

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO  
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION FOR PROGRAM ADMISSION**

**Description:** Because the Social Work Program is a program of professional study, all students must apply for admission into the Program as a junior. Admission to the Program is based on serious student interest, satisfactory progression through the social work curriculum, and an ongoing and collaborative assessment between each student and the Social Work Faculty. Specific attention is paid to the appropriateness of the social work major for the student. This process includes three formal and specific decision points spaced out over a period of several years: 1) declaring a social work major; 2) applying to the Social Work Program; and 3) applying to the Social Work Practicum. This application covers admission to the Social Work Program.

**Criteria for Admission to the Social Work Program**

Students apply for admission to the Social Work Program once they have met the academic and nonacademic criteria outlined in the Social Work Student Handbook. Admission to the program usually occurs when the student is taking SWK 350, *Generalist Social Work Practice*, and after all prerequisites have been completed with the required GPA.

**Academic Criteria:** Students must be at least a junior and must have successfully completed the following courses:

SWK 203, SWK 322  
ENG 101, ENG 102, ENG 231  
HIST 101, HIST 102  
PSYC 201  
PSYC 306 or FCS 291  
SOC 101  
COMS 101  
BIO 105  
MATH 147 or 144

Additionally, students need an overall University grade point average (GPA) of 2.3, and a combined GPA of 3.0 is required in SWK 203, SWK 322 and PSYC 306/FCS 291. To maintain admission status to the program, students must continue to sustain an overall GPA of 3.0 in all social work courses. All social work hours and all grades earned in social work courses and PSYC 306/FCS 291 will be used in computing the social work GPA for admission to the Program. It is not recommended that a student enter Social Work 350 without the 3.0 required for admission into the Program.

**Volunteer Service Criteria:** Students must complete thirty (30) hours of volunteer work as a part of the process for admission to the Program. The volunteer experience has two purposes: 1) to provide students with an introduction to social problems affecting individuals, families and communities in Alabama; and 2) to promote and reinforce community service as a life-long learning activity. Students are responsible for obtaining their own volunteer experience and must have their experiences approved in writing by the Social Work Program Director or by their academic advisor. Students should use Form A of the application to document approval of their volunteer experience.

The volunteer service work can be approached in a variety of ways. Students may choose to complete all thirty hours at one agency, and should document the experience using Form B of the application. Students might also choose to volunteer at several different places. For example, students might choose to work eight (8) hours on a Saturday with Habitat for Humanity and then volunteer another eight (8) hours in a soup kitchen, and finally volunteer to help a child learn to read at your local school for the rest of the hours. Students should use Form C of the application to document their hours. Additionally, students will write a reflection essay of no more than two pages about their volunteer service experience. Questions to address in this essay include: 1) what service does this agency/group provide to the community; 2) what specific social problems are faced by the people this agency/group serves; and 3) what work was completed by the student with this agency or group. This essay should be written in a narrative format, using the APA writing style and Standard English, good organization, and acceptable punctuation and grammar. This essay should be titled and attached to the admissions application.

**Professional Development Criteria:** To be admitted to the Program, students must be able to demonstrate the ability to identify as a professional social worker, conduct themselves ethically, and respond to contexts that shape social work practice. Becoming a social worker involves more than academic adequacy and mastery over a prescribed number of courses. Students will be evaluated for professional behaviors appropriate for beginning-level generalist social work practitioners, such as relationship and communication skills, values congruent with the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) *Code of Ethics*, ability to conceptualize and think critically, self-discipline and self-awareness, and otherwise responsible behaviors relevant to the future practice of social work. Specific examples of professional development criteria include:

