

University of Montevallo Social Work Program Student Handbook 2026–2027

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Social Work Program Nondiscrimination Policy

In keeping with the ethics and values of the social work profession and the policies of the University of Montevallo, the Social Work Program is open to all students regardless of age, class, race, color, gender, culture, physical ability, creed, ethnic or national origin, immigration status, religion, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or expression of gender identity.

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The Program's website provides useful information related to the social work major. Program-related forms and publications are available on the website, including the Program Admissions Application and the Student Handbook: https://www.montevallo.edu/program/social-work/

Preface

The Social Work Student Handbook serves to orient social work students to the undergraduate Social Work Program at the University of Montevallo. The handbook has the following specific purposes:

- to introduce new majors to the Social Work Program;
- to serve as a resource and a guide for students in planning their undergraduate experience in social work education;
- to articulate relevant university and program policies and procedures; and
- to describe the activities of the Social Work Program.

To plan a successful educational experience, social work students should also refer to the *2026–2027 University of Montevallo Undergraduate Bulletin*, available online at https://www.montevallo.edu/academics/university-bulletin/

The Social Work Handbook focuses primarily on the social work major and does not articulate every institutional requirement for graduation from the University of Montevallo (UM). The *Undergraduate Bulletin* is UM's official publication and ultimately takes precedence; the Social Work Handbook is to be used as a student resource. All social work students are encouraged to be familiar with both this handbook and the UM *Undergraduate Bulletin*. Additionally, students are required to consult with their academic advisor at least once per academic semester regarding their scheduled courses to ensure a successful path to graduation.

The Social Work Profession

As defined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE),

> The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice; the creation of conditions that facilitate the realization of human rights; the elimination of poverty; and the enhancement of life for all people, locally and globally. (CSWE, 2022, p. 14)

For the right student, social work is indeed an exciting, challenging, and rewarding profession. A career in social work involves helping people to find their way to living more satisfying and productive lives through empowerment and self-sufficiency. Professionally, social workers are ever concerned with the social problems, circumstances, and barriers that prevent people from fulfilling their basic needs and accomplishing their life goals. The problems and circumstances that social workers address in their practice include, but are not limited to, child abuse and neglect, physical health problems, alcohol and substance abuse, mental illness, poor education, lack of adequate job skills and training, disruption to interpersonal relationships and family dynamics, systemic discrimination and oppression, and poverty.

To accomplish the collective purpose of helping people live more satisfying and productive lives, social workers systematically engage consumers of services at individual, family, group, community, and organizational levels (also referred to as systems of all sizes in this document) with both micro- and macro-level practice interventions. Operating from a person-in-environment perspective, social workers recognize that people's lives are influenced by the physical and emotional environments in which they live, their family and friendship networks, the organizations with which they interact, their local community, state and national government, and society. To effectively engage the inherent complexity between human behavior and the social environment, social workers must have the knowledge and skills to practice at all five of these levels. Social workers are interested, not only in helping individuals and communities to adapt to change, but also in contributing to the continued development of a more humane and just society that offers maximum opportunities for all people.

In implementing these purposes, social workers are employed in an array of human service organizations and programs. Examples of settings where social workers are employed include hospitals, mental health facilities, family service agencies, child protection agencies, juvenile probation and detention facilities, public welfare agencies, alcohol and substance abuse rehabilitation programs, programs for the aging and elderly, public schools, adoption agencies, programs for the homeless, public health, home health-care and hospice, veterans' centers and hospitals, agencies serving the medically fragile including services to clients who are diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, programs for domestic abuse and sexual assault, and social justice initiatives including community organizing, advocacy, and policy development.

To be effective, social workers must master a wide range of knowledge from the social and behavioral sciences. For example, social workers must understand the various dimensions of human growth and development; they must also understand the nature and importance of interpersonal communication and family dynamics and the influence of ethnicity and culture, social structure, and social institutions on the lives of people. It is also necessary for social workers to learn about effective helping approaches including the ability to think critically about helping interventions and to engage in research-informed social work practice. Social work practice is based on knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge in understanding the problems of people. However, having this knowledge is not enough. Knowledge leads to understanding, but understanding is only part of the picture. Social workers must be able to do something with this knowledge. To this end, social workers must learn a comprehensive skillset to aid individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities including the state and the nation.

Effective social work practice is a planned, purposeful process that combines knowledge, helping skills, and professional social work values and ethics. It is imperative that social workers understand and identify with the spirit, mission, and values of the social work profession. A social work professional must be able to apply social work ethical principles to their daily work. Fueled by the fundamental value of social justice is the view that society has the responsibility of ensuring that all people have access to opportunities for developing their fullest potential as human beings. Social work has a well-articulated statement of professional values, which is put forth in the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW, 2021) *Code of Ethics* and is available online at https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics

Professional Social Work Organizations

National Association of Social Workers

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW; https://www.socialworkers.org/) was founded in 1955 as the result of a merger of seven separate and specialized social work associations. The NASW is charged with establishing the ethical standards for professional conduct in social work practice. Regular membership in NASW is available to anyone who has an undergraduate or graduate degree in social work from an accredited program. Social work students may join NASW at a reduced rate if they are enrolled in an accredited social work educational program. For student members, NASW offers a full range of professional publications designed to keep social workers up to date with respect to new knowledge in the field. Professional member services provided by NASW include group insurance rates and continuing education opportunities. Members of NASW are active in the political arena at the national, state, and local levels as part of social work's professional mandate to continually advocate for the improvement of services to all client groups. Please consult your faculty advisor with questions regarding student membership in NASW.

Council on Social Work Education

Founded in 1952, the Council on Social Work Education (https://www.cswe.org) is responsible for the accreditation of undergraduate and graduate social work education programs. The Council is a national entity and has a smaller scope than the NASW, although a most important function in maintaining the integrity of the social work profession. The mission of CSWE is "to advance excellence and innovation in social work education, by providing leadership and scholarship, to ensure quality in teaching and learning, supporting critical thinking, empathy, and advocacy to strengthen the capacity of our membership" (CSWE, n.d.).

CSWE is the only organization authorized to set standards for social work education programs and to provide accredited status to those programs that meet those standards. As of 2026, there are over 760 accredited undergraduate social work programs, including UM, in colleges and universities across the United States. The *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* (CSWE, 2022) that guide all social work programs in curriculum development can be found online at https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/policies-process/2022epas/

Social Work Licensure

Social work is not just a college major; it is a profession with licensure and certification privileges. The purpose of social work licensure is to assure the public that licensed practicing social workers have met the minimum standards for professional competency. Simply stated, professional licensure serves as a layer of protection for clients who are consumers of social work services. An increasing number of social work jobs require licensing. A social worker becomes licensed by completing a social work degree from an accredited school and passing a standardized test for the appropriate level. A person who graduates from UM with a social work major may become licensed if they apply for and pass the test for the baccalaureate level. Each state has its own set of licensure laws and procedures. Alabama's social work licensing law provides for licensing social workers at three levels: baccalaureate (LBSW), master (LMSW), and clinical (LICSW).

The Program strongly encourages and supports professional licensure for our graduates. The Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners (ASBSWE) administers the licensing law in Alabama. More information about ASBSWE can be found online at http://socialwork.alabama.gov/. The licensure exam is a nationally standardized test curated by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB; https://www.aswb.org/). ASWB is the nonprofit organization composed of and owned by the social work regulatory boards and colleges of all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and all 10 Canadian provinces. ASWB is the only nonprofit organization dedicated to social work regulation. The mission of ASWB "is to provide support and services to the social work regulatory community to advance safe, competent, and ethical practices to strengthen public protection" (ASWB, n.d.).

