic Probation**

Students are placed on academic probation at the end of any semester in which their cumulative EMU grade point average in courses taken for graduate credit is below 3.0. Students must complete six graduate credit hours at EMU before being subject to academic probation. Students are notified via their NetID (my.emich) email each semester of their status. Students placed on academic probation are encouraged to contact their program advisor for assistance in determining how to return to good academic standing. A probationary student must obtain a semester grade point average of at least 3.0 in the first semester of probation. Failure to do so will result in academic dismissal. If a probationary student earns a semester GPA of 3.0 or higher during the first semester of probation, but their overall GPA is still below a 3.0, the student will be given one additional semester to raise their cumulative GPA to a 3.0 or higher. Failure to do so will lead to dismissal. Students will be notified via their NetID (my.emich) email.

### **Conditional Students: BSW with Low GPA**

Students admitted with an undergraduate GPA below 2.7 are placed on Conditional Status. The student have 9 credit hours to demonstrate success at a 3.0 GPA or greater. If the student cannot meet this condition, they will be dismissed from the program.

## **Student Performance and/or Conduct Dismissal Policy RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

***In situations where the School of Social Work policy differs from the EMU Graduate School policy, the School of Social Work policy supersedes the Graduate School policy.***

The University and the School of Social Work expect performance and conduct of all students which is consistent with the law and all relevant University policies and rules, including the University Student Code of Conduct and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

Code of Ethics. Any single violation to the Code of Ethics can lead to dismissal from the School of Social Work.

### **Definitions**

#### **Non-Academic Behaviors Resulting in University Disciplinary Action**

In addition to any actions taken by the School of Social Work, any conduct by a social work student that reflects an alleged violation of the University Student Code of Conduct will be referred to the Office of Wellness and Community Responsibility for processing. The Office of Wellness and Community Responsibility's Code of Conduct outlines expectations of EMU students and behaviors that could result in disciplinary action through this office. Any disciplinary action taken by the Office of Wellness and Community Responsibility is separate from any action taken by the School of Social Work. The Conduct Code outlines the kinds of student behaviors that will result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the University. Conduct violations by a student off campus in University-related activities (e.g. online activities, field placement, international field placement and course work) will be handled the same as if the violation had occurred on campus.

#### **Academic Behaviors and/or Performance Resulting in Action by the School of Social Work**

The EMU School of Social Work believes that student performance and/or behavior provides relevant information regarding that student's likely performance and success as a social worker, and, therefore, considers such performance or behavior as an academic student progress matter. Certain behaviors or performance will be considered grounds for academic discipline, in accordance with the procedures outlined in this document, when the student's behavior or performance raises concerns about the student's ability to perform satisfactorily in the profession of social work.

Academic disciplinary action may be initiated when a student exhibits the following behavior and/or performance in one discrete episode that is a violation of the law, the NASW Code of Ethics and/or standards for the practice of social work OR when a student exhibits a pattern of recurring behavior which may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Performance and/or behaviors that demonstrate poor interpersonal skills and an inability to effectively communicate with others, often evidenced by repeated complaints from the field supervisor, other students, or Social Work faculty
- Unethical, threatening or unprofessional conduct
- Performance and/or behaviors that place clients at risk during field placement, including current substance abuse; exploitation of clients, emotional, physical or verbal abuse; vindictive action toward clients, or stealing from clients
- Performance and/or behavioral displays of mental or emotional difficulties that represent a risk to others
- Consistent inability or unwillingness to carry out academic or field placement responsibilities
- Frequent excuse making when tasks, assignments, tests, and appointments are not completed in a timely manner or require rescheduling
- Consistent non-attendance in classes, at field placement and other required program functions
- Lack of insight into negative consequences of own behavior and frequent blame of others or external factors for failures and difficulties in the academic or field placement environment
- Inability to tolerate different points of view, constructive feedback, or supervision

- Dishonest academic practices, including but not limited to: plagiarism; cheating; fabrication; aiding and abetting deception or dishonesty; and, the falsification of records or official documents
- Verbal or physical aggression or threatening behavior
- Sexual or racial harassment or harassment concerning sexual orientation or gender identity
- Demonstrated inability to work effectively and collaboratively with peers and/or other professionals

This is inclusive of all behavior related to the status of students in the School of Social Work, interactions with clients, agency staff, faculty, and students.