- Maintains high standards of personal conduct in the capacity or identity as a social work student
- Respects the privacy of clients and adheres to agency confidentiality policies and procedures
- Treats colleagues, faculty, or staff with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith
- Evidences emotional stability requisite for professional practice
- Evidences the ability to value and respect human diversity
- Demonstrates effective communication skills necessary for forming professional relationships
- Meets obligations for all social work courses (e.g. attends class on-time, turns assignments in on time)
- Adheres to the *NASW Code of Ethics* in practicum
- Exhibits skills of self-awareness requisite for professional practice
- Exhibits ability to think critically
- Exhibits writing skills requisite for professional practice
- Practices personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development
- Engages in career-long learning

To demonstrate an understanding of some of the practice behaviors listed above, students will complete the following:

**1. Interviews with two practicing social workers:** The purpose of these interviews is to gain a better understanding of contemporary social work practice. Students should identify two social workers from different agencies, preferably other than where the student's volunteer work was completed. Students should learn about the agency where the social worker is employed, the social worker's educational background, licensure status, daily work tasks and roles, and how the social worker uses the *NASW Code of Ethics* in practice. Students will need to write an essay of no more than two pages describing: 1) the social workers role and areas of practice within the agency; 2) how each social worker applies the *NASW Code of Ethics*; and 3) what the student learned from each social worker.

**2. Reflection on NASW Code of Ethics:** The purpose of the is task is to give students an opportunity to self-reflect on their understanding of the six values of Social Work described in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and

Characteristics regarding helping and ethics. Students will write an essay of no more than three pages that: 1) reviews their perceptions of ability to help people; 2) outlines their understanding of the six values of social work (service, social justice, dignity and worth, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence); and 3) comparing and contrasting these values with their own values.

**3. Licensure Preparation:** As part of the admissions process, students will take the Licensure Practice Test that is available in the Program. By taking this test, students will be able to test their knowledge to date and learn more about the role of licensure in the social work profession. The exam takes about 4 hours to complete. Students will use the computers in the student lounge in UMOM to complete the test. Passing the exam is not required; only that students become familiar with the process. Additionally, students will write a brief one-page essay describing two things they learned from taking the licensure exam and how they could begin studying for the exam.

All three of these essays should be written in a narrative format, using the APA writing style and Standard English, good organization, and acceptable punctuation and grammar. Each essay should be titled and attached to the admissions application.

### **Criteria for Termination or Non-continuation in the Social Work Program**

The following list includes non-academic reasons that students may not be admitted or terminated from the Program:

1. Overtly expressed attitudes, values, and behaviors in opposition to or contrary to those found in the NASW Code of Ethics
2. Evidence of current chemical, alcohol, or drug abuse
3. Personality, emotional, attitudinal, or personal issues or difficulties which actually impairs performance, interactions, and relationships with classmates, faculty, agency staff, and/or clients
4. Evidence of certain criminal or unlawful activity
5. Dishonesty, including lying, cheating, or plagiarizing in course work or practicum placement
6. Consistent failure to demonstrate effective communication skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships
7. Consistent failure to meet class obligations (e.g. absences, tardiness, late assignments)
8. Failure to demonstrate appropriate ability to develop and maintain helping relationships (e.g. inability to be non-judgmental, allow client self-determination, inconsistent follow through)
9. Failure to develop skills of self-awareness requisite for professional practice
10. Failure to evidence writing skills requisite for professional practice

**Students Convicted of a Misdemeanor or Felony:** Students considering a social work major who have been charged with or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor should be aware of the following:

1. A number of agencies/organizations that provide practicum or volunteer placements for social work students require a criminal background check prior to accepting students.
2. A number of agencies hiring social workers may also require criminal background checks prior to employment.
3. Some state licensure laws for social workers inquire about whether the applicant has been charged with or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony.

Having a felony or misdemeanor charge or conviction does not automatically exclude a student from volunteer work, practicum placements, licensure or employment. It may, however, limit students in some areas. Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns that may have with any of the Social Work Faculty.