In Alabama, the need is great for professionally trained social workers. Because of the federal class action lawsuit *R.C. v. Hornsby*, the Alabama Department of Human Resources requires child welfare social workers to be licensed (which means they must have a social work degree). The personnel demand for this agency alone can absorb a large percentage of the graduates from all the undergraduate programs in the state combined. The Alabama Department of Public Health also hires only licensed social workers, as do most nursing homes, home health and hospice agencies, and hospitals. The challenge lies in getting graduates to the areas where they are most needed, often rural or inner-city areas. The rationale many agencies give for requiring licensed social workers is that they enhance service delivery. Our Program has a strong record of accomplishment in having its graduates licensed and employed in a wide range of social service agencies in both rural and urban areas.

Social work students at UM are prepared to pass the licensure exam upon graduation as an ongoing program objective. First, the social work curriculum is deliberately designed to reflect the knowledge, competencies, and critical thinking skills needed to prepare for the exam. Students are encouraged to save notes and textbooks from all their courses to review after graduation. The Social Work Program provides one free practice exam to all social work majors. Through grant funding, the Social Work Program has multiple study guides available for students and graduates to borrow in preparation for the examination. UM offers licensure preparation workshops once a semester for all graduating seniors, alumni, and community partners. Students may complete the licensure preparation workshop, before and after graduation, as many times as they like at no cost.

The application for licensure in Alabama is available online from the ASBSWE at https://www.alabamainteractive.org/alsocw_initial/welcome.action. For inquiries on licensure law in other states, please consult the ASWB website at https://www.aswb.org/

The University of Montevallo Social Work Program

History

Undergraduate social work education was first instituted at the University of Montevallo in the 1920s. Ms. Myrtle Brooke, chairperson of the Sociology Department, organized summer training in social work as early as 1924 (Griffith, 1969). Ms. Brooke employed faculty from what is now the Jane Addams School of Social Work at the University of Chicago and Simmons College in Boston to teach summer courses in social casework and community organization. Ms. Brooke

also arranged for members of the National Child Labor Commission of New York, the Child Welfare League of America, and the Children's Aid Society in Boston to teach summer courses in social and child welfare. Inspired by the need for training for social workers, Ms. Brooke expanded this summer program into a full major in social work in 1925, the first such major in the state of Alabama. Many early graduates of UM's Social Work Program have been instrumental in the development of child welfare, mental health, public health, and aging services in the State of Alabama.

By 1974, CSWE began offering accreditation status to undergraduate education programs with the primary objective of preparing students for beginning-level professional social work practice. Under the leadership of Professor Virginia Jones, UM met all initial criteria set forth in the Standards for the Accreditation of Baccalaureate Degree Programs and was the first in the State of Alabama awarded accredited status in 1974. The program has maintained its accredited status since that time, having been reaffirmed in 1977, 1980, 1989, 1997, 2004, 2012, and 2020 for preparing entry-level professional social workers.

The number of social work majors declined in the 1980s due, in part, to the devaluing of social service and social welfare programs in the United States. In response to the decreasing number of majors and the concomitant decrease in the number of faculty, the Social Work Program initiated a merger with the Department of Social Sciences and became a Program within that Department in 1989. In 2024, the Social Work Program was integrated into the newly formed College of Health Professions. The Social Work Program joined other accredited allied health professions including nursing, exercise and nutrition sciences, dietetics, and speech-language pathology. Today, the Social Work Program is a professional program within the Department of Social Work and Speech Pathology.

Mission Statement of the Social Work Program

Over the years, the mission, goals, objectives, and curriculum of the Social Work Program have been updated to reflect changing conditions in society, the State of Alabama, social problems, social work practice, social work education, and the University of Montevallo. The current mission states, "The University of Montevallo Social Work Program provides a professional education for beginning-level generalist practice with emphasis on the poor, vulnerable, and underserved. Generalist practice is founded upon the purposes and core values of the social work profession."

The Program's mission statement drives the Program's pedagogical approach to preparing undergraduate students to practice efficaciously and with competence. Our mission statement reflects the spirit of social work's historic duty of service to those who are poor, vulnerable, oppressed, discriminated against, underserved, or otherwise suffering in some way. Our mission statement is also reflective of the social problems faced in Alabama and the geographic area where our Program is located.

To elaborate, *The Social Work Dictionary* (Barker, 2014) provides a useful definition of the term "vulnerable populations" as it applies to social work practice, describing "individuals or groups who have a greater probability of being harmed by specific social, environmental, or health problems than the population" (p. 452). Examples of vulnerable populations include those who live in poverty, the unemployed, the physically ill and disabled, the mentally, intellectually, and

developmentally challenged, women and children, the elderly, racial and ethnic minorities, high-risk youth, veterans and military families, and the LGBTQ+ community.

The mission statement also directly references, and ties to, the core values of the social work profession as outlined in the NASW *Code of Ethics* (NASW, 2021):

- service,
- social justice,
- the dignity and worth of the person,
- the importance of human relationships,
- integrity, and
- competence.

These values frame the profession's commitment to respect for all people and the quest for social and economic justice. Social and economic justice is the fair distribution of societal resources to all people with emphasis on how society allocates resources, which consist of material goods and social benefits, equal rights, and protections. The Program's commitment to advocacy on behalf of those suffering from social and economic injustices drives much of what is taught in the curriculum.

The Program Mission's emphasis on poverty and economic justice is a natural fit given the Program's residence in the State of Alabama. Alabama ranks near the bottom on most social indicators such as infant mortality, median family income, and funding for education. As can be seen in Table 1, Alabama has higher rates of poverty compared to national data. Additionally, Alabama has a lower median family income than the national average. The University of Montevallo is located in Shelby County, Alabama, which overall has lower rates of poverty compared with state data. However, the City of Montevallo, where the University is located, has higher rates of poverty compared to Shelby County, and is an example of the pockets of poverty that are very common throughout Alabama.

Table 1

Poverty Data for the United States, Alabama, Shelby County, and the City of Montevallo

Location	Median household income	% of individuals living in poverty	% of children living in poverty
United States	$80,734	10.6	14.3
State of Alabama	$63,999	15.2	20.2
Shelby County	$97,961	6.8	9.4
City of Montevallo	$56,626	17.7	—

Note. Data from U.S. Census Bureau (n.d., 2026). Median household income figures reflect 2020–2024 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Overall poverty rates draw on the most current vintage available for each geography (2024 CPS ASEC for the U.S., 2024 ACS 1-year estimates for Alabama, and 2024 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates for Shelby County). The child poverty rate for the City of Montevallo (—) is suppressed due to insufficient sample size at the city level.

Compared to national data, Alabama ranks high in the nation for the percentage of children in poverty. It is estimated that roughly 763,679 Alabamians, including 227,337 children, live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026). Other data from Alabama show significant problems on the following indicators of child well-being: percentage of low-weight births, infant mortality, child death, preventable teen death, teen birth rate, percent teen dropout, idle teens, under-employed parents, children in poverty, and single parent families. While vulnerable populations are not limited solely to the poor, poverty is often a complicating factor for many vulnerable populations including children, the elderly, and minority groups. Due, in part, to these statistics, the Social Work Program continues to place curriculum emphasis on poverty as it impacts quality of life for those who are poor, vulnerable, and underserved. The faculty work to ensure that students understand the effects of poverty on systems of all sizes and the risk factors that make the poor vulnerable.