## **Procedures for Handling Academic Behavior and/or Professional Performance Issues**

### **Academic Review**

Students needing representation for an Academic Review shall: (1) Review the specific policy in the MSW Student Handbook; and, (2) Request attendance by a faculty person of their choosing to serve as their adviser. In the event that the faculty chosen by the student is unable to support the process, the student may request the **MSW Faculty Grievance Representative as their adviser.**

### **Academic Review Process**

All concerns should first be discussed between the student and faculty member with the goal of reaching an understanding and/or resolution. Any concern about a particular student's academic behavior and/or professional performance is brought to the attention of the MSW Program Director. The MSW Program Director will consult with the faculty member on the presenting concern(s). After consulting, the student will either be granted a Preliminary Review or a Full Academic Review.

### ***STEP 1: Preliminary Review***

The MSW Program Director will notify the student and schedule a formal meeting with the student, the student's advisor of choice, and the person raising the concern about the student's behavior and/or professional performance. It must be noted that a substitute will be assigned by the Director of the School of Social Work when the person(s) raising the concern(s) about the student's behavior and/or performance is/are unable to attend this meeting. The purpose of this meeting is an effort to assist the student in receiving due process.

### **Process of Meeting:**

The MSW Program Director will facilitate this meeting. During this meeting, the person(s) bringing forth the concern will present the concern and any supporting documentation/evidence. The student will also present their perspective of the concern and any documentation/evidence. All parties will have the opportunity to ask clarifying questions.

### **Outcome:**

At the completion of the meeting, the MSW Program Director and Advisor will review the concern and other pertinent information about the student's performance throughout their course of study and arrive at a decision. They may: (1) decide that the concern does not rise to the level of an "Academic Review" requiring any further action; (2) set up a plan for remediation of the problem(s) with the student's input; (3) decide that a formal Academic Review is necessary; and/or, (4) counsel the student out of the program.

A student who does not agree with the recommendation given can request a Full Academic Review within 10 days of the Preliminary Review decision. The request must be received in writing or by email.

In the event that the student fails to attend this scheduled formal meeting, those attending may go forward with the suggestion to perform a full “Academic Program Review” and will inform the student, in writing, of this decision.

***STEP 2: Full Academic Review:***

A Full Academic Review is warranted in the following circumstances: 1) a student rejects the recommendation made from the Preliminary Review; 2) it is deemed the next step by the MSW Program Director and Advisor at the completion of the Preliminary Review; and, 3) the seriousness of the concerns and initial evidence indicates that the First Step of Preliminary Review is not appropriate.

*Notice to Student:*

The MSW Program Director will notify the student, in writing, at least one week before the review date, that there will be a formal Academic Review by the Review Committee. The notice will be sent via email to the student’s last known email address registered with the University and will set forth the following:

1. The date, time and place of the review meeting
2. The allegations against the student, stated with specificity and detailed particulars
3. The student’s rights during the review meeting
4. The possible evidence to be presented and witnesses likely to be called during the review

*Composition of Review Committee:*

The MSW Program Director will convene the Review Committee, consisting of the MSW Program Director, the faculty Advisor, one additional social work faculty representative plus a faculty alternate, and two representatives plus an alternate from the Social Work student body. The review committee, by majority vote, will elect one member to serve as chair of the committee. A review committee member must have no prior involvement in the case (with the exception of the MSW Program Director and Advisor), must be impartial and able to render a just and fair decision. A member not able to do so should disqualify themselves from the review. In addition, the student undergoing review may challenge any member of the review committee on grounds of prejudice or impartiality and request the removal of that particular member from the review meeting. If this occurs, the review committee shall deliberate in private to determine, by majority vote (excluding the member being challenged), whether the member should be removed from that particular case. If the vote is to remove the member, the review will continue with a committee of the remaining members.

*Process of Meeting:*

During the review, the individual/s (or substitute) who raised concerns about the student’s behavior or performance will summarize the concerns. The student and/or their Advocate will have the right, within reason, to question anyone presenting information to the committee during the review. In addition, the student will have the opportunity to speak on their behalf, bring witnesses to testify at the review, and present any written or other type of evidence to be considered by the Review Committee. Once this process is completed, the student, their advocates, and the individual(s) and/or their representatives who raised the concerns about the student’s behavior or performance will be dismissed.

### Outcome:

The committee will determine whether or not the allegations have been substantiated by “clear and convincing” evidence. If the committee determines that the evidence is lacking, the case will be dismissed. If the evidence is sufficient, the committee will make a recommendation about the student, which can include, but *is not limited to*: (1) requiring that a course be satisfactorily repeated; (2) suspending a student for a specified or unspecified length of time with or without stipulated conditions for re-admission to the Social Work program; or, (3) permanently dismissing the student with no opportunity to return to the program.