## Procedure for Admission to the Social Work Program

Students can secure an application for admission from the Social Work Program Director and submit the completed form to the Program Director by the announced deadline. After reviewing the student's completed application for admission, the Program Director will conduct an admission interview with the student to review the application. Additionally, the Social Work Faculty review all completed applications and provide input regarding a student's application. Decisions for admission to the Social Work Program are based on the academic, volunteer service and professional development criteria. The possible decisions include:

1. **Admitted** to the social work major represents that in the judgment of the social work faculty, the student meets criteria for admission to the social work program.
2. **Admit with concerns** represents an application that meets the minimum requirements for admission but generates areas of concern by one or more members of the faculty regarding the student's academic work and/or professional behavior. In this case, faculty make specific recommendations to support the student's education and professional development. Students must complete all recommendations prior to acceptance and placement into field education.
3. A **deferred** decision represents that in the judgment of the faculty the student does not meet all the criteria for admissions but is offered the opportunity to develop and implement a written plan for remediation and will be reconsidered at a later date.
4. **Denied** admission to the social work major represents that in the judgment of the social work faculty, the student does not meet criteria for admission to the Social Work Program. A student will be denied admission to the social work program if they do not meet the academic and/or non-academic criteria. In order to get the requisite GPA, the course to be repeated should be the one taken most recently in which the student made the lowest grade. (For example, if a student makes a C in SWK 203 and a B in SWK 322, the student would be required to repeat SWK 203).

The Program Director will communicate the decision and rationale of the Faculty in writing to each student.

**Grievance Procedure:** If the student questions the outcome of their application, the student may request that his/her application for admission be reconsidered by the faculty. This request for reconsideration must be made in writing to the Program Director within 30 days of the date of the letter informing the student of the original decision by the Faculty. The request for reconsideration must include why the student disagrees with the Faculty's decision and may include additional information to supplement the original application for admissions. The faculty will then evaluate the student's request for reconsideration. The possible decisions are the same three listed above. The Program Director will communicate the Faculty's decision in writing. If the student continues to disagree with the decision of the faculty, the student may initiate the University Student Grievance process as outlined in the Social Work Student Handbook.

## List of Potential Volunteer Opportunities

The following list includes potential volunteer opportunities for social work majors. Remember all volunteer experiences must be approved in advance by the Social Work Program Director in writing using Volunteer Service Experience Approval Form A in the application.

### Alabama Poverty Project

Birmingham, AL

Contact: Kristina Scott

205- 939-1408

[kscott@alabamapoverty.org](mailto:kscott@alabamapoverty.org)

Website: <http://alabamapossible.org>

### Birmingham Aids Outreach

Birmingham, AL

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator

205- 322-4197

[volunteer@birminghamaidsoutreach.org](mailto:volunteer@birminghamaidsoutreach.org)

Website: [www.birminghamaidsoutreach.org](http://www.birminghamaidsoutreach.org)

### Boys & Girls Club of Central Alabama

Montevallo, AL

Contact: Freda Shivers

205-665-4466

[fshivers@bgcca.org](mailto:fshivers@bgcca.org)

### Community of Hope Health Clinic

Pelham, AL

Contact: Chris Monceret

205-685-4154

[Chris.Monceret@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Chris.Monceret@adph.state.al.us)

### Crisis Center

Birmingham, AL

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator

205-323-7782

Website: <http://www.crisiscenterbham.com>

### Hospice Services of Alabama

Birmingham, AL

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator

205-682-9996

[volunteers@hsosal.com](mailto:volunteers@hsosal.com)

### Kids First Awareness

Alabaster, AL

Contact: Cindy Hawkins

205-706-9467

[kids.1st@att.net](mailto:kids.1st@att.net)

### Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging

Calera, AL

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator

205-670-5770

Website: [www.m4a-alabama.org/](http://www.m4a-alabama.org/)

### Shelby Emergency Assistance

Montevallo, AL

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator

205-665-1942

### Link-Up Mentoring

Birmingham, AL

Website: [www.campfire-al.org](http://www.campfire-al.org)