The Program provides opportunities for and encourages students to be active in advocacy groups such as Alabama Arise (http://www.alarise.org/), Alabama Possible (http://alabamapossible.org/), and the Equal Justice Initiative (https://eji.org/). Faculty themselves are members of these organizations and regularly attend meetings and workshops. Other activities that provide students with additional opportunities to learn more about the poor and vulnerable and the profession's commitment to those who are most at risk include involvement in local and statewide conferences such as the Alabama Conference of Social Work, the Alabama-Mississippi Social Work Education Conference, the Alabama Fall Social Work Conference, Alabama Arise Advocacy Day, the Alabama Head Injury Foundation, Washington, D.C. Fly-In, and the Alabama NASW Social Work Advocacy Day. The Program supports these efforts by informing students of upcoming events and using Program and Foundation funds to pay for student registration at conferences. Thus, the mission drives not only curriculum decisions, but also programmatic decisions.

Generalist Social Work Practice

Conception of Generalist Practice

In 2009, and again in 2026, the Social Work Program reviewed and expanded its conceptualization of generalist practice. The conception of generalist practice is consistent with and is an extension of the Program's mission. The Program's mission, goals, and core competencies are infused and operationalized into specific course objectives, content, and assignments throughout the Program's curriculum. All decisions made in relation to curriculum (content, structure, general education, and support courses) are designed to be consistent with the conception of generalist practice as well as the spirit, values, and mission of the profession.

Generalist practice is directed towards problems of living as they are experienced by people within their own life space. Its aim is to increase or augment the opportunities and options for people to manage their predicaments in more effective, rewarding, and growth-producing ways. Generalist practice emphasizes a common core of knowledge and skills associated with social services delivery. A generalist social worker possesses basic knowledge that may span several methods in social work. Such a social worker would not necessarily be a specialist in a single field of practice or professional technique but would be capable of providing and managing a wider range of needed client services and intervening in a great variety of systems (Barker, 2014).

As a further explication of generalist practice, the faculty has adopted CSWE's definition of a generalist practitioner:

> Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. (CSWE, 2022, p. 17)

For curriculum purposes, two important emphases can be extracted from these definitions of generalist practice. The first is a focus on the social, emotional, occupational, and environmental problems of individuals. This emphasis focuses concern on the negotiation of life and its circumstances rather than on diagnostic or problem categories. The second emphasis is the primary concern for people—whether individuals, families, groups, communities, or organizations—involved in these problematic life situations, and the interrelationships between these systems that cause difficulties for people as they attempt to meet life goals. Also inherent in the definition of generalist practice is an emphasis on using the strengths of people (individuals, families, groups, communities, or organizations) to increase options for maximum human functioning when addressing problems or issues of life.

Purposes, Values, and Principles of Social Work

The UM Social Work Faculty has adopted and incorporated into their view of social work the mission of the social work profession as noted in the NASW *Code of Ethics* Preamble:

> The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's dual focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.
>
> Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also

> seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems. (NASW, 2021, Preamble)

This view of social work is further operationalized by the purposes, values, and principles chosen by the social work faculty. CSWE (2022) describes the purpose of professional social work as follows:

> To promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice; the creation of conditions that facilitate the realization of human rights; the elimination of poverty; and the enhancement of life for all people, locally and globally. (p. 14)

While not exhaustive, the NASW *Code of Ethics* (NASW, 2021) lists many ethical guidelines for social work practice, and the following are several values and principles that are taken as central to the social work profession:

- Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.
- Social workers challenge social injustice.
- Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.
- Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.
- Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.
- Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

These ethical principles are based on the values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Thus, the Program's conception of generalist practice is underpinned by the mission of the profession, the values and principles of the profession, and the purposes of social work as defined by CSWE. These values, combined with the Program's mission statement, the definition of a generalist practitioner, and the CSWE core competencies and EPAS standards, provide the guidelines for curriculum development and, indeed, the overall development of the Social Work Program.

Social Work Program Goals

The goals of the Social Work Program are as follows:

1. To educate generalist practitioners with strong professional identity and commitment to the social work profession's historical knowledge, spirit, values, and ethics.
2. To prepare beginning level generalist practitioners to effectively engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate in micro- and macro-level practice with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
3. To prepare culturally competent practitioners who understand and value human needs as they relate to the practice of social work.
4. To prepare practitioners who understand and appreciate the value of scientific inquiry, qualitative and quantitative data collection, and systematic data analysis for

the purpose of informing best practices for service delivery, evaluation, advocacy, and critical thought.
5. To prepare generalist practitioners who understand the dynamics and consequences of social, economic, and environmental factors.
6. To prepare generalist practitioners to engage in advocacy and policy practice at the state, local, and federal levels for the purposes of developing consumer resources and enhancing service delivery.

Each of these goals flows from the Program's mission statement. The first goal directly reflects the importance of student identification with the historical mission, spirit, and values of the social work profession. The goal serves as a billboard for students as they first engage the core values of the social work profession as outlined by the NASW. Hence, the first goal is a true starting point for students entering the social work major and ultimately the profession. Professional education includes the idea that professionals subscribe to standards and principles of ethical behavior. While knowledge and skills are important components of practice, social work values and ethics provide a framework for appropriately using knowledge and skill. The preamble to the NASW *Code of Ethics* notes "the primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty" (NASW, 2021, Preamble). This ties in directly to the part of the mission focusing on the poor and vulnerable. This goal incorporates the core values and ethics of the profession and is consistent with the Program's mission of educating generalist practitioners. The Program provides multiple opportunities for students to develop a strong professional identity including the requirement for volunteer work, funding for students to attend professional conferences, and the regular offering of timely Program-sponsored workshops and speakers.

The second and most comprehensive goal captures the component of the mission statement that includes generalist practice as it applies to diverse individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. This goal is a natural extension of the mission of the Social Work Program as generalist practice involves working effectively with systems of all sizes. UM social work graduates are offered a holistic competency-based curriculum that emphasizes service delivery to individuals and families in combination with knowledge of communities and organizations to identify gaps in policies, procedures, and services to vulnerable populations. Upon completion, graduates must have the ability to effectively engage, assess, and intervene at both the micro and macro levels of practice. This includes comprehensive knowledge of key principles in the helping process with individuals and families, with emphasis on the use of client strengths in generalist practice settings; the ability to identify selected frameworks, perspectives, models, and theories, with emphasis on the ecological systems perspective of practice; and the process of assessment, planning, intervention, case managing, and evaluation in social work practice. As most social work services are delivered within the context of organizations, it is also important for graduates to understand the impact organizations have on both the social worker and the consumers they serve. Thus, UM social work graduates acquire knowledge of organizational, community, and political change techniques based on the thorough assessment of social problems causing difficulties for diverse groups of people. Knowledge of group process and the ability to work with a range of groups (from groups developed to meet client needs, to committees, to community groups, to advocacy groups) are also essential for effective generalist practice.

The third program goal reflects the importance of understanding and valuing human needs as they shape human experiences and formation of interpersonal identity. Pragmatic understanding of, and the ability to work with, diverse populations reflect the Program's commitment to the poor and vulnerable, whose situations are often due to the nature of "simply being different" in some way. The ethical commitment to understanding and valuing diversity as a function of the practice of cultural competency is an integral part of preparing students for generalist practice. The mission's emphasis on the poor and vulnerable is directly related to the practice of cultural competence, as being from a diverse group often contributes to the risk of being poor and/or vulnerable. UM recognizes that diversity goes far beyond racial and ethnic demographics and encompasses age, class, color, gender, culture, physical ability, creed, national origin, immigration status, religion, sexual orientation, or expression of gender identity. In addition to the social work curriculum, social work students obtain knowledge about human diversity (biology, class, race, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, etc.) in the basic liberal arts courses of human biology, economics, English literature, history, psychology, political science, and sociology.