The MSW Program Director will notify the student, in writing, of the decision within five calendar days of the review by email and mail.

### Right to Appeal:

Within ten days of the date that the committee’s notification is sent to the student, the student may appeal, in writing, to the Director of the School of Social Work. The Director may accept, reject or modify the decision of the committee. The Director’s decision is final.

### Office of the Ombuds

It is recommended that students secure the support of the Office of the Ombuds if they:

- Feel their concerns are not being heard.
- Believe their rights have been violated or they have not been given due process.
- Need help to resolve or mediate a dispute.
- Feel they have been treated unfairly or insensitively.

It is the student’s decision to use the services of the Ombuds and arrangements are made by the student. For more information about the Ombuds and their services, please call 734.487.0074 or visit: <https://www.emich.edu/ombuds/>.

### Graduate Scholastic Performance

**Grade Point Requirements:** Once admitted into the Social Work program, Graduate School policy requires that a student must maintain a 3.0 GPA. If, after the completion of 9 credit hours, the GPA falls below 3.0, the student will immediately be placed on probation. The student must meet with either their Advisor or the MSW Program Director to develop a plan to raise the GPA to the required 3.0 minimum. Any additional supports or resources needed to assist the student in raising their GPA will be identified and recommended, and the MSW Office is available for ongoing consultation and support to the student. Students should carefully review Graduate School policies specific to probationary status. In addition, MSW Program policy requires that students have a minimum GPA of 3.0, no incompletes, and a minimum “C” grade in **all** courses used to meet the requirements of the degree. These courses include Social Work courses and electives. The student’s progress in the Program and graduation can be delayed until the GPA and social work course grades meet the required minimum.

**Individual Course Grade Requirements:** MSW students must achieve a minimum letter grade of “C” in **all** courses used to meet the requirements of the degree. Students who receive a grade below a “C” in any social work course will be allowed to repeat any given course one time only. Students who receive less than a “C” grade in their courses cannot progress to field placement or to more advanced course work until the course in which less than a “C” grade was received is successfully repeated, in sequence, as dictated by the Plan of Study.

Students who receive a grade below a “C” in a required social work course they are repeating may be dismissed from the program. Similarly, students who receive a grade below a “C” in a second required social work course will be placed on “School Academic Probation” and will be dismissed from the social work program if they receive a grade in a third required social work course below a “C.”

Students receiving an “F” grade in any graduate level course (i.e., required social work course or an elective course) will result in “School Academic Probation”, following a meeting with their Advisor and/or the MSW Program Director to decide upon a plan for improvement and to identify any needed supports. A second grade of “F” in any graduate level course may result in dismissal from the program.

Students who are currently on **academic probation** will not be granted approvals for: a) extensions beyond the one-year limit for prior incompletes, (b) full-time enrollment status, (c) an extension to complete the program beyond the Graduate School’s required six-year time of completion, and/or d) waivers for any SSW Graduate School policies.

Students who are not able to complete the program within 6 years of active enrollment including Stop-Out time will be dismissed from the MSW Program once reaching the point of not being able to complete all requirements within this timeframe.

A record of more than two incompletes not finished within the one-year deadline may result in dismissal from the Program, unless there are extenuating circumstances. It is the students’ responsibility to create a plan for completion of this work with their advisor if they are facing this situation.

**NOTE:** In cases where a student’s deficient grade in a course reflects extenuating circumstances that should have resulted in a withdrawal from the course, the student may request the support of the School or Ombuds’ Office for a retroactive withdrawal.

***Field Placement Requirements:*** In order to complete the MSW degree, students must have attained a “C” or better in all classes at the foundation and advanced levels. Students who do not achieve a “B” in any semester of field placement will be required to repeat both the field seminar and the field placement, which they may do only once. A student receiving an “F” in field placement and or the field seminar may be immediately dismissed from the program without the option of repeating the field placement or the field seminar. A student who does not achieve a “B” when repeating a semester of field placement and/or the field seminar will be dismissed from the program.