Contact: Renee Bireley

205-324-2434

### Falcon Scholars in Action

Office of Service Learning

Station 6300, located in Bloch 201

(205) 665-6300 [servicelearning@montevallo.edu](mailto:servicelearning@montevallo.edu)

### Best Buddies Chapter at Montevallo

Shelby County

Contact: Dr. Danielle Waldrep Rich

205-665-6729

[waldrepr@montevallo.edu](mailto:waldrepr@montevallo.edu)

### UM Counseling Center

Montevallo, AL

Contact: Mr. Joshua Miller

205-665-6262

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO  
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION CHECKLIST**

- \_\_\_ Completed Application Form for Admission
- \_\_\_ Completed Approval of Volunteer Service Experience Form A
- \_\_\_ Completed Volunteer Experience Verification Form B or Form C
- \_\_\_ Written Essay about Volunteer Service
- \_\_\_ Written Essay about Social Work Interviews
- \_\_\_ Written Essay about NASW Code of Ethics
- \_\_\_ Written Essay about Licensure Preparation Exam
- \_\_\_ Licensure Preparation Verification Form

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO  
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION**

<b>General Information</b>	
Date of Application:	
Name:	
Local Address:	
Phone:	Email:

<b>List of Volunteer Service Agencies</b>
Name of Agency, Contact Person & Phone Number:
Name of Agency, Contact Person & Phone Number:
Name of Agency, Contact Person & Phone Number:

<b>List of Social Workers Interviewed</b>
Name of Social Work, Agency of Employment, Phone Number & Email Address:
Name of Social Work, Agency of Employment, Phone Number & Email Address:

<b>Academic Criteria</b>
Please list your grades for the following courses:
SWK 203:
SWK 322:
PSYC 306:
What is your overall UM GPA:

Include the following attachments with this application:

1. Written statement on volunteer service
2. Written statement about social work interviews
3. Written statement on NASW Code of Ethics
4. Written statement about taking the Licensure Practice exam
5. Social Work Check Sheet from Records Office

I have read and understand the admission procedures and criteria for admissions and continuation in the program.

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

I have read the UM Social Work Program Student Handbook.

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

I have read the NASW Code of Ethics.

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

The Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act was enacted by Congress to protect individual privacy by assuring the confidentiality of information related to the records and educational experience of students. This space was adopted by the Social Work Faculty at the University of Montevallo to permit students to grant written permission for program faculty to release confidential information about the student to BSW Program faculty and staff, practicum agencies, licensing boards, agencies for employment and graduate schools.

I have read and understand the above statement regarding my privacy rights and the confidentiality of information related to my educational experience and records. My signature below acknowledges that I have granted written permission to the BSW Program at the University of Montevallo to release confidential information protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act to those auspices noted above.

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

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM  
VOLUNTEER SERVICE EXPERIENCE APPROVAL FORM A**

Student Name:	Date:
Name of Agency:	Name of Agency Supervisor:
Agency Address:	Agency Phone Number:

I approve this volunteer service experience.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Social Work Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM  
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION FORM C**

Student Name:	Date:
Name of Agency:	Time Period of Volunteer Service (ex. 8a.m.-11 a.m.):
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Supervisor:

Student Name:	Date:
Name of Agency:	Time Period of Volunteer Service (ex. 8a.m.-11 a.m.):
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Supervisor:

Student Name:	Date:
Name of Agency:	Time Period of Volunteer Service (ex. 8a.m.-11 a.m.):
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Supervisor:

Student Name:	Date:
Name of Agency:	Time Period of Volunteer Service (ex. 8a.m.-11 a.m.):
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Supervisor:

Student Name:	Date:
Name of Agency:	Time Period of Volunteer Service (ex. 8a.m.-11 a.m.):
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Supervisor:

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**  
**LICENSURE PREPARATION VERIFICATION FORM**

To take the social work practice exam, contact the BSS Departmental Secretary to schedule a time. After completing the exam, please complete this form and submit as part of your admissions application.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date test was taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Verification Signature: \_\_\_\_\_