The fourth program goal emphasizes the importance of systematic data collection as graduates engage with systems of all sizes to address issues of concern to clients and to social workers. Preparation for generalist practice includes the skills to be a good consumer of the professional literature as well as the utilization of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection to improve practice. Generalist social work practice typically begins with an issue or concern, then moves rationally to an exploration of that concern using the data that is available (census data, agency-generated data, assessment data from clients, and empirically based knowledge from the professional literature). Because social work practice includes the use of scientific inquiry to inform practices, the UM Social Work Program has a core curriculum emphasis on the exploration and utilization of evidence-based practices. This goal is related to the goals of the profession as a method of enhancing the lives of clients through efficacious practice and serves as a basis for identifying needed change across systems of all sizes.

The fifth Program goal is an extension of the Program's mission as the poor, underserved, and vulnerable often suffer from oppression and/or other forms of social, environmental, and economic injustice. It is impossible to understand the dynamics and consequences of social, environmental, and economic injustice without understanding the societal conditions that perpetuate these circumstances. Individuals who are vulnerable are the victims of injustice and students must first understand the impact of social, environmental, and economic injustice on individuals, families, groups, and communities before they begin to consider how these problems may be alleviated. This goal is also consistent with the profession's overarching commitment to social justice.

Finally, the sixth goal reflects the importance of service delivery at the macro level in the form of advocacy for beginning-level generalist practitioners. To successfully champion the cause of others, graduates must have the skills to advocate for the poor, underserved, and vulnerable through the pursuit of policies and practices that enhance human well-being through service delivery. Graduates must be prepared to engage and assess at the global, national, state, and community levels through advocacy and policy practice. This goal is also consistent with the profession's overarching commitment to social justice.

Social Work Program Competencies

Based upon the mission statement and program goals, the UM Social Work Program's curriculum is designed to provide students with a holistic competency-based curriculum emphasizing the acquisition of the knowledge, values, skills, and critical thinking skills (also referred to as cognitive-affective processes in this document) requisite for professional social work practice. A competency-based approach to social work education is designed to help students "integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being" (CSWE, 2022, p. 7). The Council on Social Work Education mandates that each accredited undergraduate program address the following competencies and behavioral outcomes. The competencies and behavioral outcomes listed below describe what the curriculum is designed to help students learn about and be able to do (knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive-affective process). The competencies and outcomes are available on the CSWE website at https://www.cswe.org. In 2022, the UM Social Work Program transitioned from the 2015 version of the core competencies to the 2022 standards as outlined by the CSWE's *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* (CSWE, 2022). The competencies are as follows.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

a. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers *Code of Ethics*, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;
b. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
c. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and

d. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

a. advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
b. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

a. demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
b. demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working

with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

a. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
b. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects well-being, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

a. use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and
b. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 6: Engage With Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

a. apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and
b. use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

a. apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and
b. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

Competency 8: Intervene With Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human

behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.

Social workers:

a. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
b. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice With Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

a. select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and
b. critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social Work Faculty

Brendan Beal, PhD, Associate Professor of Social Work

Dr. Brendan Beal is an associate professor of social work in the Department of Social Work and Speech Pathology at the University of Montevallo. He holds a BS in marketing and an MSW in clinical social work from Florida State University, and a PhD in social work from the University of Georgia. He joined UM in 2016.

Dr. Beal teaches Introduction to Social Welfare and Social Work, Skills for Social Work Practice, Research in Social Welfare, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, and Social Work Practice With Groups. His research interests include the use of virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) in social work pedagogy.

Jason M. Newell, PhD, LICSW-S, Professor and Practicum Director

Dr. Jason Newell received his BA in psychology from Auburn University and an MSW and PhD in social work from the University of Alabama. Dr. Newell is a licensed independent clinical social worker (LICSW) and a private individual practitioner (PIP) with an endorsement in clinical and social casework. Dr. Newell has been in the fields of social work practice, research, and education for over 25 years. Dr. Newell served as the Director of the Social Work Program from 2013 to 2026. His research and specialty areas include clinical social work practice with the mentally ill; treatment of anxiety, trauma-related, and mood disorders; self-care and professional resilience; practice with veterans and military families; and child welfare.

In 2008, he joined the social work faculty in the Department of Social Work and Speech Pathology at the University of Montevallo. Dr. Newell has taught courses in introduction to social welfare and social work, human behavior and the social environment, research methods, generalist social work practice, practice with individuals and families, practice with children and families, and practice in mental health care settings. In 2013, he received the College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award; in 2016, he was named the Alabama-Mississippi Social Work Educator of the Year; in 2024, he received the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award from the National Alumni Association; and in 2025, he was recognized for 25 years of service to the social work profession at the Alabama Conference of Social Work annual meeting. In 2023, Dr. Newell was appointed as the inaugural Dr. Jeanine Cannon Bozeman Endowed Chair in Social Work Education.

Meredith Tetloff, PhD, Associate Professor of Social Work and Program Director

Dr. Meredith Tetloff is an associate professor and Director of Social Work at the University of Montevallo. Dr. Tetloff received an undergraduate degree in political science from Birmingham-Southern College in 2000, an MSSW from Columbia University in 2004, and a PhD in social work from the University of Georgia in 2012.

Her primary research interest is community practice interventions, most recently with a focus on university-community partnerships. Her professional experience is primarily in the field of nonprofits, including work with refugee and immigrant families in Atlanta, with UNICEF in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and with youth development programs in Brooklyn and Atlanta. She also works closely with the David Mathews Center for Civic Life.

Dr. Tetloff has been on the faculty at the University of Montevallo since 2012 and is currently the Social Work Program Director. In this role, she teaches classes such as Social Policy, Social Work With Communities and Organizations, Environmental Justice, and Introduction to Peace and Justice Studies. Her favorite part of her job is connecting the classroom and the community, which she does through field trips to Montgomery and Washington, D.C., organizing and facilitating advocacy events on UM's campus, hosting guest speakers from community organizations, and partnering with students to create assignments at the intersection of student interests and community context. In 2020, she was selected as a fellow for the Social Work Health Futures Lab sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In that role, she has collaborated with social workers across North America to explore, imagine, and create a more just and equitable future. She was awarded the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award from the College of Arts and Sciences in 2017.

The Social Work Major

As described in the previous section, the mission of the Social Work Program provides for a professional education for beginning-level generalist practice with emphasis on the poor, vulnerable, and underserved. Becoming a professional social worker is a complex process. Unlike other undergraduate majors at UM, the social work major is education for practice—that is, professional action. The social work student seeks knowledge not just for understanding, but so that each student will be prepared to put that knowledge to use in a professionally responsible manner.

Social work education, at the generalist level, is not preparation for a specific job; rather, it is education for entry into the social work profession. Effective social work practice is a blending of knowledge, helping skills, and social work values. The curriculum for the social work major, described in the pages that follow, has been designed to achieve the goal of preparing students for generalist social work practice.

Liberal Arts Foundation

Congruent with CSWE's description of generalist practice, the social work curriculum is closely interrelated with the liberal arts curriculum at UM and is sequentially organized to provide students with the knowledge, skills, values, and critical thinking ability necessary for competent, entry-level social work practice in contemporary society. UM has a long-standing commitment to providing a liberal arts education, and the liberal arts are integral to the University's current mission and vision statements for students and current strategic plan (2021–2026; https://www.montevallo.edu/about-um/administration/office-of-the-associate-provost/strategic-planning/strategic-plan-2021-2026/).

The University of Montevallo's Mission Statement

> The overriding mission of the University of Montevallo, unique in Alabama higher education, is to provide to students from throughout the state an affordable, geographically accessible, "small college" public higher educational experience of high quality with a strong emphasis on undergraduate liberal studies and with professional programs supported by a broad base of arts and sciences, designed for their intellectual and personal growth in pursuit of meaningful employment and responsible, informed citizenship. (University of Montevallo, n.d.)