When students are experiencing difficulties or concerns in a Field Placement and before the Field Office may consider replacement for a student, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Faculty Liaison meets individually with the student and helps problem solve
2. Faculty Liaison visits agency and meets with the Field Supervisor and the student to engage in problem-solving and to establish appropriate monitoring

When problems cannot be resolved with the above steps, one and/or more of the following solutions will take place:

- a) Faculty Liaison completes “Field Placement Review Request Form” and forwards to the Field Director

- b) Field Director discusses situation with the student, Faculty Liaison and/or Field Coordinator and/or Field Agency personnel
- c) Field Director decides if changes are needed in current placement, if student needs new placement, or if student cannot be replaced by Field Office
- d) Student may be terminated from field placement for violations of the NASW Code of Ethics
- e) Students needing new field placement should not expect to take/roll over field hours accumulated in one agency to another agency
- f) Students not being replaced in field placement may receive an “F” in the particular field experience course
- g) Students may be referred for an Academic Review

### **Procedures for Handling Scholastic Performance Issues**

Students will be notified in writing by the MSW Program Director of their academic status as it pertains to “School academic probation” or “dismissal.” Students placed on School academic probation must set up a meeting with the MSW Student Services Coordinator to develop a remediation plan that is submitted to the MSW Program Director and placed in the student’s file.

Students dismissed from the program may request reinstatement by submitting a Request for Reinstatement packet to the Office of Records and Registration. The deadline for submission of a request will be included in the notice of dismissal.

## **Grade Grievance Policy and Procedure**

### **Grade Grievance**

Grades and expectations of students in social work courses will be determined by the individual instructor of each course and outlined in the course syllabus. University Policy provides that a student may pursue a grade grievance for any final grade that they believe was assigned capriciously or unfairly. Basis for a grievance does not include disagreement with assignments or with grading policies provided in the syllabus by the course instructor. Grade grievances are not coordinated through the MSW Program Office.

Students should review Policies Affecting You at EMU, University policies regarding student conduct and grade grievances, accessible in the online Graduate Catalog (<https://catalog.emich.edu/index.php>).

### **Part-time / Full-time Attendance**

The EMU MSW Program is designed to be a part-time program. The Council on Social Work Education mandates that the MSW degree must be completed in a timely manner. MSW requirements must be completed within six years of the date of entrance into the program (See Program and Course Requirements: Time Limitation).

All students accepted into the MSW Program are accepted as part-time students. Although students may petition to attend full time, permission may be granted only to those students who meet all the requirements and only on a space-available basis (see Request to Transfer from Part Time to Full Time Status below). Both advanced standing and full program students may apply to complete their MSW degrees on a full-time basis.

### **Request for Transfer from Part-Time to Full-Time Status**

Because the MSW Program is designed to be part-time, students wishing to attend on a full-time basis must follow the process outlined below. The deadline date to apply for this approval is as follows:

- February 1<sup>st</sup> for continuing students
- May 1<sup>st</sup> for newly admitted students

In order to obtain approval, students must submit a petition/application with the following:

1. Letter to the MSW Program Director requesting full-time enrollment and outlining the reasons for this request. This letter must also include a statement that the student is available to do 16 hours of field placement during weekdays.
2. Documentation on agency letterhead from the student's employer indicating that the student will either terminate their position or work 20 hours or less when attending school full-time. If the student is not employed, they must indicate their availability as mentioned above in point 1.
3. Current transcript to verify student is in good academic standing with no withdrawals, incompletes, or failing grades.
4. Interview with MSW Admissions Coordinator and/or MSW Program Director.

Full program students may only begin full-time enrollment at the following specific times: 1) beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> year (foundation) courses; or, 2) beginning of 3<sup>rd</sup> year (advanced) courses. Advanced standing students must request full-time enrollment prior to the beginning of the program. For purposes of the MSW Program, "full-time enrollment" is defined as combining year one and two or year three and four of the full program, or year one and two of the advanced standing program.

Full-time students who fail, withdraw, or receive an incomplete grade on any course, will be immediately returned to part-time status without exception. In addition, students whose grade point average (GPA) falls below the required "B" will be placed on probation by EMU's Graduate School as well as the School of Social Work (See Program and Course Requirements: Academic Probation).

### **Student Organizations**

#### **Social Welfare Action Alliance (SWAA)**

SWAA is a student organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for all through active campus and community service. The alliance provides members additional experience that will be an asset to their professional careers. This organization includes MSW students as well as BSW students.

#### **Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW)**

The School of Social Work hosts a student chapter of the Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW) which is committed to enhancing the quality of life and empowering people of African ancestry through advocacy human services delivery, and research. Student members and supporters participate in leadership development and community service activities.

#### **AFU @ EMU Student Organization**

AFU @ EMU is a group of students and professionals who strive to be age-inclusive in all aspects of the university. With a focus on non-traditional students, this group works to provide community for students of all ages at EMU through activities, support services, and advocacy.