The University of Montevallo's Vision Statement

The University of Montevallo offers undergraduate and graduate students a learner-centered 21st century education informed by our liberal arts identity.

Foundation Liberal Arts Courses

The liberal arts curriculum is the core of the education of every University of Montevallo graduate, including social work majors. The liberal arts foundation provides a breadth of knowledge and understanding that is essential in the education of generalist social workers and in the development of critical thinking skills. The liberal arts perspective, provided in the comprehensive General Education curriculum at UM, enriches students' understanding of the "human condition" and lays a foundation for understanding the role of social welfare and social

work in contemporary society. The professional foundation for social work practice is characterized as building on the liberal arts perspective. The professional foundation areas are logically organized in relation to each other as well as to the undergirding liberal arts content. The general purpose of the social work curriculum is to provide students with the educational experiences necessary for the mastery of knowledge, the development of professional skill, and identification with the spirit, values, and mission of the social work profession.

A brief description of the relationship of specific liberal arts areas to the social work curriculum is essential to understand the links between the liberal arts foundation and generalist social work education. The University of Montevallo outlines four key educational goals for the general education (GE) curriculum: knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, knowledge of personal and social responsibility, intellectual and practical skills, and integrative and applied learning. Each of the general education goals applies directly to social work education, particularly the GE goals of gaining knowledge of personal and social responsibility and the development of intellectual and practical skills. As such, three courses from the social work curriculum are offered as part of UM's general education curriculum: Introduction to Social Welfare and Social Work, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, and Social Work Practice With Children and Families.

Social workers must understand the bio-psycho-social-spiritual aspects of behavior. The basic content for understanding these aspects of behavior is gained in the liberal arts courses such as biology, sociology, and psychology. In addition, social workers must communicate effectively in both oral and written forms. English, communication, and information literacy courses help students develop skills in these areas. English and fine arts courses also help students develop an understanding and appreciation of culture and diversity.

Additionally, courses in history contribute to an understanding of diversity and how society has evolved. History helps students learn about other cultures and the relationship between present troubles in the world and past conflicts that are culturally based. Knowledge of the workings of the political system is gained in political science and economics. Without this knowledge, understanding social policy, social justice, and social welfare would be difficult. The ability to advocate for change within macro systems is also enhanced by knowledge of the political system. Content taught in economics contributes to students' understanding of policy decisions and the relationship between social services and other economic structures in society.

Finally, a basic grounding in mathematics gives social workers the tools needed to understand budgeting, accountability, and the simple tools for evaluating one's own practice and prepares students for the study of statistics. Each of these courses helps prepare students to understand, evaluate, and conduct research.

Each of the curriculum content areas mentioned above is a component of the liberal arts curriculum at UM. The Social Work Faculty have selected specific courses in the University General Education Curriculum (biology, history, sociology, political science, economics, and psychology) as prerequisites for social work courses to enable the faculty to build upon the knowledge gained by the student and to help the student integrate the knowledge into a unique social work perspective. As social work is an applied profession, students are helped to use knowledge gained in the liberal arts courses to work effectively with the reciprocal relationships

between people and their environment. Generally, social work majors begin taking social work courses at the junior level, after completion of the general education courses.

Requirements for the Social Work Major

Requirements for the social work major include the following:

- a minimum of 120 credit hours;
- fifty-three (53) required general education hours;
- forty-two (42) semester hours of required social work courses;
- fifteen (15) hours of academic support courses outside the Social Work Program;
- seven to twelve (7–12) additional general education hours toward either a BS or BA degree; and
- elective course credits.

Of the 42 required semester hours of social work courses, 33 hours are classroom courses and nine hours are in field education. The classroom courses are primarily knowledge and skill development courses, and the field education course is designed to help students apply the knowledge and skills gained in the classroom while implementing generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The current BA/BS degree plan is available online at https://www.montevallo.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/202680-SWK-BABS.pdf

The course descriptions that follow can also be accessed in the University *Bulletin* at https://bulletin.montevallo.edu/

Social Work Course Descriptions (42 Hours)

SWK 203: Introduction to Social Welfare and Social Work (3 Hours). This course is an introduction to social welfare as a humane and stabilizing influence in U.S. society, and to social work as the dominant profession in social welfare. This is a general education course.

SWK 322: Human Behavior and the Social Environment (3 Hours). Examination of interrelationships among the individual, family, small groups, organizations, and the community. Special attention given to diversity, cultural sensitivity, oppression, and discrimination. Prerequisite(s) with concurrency allowed: SWK 203. This is a general education course.

SWK 350: Generalist Social Work Practice (3 Hours). This course serves as an introduction to generalist social work practice as a planned, purposeful process driven by the mission, values, and ethical principles of the social work profession. Emphasis is placed on practice theories and methods of intervention with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. For social work majors only. Prerequisite(s): SWK 203 and 322, and PSYC 306 or FCS 291, with a GPA of 3.0 in prerequisite courses.

SWK 355: Research in Social Welfare (3 Hours). This course introduces the theoretical principles and application of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Emphasis is placed on developing students' practice skills as consumers of the research literature to inform evidence-based social work practice and evaluation at the micro and macro levels of service. Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or better in SWK 203.

SWK 373: Social Policy (3 Hours). An introduction to the study of social policy, with emphases on (a) how social policy influences the lives of citizens and clients, (b) how social policy influences the practice of social work, and (c) the resulting responsibilities of social work to try to influence social policy. Non-majors are allowed to take this course with consent of instructor. Prerequisite(s): For social work majors: SWK 203 and 322 (with grades of C or better), EC 231 or 232, and POS 200. Also recommended for Human Services minors, for whom the prerequisite is SWK 203.

SWK 380: Social Work Practice in Mental Health Care (3 Hours). This course describes the role of professional social workers as service providers to the mentally ill and intellectually disabled. Emphasis is placed on the use of a comprehensive bio-psycho-social model for the assessment of mental health conditions. Prerequisite(s): SWK 203.

SWK 390: Social Work Practice With Small Groups (3 Hours). Emphasis on the development of knowledge and skills for generalist social work practice with small groups, including task and treatment groups. For social work majors only. Consent of instructor required for non-social work majors. Prerequisite(s): Grades of C or better in SWK 203 and 322.

SWK 400: Skills for Social Work Practice (3 Hours).A competency-based course emphasizing preparation for the social work practicum. Emphasis placed on the acquisition of skills in client interviewing, oral and written communication, professional documentation, and presentation. Students will apply to the Practicum Program. For social work majors only. Students must meet criteria for admission to the social work professional program to enter the course. Prerequisite(s): Grades of C or better in SWK 350 and 355. Co-requisite(s): SWK 410.

SWK 410: Social Work Practice With Individuals and Families (3 Hours). Examines social work practice with individuals and families. The problem-solving process, social work purposes, values, and ethics are examined. Emphasis is given to the helping relationship and the phases of the helping process. For social work majors only. Prerequisite(s): SWK 350 and 355. Co-requisite(s): SWK 400.

SWK 420: Social Work Practice With Communities and Organizations (3 Hours). Emphasis on the development of knowledge and skills for practice with communities and organizations. Prerequisite(s): SWK 350 and 355.

SWK 455: Social Work Practicum (9 Hours). The social work practicum provides an opportunity for students to have direct and continuing contact with the realities of social work practice for the purpose of developing professional social work capabilities. The student is assigned to a social service agency five days a week and is supervised by a qualified professional practitioner employed by the agency. Students must be admitted to the practicum program before registering for this course. A GPA of 3.0 is required in social work courses. An overall GPA of 2.3 is also required. Prerequisite(s): SWK 373, 390, 400, 410, and 420. Co-requisite(s): SWK 456.