## **Unmasked: Fight Human Trafficking**

Unmasked is EMU's student-lead human trafficking awareness organization.

## **Alumni Association**

When students graduate, students should apply to become members of the EMU Alumni Association. It is not a dues-paying organization. The primary focus of the Association is to network for professional development.

## **Graduation**

### **Applying for Graduation**

It is each student's responsibility to ensure that all the requirements for graduation have been met.

To be eligible for graduation, each student must:

- Remain in good academic standing in their Plan of Study,
- Have a "C" or better in all their courses used to meet credit requirements,
- Maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA in all graduate-level courses taken at EMU and in their Plan of Study,
- Complete all the coursework required for graduation

Candidates for a degree and/or certificate must submit a formal application for graduation in the final semester in which you will complete all requirements before a degree/certificate can be awarded. Applications are accepted online via [my.emich.edu](http://my.emich.edu) under the Student Services tab. If you are applying for more than one degree and/or certificate, you must complete an application for each. The application fee for each degree and/or certificate will be applied to your student account.

Information on graduation is available at: <https://www.emich.edu/registrar/graduation/>.

Students should expect to receive their degree verification letter within three to four weeks after the close of the semester in which their degree is conferred. If students need verification (for work or job search purposes) that they have completed all of their MSW requirements before they actually receive their transcript and degree in the mail, the MSW Office, upon request, will issue a letter that confirms that the student has completed all requirements for the degree.

### **Graduation Ceremonies**

Once students have applied to graduate, the Office of Records and Registration will send them information about commencement tickets, event logistics, and details for ordering cap and gown, which may be purchased at the EMU Bookstore (located in the Student Center). EMU holds commencement ceremonies in December and April of each school year. If students are finishing their work during the summer term, their diploma will be dated August. Since there is not an August commencement, their name will appear in the December commencement program and they may return to participate in the graduation ceremonial event. If students want to participate in the April graduation, they must notify the Office of Records and Registration which will send commencement information to students as long as they have six or fewer credit hours to complete on their Plan of Study. The student's name will not be in the program, but students can walk across the stage and celebrate with family and friends.

### **Diplomas**

The diploma will be mailed to the student's diploma mailing address on record with the University approximately eight to nine weeks after their degree is conferred. The diploma will be

printed off-site on parchment style paper with raised ink, measuring 11.14 inches. The student's legal name (as it appears on their Application for Graduation), degree name, and honors earned (if applicable) will appear on their diploma. Unclaimed original diplomas are maintained at the Registrar's Office, 303 Pierce Hall. For more information, contact the Office of the Registrar at 734.487.4111 or by email at: [records@emich.edu](mailto:records@emich.edu).

***Ordering an Additional Diploma:*** Students may order a duplicate copy of their diploma or request a replacement diploma as a result of a name change. To do this, they must fill out the Request for Replacement Diploma form and return it to the Cashier's Office, 201 Pierce Hall with the appropriate fee (Please check current fee for graduate diplomas). Students should allow eight to nine weeks for delivery. The form can be obtained at: <https://www.emich.edu/registrar/forms/index.php>.

### **Transcripts**

Students can request an official transcript in person, by mail, or online. Please check current fee. Requests are processed in the order in which they are received. Allow five business days from when the request is received in the transcript department, for the request to be processed and the transcripts to be mailed. Transcripts can be sent overnight once processing is complete via the United States Postal Service for an additional cost per address (please check current fee for this service). No transcripts are mailed on days that the University is closed, so please plan accordingly. **Requests will not be honored for anyone with past due financial obligations to the University.** To access more specific instructions and obtain the Transcript Request form, please visit: <https://www.emich.edu/registrar/transcripts/>.

### **American with Disabilities Act**

Eastern Michigan University complies with Americans with Disabilities Act provisions through its Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC provides academic accommodations for students in both classroom and testing situations and serves as a resource for faculty and staff regarding accommodations. Students with disabilities must register with EMU's DRC, and provide class instructor(s) with official disability documentation prior to or at the beginning of the course. Students are encouraged to take an active role as their own advocate and to make use of the services available to them on campus. For additional information contact:

DRC Office

<https://www.emich.edu/drc/>

### **Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: Definition and Guidelines**

Academic dishonesty/plagiarism occurs when someone takes credit for work produced by another and includes, but is not limited to:

- Representing any work of another person, including materials from professional literature, as one's own product and achievement.
- Quoting from another work without indicating the fact by quotation marks or indentation and acknowledging the source
- Paraphrasing without proper acknowledgment of the source
- Using the work of another student
- Giving or receiving unauthorized aid in any assignment or examination
- Submitting a written assignment prepared for one class as original work for any other class without prior knowledge and permission of the instructor

- Representing interactions of clients in written case materials that did not in fact happen or presenting untrue statements in such materials
- Fabricating data that are claimed to be real

Academic dishonesty/plagiarism is a serious ethical violation. Students who violate these provisions may receive a failing grade and the violation may be grounds for dismissal (see Dismissal Policy section of this manual). Academic dishonesty/plagiarism and the appearance of dishonesty/plagiarism are avoided if proper bibliographic citations are included whenever the work of another is used.

### **Financial Aid**

Various types of financial aid are available to graduate students. Information about these programs can be found online through the Office of Financial Aid at: <https://www.emich.edu/finaid/>.

To apply for need-based aid, graduate students must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA should be filed in January of each year, prior to fall enrollment. Graduate students who are admitted to a graduate degree program will be notified of their eligibility for financial aid from the financial aid office. Need-based aid is automatically awarded for fall and winter semesters.

Students who need financial aid for the summer semester must file an additional application (available in the Office of Financial Aid or its website) beginning February 15 of each year. For further information or to apply for federal and state need-based aid, please visit FAFSA online at: <https://studentaid.gov>.

Please **contact the financial aid office** for all your financial aid questions.

### **Billing**

Students can access their billing information online from their my.emich.edu accounts via e-bill. E-bill is a 24x7 service offered to students and their families for viewing bills, making payments, setting up payment plans, and managing student accounts. To access the e-bill login webpage, please visit the website below and have your University ID and PIN available at: [https://ebill.emich.edu/C20704\\_tsa/web/login.jsp](https://ebill.emich.edu/C20704_tsa/web/login.jsp)

### **Career Services**

The University Advising & Career Development Center provides a variety of services to enrolled students and alumni to assist with planning careers, developing job search skills, and securing employment upon graduation. You are encouraged to visit the UACDC throughout your time at EMU to take advantage of its numerous services and programs. For further information, please visit: <https://www.emich.edu/uacdc/index.php>.

### **Harassment Policy**

Should students have questions regarding situations involving harassment, they may contact the Director of the School of Social Work at 734.487.0393.

Eastern Michigan University has a policy on equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination. In addition, the School of Social Work adheres to the NASW Code of Ethics,

which can be found at the end of this handbook. Harassment based on age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability, is regarded as a violation of the EMU policy on harassment as well as the NASW Code of Ethics. All students and employees are expected to interact respectfully and honestly with one another to ensure a work and educational environment that is free from intimidation and harassment. The complete EMU policy on sexual harassment is found at: <https://www.emich.edu/policies/policy.php?id=181>.

### **University and Graduate School Policies**

All Graduate Students must also abide by University Policy and Graduate School Policies, found here:

<https://www.emich.edu/studenthandbook/>

<https://www.emich.edu/graduate/documents/policy2021.pdf?v=2020-08-31T17:08:22Z>

### **Michigan Licensing**

You must have a LLBSW (limited licensed bachelor of Social Work) or LLMSW (limited license Master of Social Work) to practice social work in the State of Michigan.

- You can obtain licensing applications at the following website:

[https://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-72600\\_72603\\_27529\\_27554---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-72600_72603_27529_27554---,00.html)

- Download, print and thoroughly **READ** all the information provided on this website.
- Complete all steps as outlined in the application.
- Pay the application fee.

You are strongly encouraged to start the application packet prior to graduation. The State Board cannot process your application until they have received the necessary paperwork. It usually takes 6-8 weeks for your application to be processed.

The application process requires your final official transcripts of your MSW to be sent directly from EMU. If you request your transcripts prior to graduation please check the *Hold Until Degree is Posted on Record* box of the Transcript Request Form. The link to transcript request at Eastern is available at: <https://www.emich.edu/registrar/transcripts/>.

The Application for a MSW License must be completed and sent to the **State of Michigan** along with the applicable fees. Please do not send any documents to the School of Social Work.

### **NASW Code of Ethics**

The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics provides the core values and imperatives of the profession. It gives guidance to the design of our curriculum and to the field work that confirms a social worker's place as a professional.

We have included a link to the Code here as a resource and a reminder of our task and our principles:

[NASW Code of Ethics](#)

NASW National website: <https://www.socialworkers.org/>

NASW Michigan Chapter: <http://www.nasw-michigan.org/>