SWK 456: Social Work Integrative Seminar (3 Hours). Emphasis is on helping students incorporate previous classroom content with their “real life” experiences in the practicum. Themes that are infused into the total curriculum and preparation for entering social

work practice are emphasized. The course meets every week for two hours. Co-requisite(s): SWK 455.

Social Work Elective Descriptions

SWK 260: Social Work Practice With Children and Families (3 Hours). This course presents issues affecting children and families in American society. Emphasis on providing social services to children who are abused, neglected, developmentally delayed, homeless, chronically ill, and disabled. Policy issues related to the provision of adequate services to children and their families will also be reviewed. This is a general education course.

SWK 301–305: Selected Topics in Social Work (3 Hours). Specific subjects will vary each time the course is offered. The subject will be announced the previous semester. Course may be repeated for credit each time the topic changes. The following courses have been offered by the Program.

Interdisciplinary Education for Professional Collaboration (3 Hours).The overarching goal of this course is to educate students on the use and efficacy of collaborative interprofessional approaches to meet the service needs of vulnerable clients from an interdisciplinary approach. This course is designed to provide students with a framework to effectively and ethically serve on a team with other multidisciplinary health care and/or educational providers. This class will be co-taught by speech pathology and social work faculty members. This course is designed to facilitate an understanding of interprofessional collaborative practice across a variety of education settings, professional service agencies, and health-care-related settings (outpatient clinics, social work agencies, hospitals, nursing homes, public schools, early intervention settings, and other related settings).

Social Contexts of Health (3 Hours).This course examines the intersection of health, well-being, and social systems through a social work lens. Drawing on frameworks from public health, sociology, and social policy, students investigate how social, structural, and political forces shape health outcomes across populations. Topics include the social determinants of health, health equity, structural racism, mental health systems, housing, immigration, aging and disability, child welfare, and LGBTQ+ health disparities. Students develop skills in policy analysis, community assessment, and advocacy, with attention to the unique contributions of social work practice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

SWK 311: Substance Use Disorders (3 Hours). Evolution of alcohol and drug abuse/dependence in the U.S. and selected other countries and models used to treat substance abuse. Content includes the effects of drugs, including alcohol, on the body, as well as how the disease of dependence affects every area of life and the lives of family members.

SWK 401: Social Work Practice With Aging Populations (3 Hours). This course provides a comprehensive examination of the social problems related to aging in contemporary society. Emphasis on the theoretical approaches and practice methods applied to populations receiving services within aging and geriatric settings. Prerequisite(s): SWK 203.

SWK 411: Selected Topics in Social Work (3 Hours). Topics vary. Course may be repeated for credit as topic changes. Prerequisite(s): SWK 203 and SWK 322. The following courses have been offered by the Program.

Environmental Justice (3 Hours).This interdisciplinary course will examine racial and income inequalities that result from the development and implementation of environmental policies. It will investigate the root causes of these disparities, their impact on physical, mental, and emotional health, and mechanisms for meaningful change. The course will consist of group project visits to identified communities, lectures from course professors and guest speakers, online content, and a community-wide presentation.

Social Change Through Social Marketing (3 Hours).This is a team-taught, interdisciplinary course. This course will provide introductory knowledge, ethics, and skills regarding marketing techniques for human service agencies and the impact these practices have on the market's relationship with the environment. Units addressed include (a) Social Media and Beyond (Social Change Through Social Marketing), (b) Reality Bytes (Using Simulation for Social Change), and (c) Smokey the Bear vs. McGruff the Crime Dog (The Value of Community and Environmental Impact). The objective is to provide students with an ability to think about pressing issues and possible solutions in this field.

SWK 490: Directed Readings in Social Work (1–6 Hours). Topics vary. Course may be repeated for credit as topic changes. Prerequisite(s): SWK 203 and SWK 322.

Academic Support Course Descriptions (15 Hours)

Economics (3 Hours)

Students may choose one of the two options:

EC 231: Introduction to Macroeconomics (3 Hours). Basic economic concepts, aggregate income, employment and output, money and banking, inflation, monetary and fiscal policy, and international economics and comparative systems. Prerequisite for SWK 373. This is a general education course.

EC 232: Introduction to Microeconomics (3 Hours). An explanation of the market determination of and the individual household's response to demand, supply, and price in both product and factor markets. Prerequisite for SWK 373. This is a general education course.

Statistics (3 Hours)

Students may choose one of the two options:

PSYC 300: Descriptive Statistics (3 Hours). Choice, calculation by hand and through statistical software, and interpretation of descriptive statistical techniques in the behavioral sciences. Topics include measures of central tendency and variability, correlation, *t* test, and regression. Prerequisite(s): PSYC 201, a grade of C or better in MATH 147, or permission of instructor.

MATH 157: Introduction to Statistics (3 Hours). Descriptive and inferential statistics, frequency distributions, measures of central tendency and dispersion, probability and sampling, estimation, hypothesis testing, confidence intervals, linear regression, correlation, and design of experiments. Prerequisite(s): MATH 131, 144, 147, 150, 154, or 155; or Mathematics ACT minimum subscore of 20, or Mathematics SAT minimum subscore of 444.

Lifespan Development (3 Hours)

Students may choose one of the two options:

PSYC 306: Lifespan Developmental Psychology (3 Hours). Behavior throughout the human life span, from conception to death; biological, cross-cultural, and environmental factors influencing physical, intellectual, perceptual, social, personality, emotional, and verbal development; theories and methodology of the scientific study of development. Prerequisite(s): PSYC 201.

FCS 291: Individual and Family Development (3 Hours). Individual and family development throughout the life cycle, prenatal through the aging adult. Includes observation hours. This is a general education course.

Psychopathology (3 Hours)

Students may choose this course as an alternative to SWK 380:

PSYC 310: Psychopathology (3 Hours).A study of psychopathological behavior, theoretical models, and therapy modalities. Prerequisite(s): PSYC 201.

Political Science (3 Hours)

POS 200: American National Government (3 Hours). Constitutional background and development of American government, including the machinery, problems, and practical workings of the government. This is a general education course.

Other Required General Education Support Courses

SOC 101: Introductory Sociology (3 Hours). Patterns of modern society, including social behavior in terms of culture, group relationships, social organizations, and social stratification. This is a general education course.

PSYC 201: Foundations of Psychology (3 Hours). Facts, principles, and theories of psychology with which every educated person should be familiar. PSYC 201 is a prerequisite for all other psychology courses. Recommended for sophomores. This is a general education course.

BIO 105: Introductory Biology I (4 Hours). Three lectures. One two-hour laboratory. Introduction to biology emphasizing molecular aspects of cells, genetics, and physiology. Open to students in the following majors: biology, chemistry, family and consumer sciences, exercise and nutrition science, psychology, and social work, or by consent of instructor.

Completing the Social Work Degree Plan

To graduate with a social work major, students must complete all five sets of requirements:

- requirements of the social work major;
- Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science requirements;
- general education requirements;
- academic support course requirements; and
- a minimum of 120 hours.

To complete a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, students must complete six to twelve hours of world language courses. To complete a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree, students must complete a minimum of eighteen hours of math and science.

Progression Through the Social Work Major

Table 2 illustrates the recommended progressive completion of the social work major. While not all students take all the courses in a tier at the same time, all are required to meet the pre- and co-requisites for each social work course. Tier 1 represents the introductory social work courses, SWK 203: Introduction to Social Welfare and Social Work and SWK 322: Human Behavior and the Social Environment (HBSE). These courses build upon UM's GE curriculum as well as provide the foundation for all other social work courses.

Table 2
Recommended Progression Through the Social Work Major

Tier	SWK course	Prerequisites (P) and co-requisites (C)
1	SWK 203	N/A
	SWK 322	N/A
2	SWK 350	SWK 203 (P), SWK 322 (P), PSYC 306 or FCS 291 (P); 3.0 GPA in prerequisite courses
	SWK 355	SWK 203 (P); grade of C or higher
	SWK 373	SWK 203 (P), SWK 322 (P), POS 200 (P), EC 231 or 232 (P); C or higher in SWK 203 and 322
	SWK 380	SWK 203 (P)
3	SWK 390	SWK 203 (P), SWK 322 (P); C or higher in SWK 203 and 322
	SWK 400	SWK 350 (P), SWK 355 (P), SWK 410 (C); C or higher in SWK 350 and 355
	SWK 410	SWK 350 (P), SWK 355 (P), SWK 400 (C); C or higher in SWK 350 and 355
	SWK 420	SWK 350 (P), SWK 355 (P); C or higher in SWK 350 and 355
4	SWK 455	SWK 373 (P), SWK 390 (P), SWK 400 (P), SWK 410 (P), SWK 420 (P); 3.0 in all SWK courses; 2.3 overall GPA
	SWK 456	SWK 455 (C)

Note. P = prerequisite; C = co-requisite; N/A = not applicable.

Human Services Minor

For students interested in the helping professions, the Social Work Program offers a minor in Human Services. This minor offers an introduction to social welfare systems, human behavior in the social environment, and helping relationships. Requirements for the minor include the following.

Required Courses

- SWK 203 Introduction to Social Welfare and Social Work
- SWK 322 Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Elective Courses

Students must choose four electives from the following courses:

- PSYC 307 Psychology of Death
- PSYC 321 Social Psychology
- PSYC 352 Health Psychology
- SOC 320 Social Interaction
- SOC 324 Social Stratification
- SOC 401 Social Gerontology
- SWK 260 Social Work Practice With Children and Families
- SWK 373 Social Policy
- SWK 380 Social Work Practice in Mental Health Care

Social Work Scholarships and Awards

The Social Work Program is proud to offer several funding opportunities for students who have been admitted to our professional program. Funding is made possible by the generosity of social work alumni and their donations.

The Roxie Craig Scholarship in Social Work. This scholarship is in memory of Ms. Roxie Craig, who graduated from the Social Work Program in 1942. Ms. Craig was a Senior Probation Officer at Jefferson County Family Court who spent her professional life helping troubled children. Criteria include financial need and grade requirements for admission to the Program and/or Practicum (2.3 overall GPA; 3.0 GPA in social work).

The Louise White Dawson Social Work Scholarship. This endowed scholarship was established by the family and friends of Louise White Dawson, a graduate of Alabama College in 1930 and a member of the first group of social work majors at the college. Criteria include a GPA of 3.0 or higher, junior standing, potential for professional contribution, and financial need.

The Dr. Jan Eagles Scholarship in the Allied Health Sciences. The Jan Eagles Scholarship is awarded to an outstanding junior majoring in a health field. The student who receives the scholarship must exhibit outstanding potential for further study in their chosen field and must be dedicated to the highest standards of scholarship, scientific inquiry, and integrity. They should also exhibit a desire to be of service to humanity. Criteria include a GPA of 3.0 or higher, junior standing, potential for professional contribution, and financial need.

The Jeanette Niven Social Work Scholarship. The Jeanette Niven Scholarship was established by friends and former students to honor the woman whose caring concern for her clients and students has spanned five decades. Criteria include a GPA of 2.75 or higher, senior standing, potential for professional contribution, financial need, and a female whose education has been interrupted.

The Mary Edna Porter Family and Child Scholarship. Family, friends, and colleagues of Mary Edna Porter, retired Executive Director of Family and Child Services, established this scholarship to honor her commitment to families and children and to social work education. Criteria include a GPA of 3.0 or higher, senior standing, potential for professional contribution, financial need, and an interest in working with families and children.

The Mel Dorrough Robinson Scholarship in Social Work. Endowed by Class of 1952 alumnus Mel Robinson, this scholarship is for students who have been admitted to the professional Social Work Program. Preference for this scholarship will be given to social work majors who intend to practice within a medical setting or who intend to pursue a graduate degree in social work with a specialization in medical social work. Recipient(s) must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 and be in good standing with the University. Recipient(s) of the Mel Dorrough Robinson Social Work Scholarship may receive the award for a total of two academic years.

The Anne and Harrison Blair Foundation Scholarship in Social Work. Endowed by the Blair Foundation, this scholarship is for students who have been admitted to the professional Social Work Program. Preference for this scholarship will be given to female social work majors who intend to practice within a medical setting or who intend to pursue a graduate degree in social work with a specialization in medical social work. Recipient(s) must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 and be in good standing with the University. Recipient(s) of the Anne and Harrison Blair Foundation Scholarship may receive the award for a total of two academic years.

The Dr. Susan Vaughn Advocacy Scholarship. This scholarship is endowed by Class of 1971 alumna and UM Professor Emerita Dr. Susan Vaughn, former director of UM's Social Work Program and Department Chair. Recipients of this scholarship will be student(s) at the University of Montevallo, preferably a junior or senior meeting the requirements for admission to the Social Work Program and demonstrating financial need as well as a strong desire to help vulnerable and underserved populations through advocacy and community service. If no qualified student majoring in social work can be identified, then a similarly qualified student from the Department of Social Work and Speech Pathology will be taken into consideration.

Hiroko Oikawa Scholarship. Gifted by the family of Class of 1953 alumna Hiroko Oikawa, this scholarship was established to honor Ms. Oikawa and to provide financial assistance to a deserving junior or senior student(s) enrolled at the University of Montevallo majoring in social work. Recipient(s) must be accepted to the Social Work Program and have a major GPA of 3.0 or higher. Recipient(s) must also be dedicated to human service work and to the mission, values, and ethics of the social work profession. Preference is given to students who demonstrate financial need.

Joyce Greathouse Advocacy Scholarship. Endowed by Class of 1956 alumna Martha Joyce Greathouse, this scholarship is for a student majoring in social work with a 3.0 overall GPA or higher. Preference will be given to a senior field-education student completing the practicum experience with Children's Aid Society where Ms. Greathouse retired as director after a long and distinguished career in public service to vulnerable children and their families. If no qualified student is placed at Children's Aid Society, then the scholarship may be awarded to a student who is dedicated to a career providing social work services to children and families in some capacity.

Dr. Jeanine Cannon Bozeman Endowed Scholarship. Dr. Jeanine Cannon Bozeman, a native of Crenshaw County, has dedicated her career to the education of future social work professionals. Dr. Bozeman graduated from UM in 1951 with a double major in English and history. She was involved on campus in several capacities, including serving as Vice President of her class. Her first job was in DeFuniak Springs, Florida, as a high school English teacher and part-time school counselor. She credits her love for working with young adults and her dislike of grading English papers as motivations for pursuing a career in social work. After she and her husband, Dr. Thomas Welby Bozeman, married and relocated to New Orleans, she completed her MSW degree at Tulane University in 1972 and her PhD at New Orleans Baptist Seminary (NOBS) in 1984. Dr. Bozeman was a Distinguished Professor of Social Work at NOBS where she was on faculty from 1985 to 2021. She helped to establish the social work education program at NOBS, where she taught in the areas of grief and loss, marriage and family, divorce, ministry, and foster care. Dr. Bozeman has a particular interest in teaching students about the stages of grief and loss. The Cannon Bozeman Scholarship funds scholarships for social work students, with preference given to applicants from the counties of Crenshaw, Coffee, and Covington, Alabama.

Jeannie A. Duke Practicum Endowed Scholarship for Social Work Majors. This scholarship provides funding to social work students completing their pre-practicum or practicum, who have fallen on financial hardship due to no fault of their own. Recipients must be in good standing, must be social work majors, must be entering or currently in their pre-practicum or practicum semester(s), and must demonstrate financial need.

M. Leigh Pickett Endowed Scholarship in Social Work. Established by David and Leigh Pickett, a social work graduate, the scholarship shall be awarded annually to a social work major. Preference is given, in the following order, to a member of Phi Mu Sorority, a first-generation college student, and a varsity athlete.

Dr. Rebecca O. Turner Endowed Gap Scholarship for Social Work Majors. Often, UM students face emergency financial constraints that jeopardize their ability to complete their coursework and ultimately delay or completely halt their dreams of being a UM alum. The primary focus of the Dr. Rebecca O. Turner Endowed Gap Scholarship for Social Work Majors is to provide emergency funding to social work students who have fallen on financial hardship due to no fault of their own. Social work students can apply for the Dr. Rebecca O. Turner Endowed Gap Scholarship for Social Work Majors at any time throughout the semester, simply by scheduling a meeting with the Social Work Program Director.

Social Work Elite. The Social Work Elite is an outstanding senior student who exemplifies scholarship, commitment and dedication to the profession, and professional promise, and who is involved in campus activities. Criteria include senior standing, a GPA of 3.5 or higher, involvement on the UM campus, demonstrated promise as a professional social worker, and community involvement.

Academic and Program Policies and Procedures

Class Attendance

The University of Montevallo expects students to attend all classes in which they are enrolled. Instructors may establish specific attendance regulations governing their classes and will provide them to their students in the course syllabus at the beginning of each semester (Academic Affairs Policy AA:006, Student Class Absences). The University's general attendance policy is included in *The Fledgling* and the *2026–2027 Undergraduate Bulletin*. All course absence policies must be on file in the office of the dean and must be approved by the appropriate dean.

Social work courses are designed to provide students with analytical and interactional skills as well as professional socialization. For professional education to take place, a student must be in class to participate with the instructor and other students. While a student may be able to get the "book knowledge" component of a class by reading the assignments or procuring notes from another student, it is impossible to access professional socialization through such means or to develop the needed interactional skills. Class attendance and classroom participation will be a part of your overall evaluation for each social work course. Students are expected to attend all classroom sessions, including arriving for class on time and staying for the entire class. You may have three unexcused absences without penalty.

All policies must allow excused absences for these reasons:

- travel considered part of the instructional program of the University and requiring absence from class;
- participation in activities directly sponsored by and in the interest of the University; and
- extraordinary circumstances, such as pressing legal obligations, authorized by the college dean.

All policies must allow for a reasonable number of absences for these reasons:

- illness and
- death or serious illness in the immediate family.

Instructors determine the validity of excuses and are responsible for consistent enforcement of their policies. Students may appeal decisions via established procedures for grievances concerning academic matters. To be considered an excused absence, the student must communicate with the instructor about the absence prior to its occurrence, in person, by phone, or via email. Additionally, the student will need to provide a written excuse to the instructor following the absence. Any absences that do not meet the above criteria will be considered unexcused and will result in a lower attendance and participation grade.

In general, course attendance is not open to the public. To attend or participate in a course at the University of Montevallo, one must be admitted and enrolled in the course or, for good cause, be granted permission to sit in on the class as an authorized visitor or guest speaker. Overall classroom management is vested with the faculty member holding the class; accordingly, faculty may request that any unauthorized individuals exit or not return to the classroom.

Transfer of Social Work Credit

Only social work courses taken at another accredited undergraduate social work program will be subject to transfer for social work courses at UM. However, the Social Work Faculty reserve the right to determine if the content of the course is similar enough to content in a UM course to be counted toward the major at UM. Courses designated as social work courses or those taught by social workers at non-accredited colleges will not transfer for social work credit at UM.

Students who are given credit for social work courses from another accredited school are still held accountable for a GPA of 3.0 in the courses comparable to SWK 203, 322, and PSYC 306/FCS 291. Should a student not have the 3.0 average, they will be required to retake the comparable UM courses if they wish to be a social work major.

Academic Credit for Life Experiences

No academic credit will be given for life experiences or previous work experiences.

Course Repeat Policy

Students are required to maintain a 3.0 social work GPA and a 2.3 overall GPA to be admitted to the program and to practicum. Should a student not have the 3.0 GPA in the courses required for admission to the Program or for admission to the Practicum, the student should ideally repeat the course taken most recently in which the student made the lowest grade. For example, if a student makes a C in SWK 355 and a B in SWK 350, the student would be required to repeat SWK 355. The highest grade in a course will be used in computing the social work GPA for admission to the Program and the Practicum.

Admission to the Social Work Program

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: (a) declaring a social work major, (b) applying to the Social Work Program, and (c) applying to the Social Work Practicum.

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 and SWK 322
- ENG 101, ENG 102, and ENG 231
- HIST 101 and 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 maintain a 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 SWK 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: (a) to provide students with an introduction to social problems affecting individuals, families, and communities in Alabama and (b) to promote and reinforce community service as a lifelong 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 a local school for the rest of the hours. Students selecting this option 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 (a) what service does this agency/group provide to the community, (b) what specific social problems are faced by the people this agency/group serves, and (c) what work was completed by the student with this agency or group. This essay should be written in a narrative format, using APA 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 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 the following:

- 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, and 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; and
- engages in career-long learning.

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

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 (a) the social worker's role and areas of practice within the agency, (b) how each social worker applies the NASW *Code of Ethics*, and (c) what the student learned from each social worker.

Reflection on the NASW Code of Ethics. The purpose of this 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 (a) reviews their perceptions of ability to help people; (b) outlines their understanding of the six values of social work (service, social justice, dignity and worth, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence); and (c) compares and contrasts these values with their own values.

Licensure Preparation. As part of the admissions process, students will take the Licensure Practice Test that is available through 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. Students will take the exam online. Passing the exam is not required; the goal is for students to 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 APA style and Standard English, good organization, and acceptable punctuation and grammar. Each essay should be titled and attached to the admissions application.

Field Education Requirements

Complete information on the Social Work Practicum can be obtained from the *Social Work Practicum Manual*. Students apply for the Practicum while enrolled in SWK 400, Skills for Social Work Practice. The overall criteria for entry into practicum include the following:

- must meet all academic criteria for applying for admission into the Social Work Practicum;
- must be admitted to the Social Work Program;
- minimum grade point average of 3.0 in all social work courses;
- minimum overall grade point average of 2.3;
- must have completed SWK 350; and
- must have completed or be enrolled in SWK 355, 373, 390, 400, 410, and 420.

All social work hours and all grades earned in social work courses will be used in computing the social work GPA for admission to the Practicum. If a student is advised to retake a course, the highest grade will be used in the calculation.

Criteria for Termination or Non-Continuation in the Social Work Program

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

- overtly expressed attitudes, values, and behaviors in opposition to or contrary to those found in the NASW *Code of Ethics*;
- evidence of current chemical, alcohol, or drug abuse;
- personality, emotional, attitudinal, or personal issues or difficulties that impair performance, interactions, and relationships with classmates, faculty, agency staff, and/or clients;
- evidence of certain criminal or unlawful activity;
- dishonesty, including lying, cheating, or plagiarizing in coursework or practicum placement;
- consistent failure to demonstrate effective communication skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships;
- consistent failure to meet class obligations (e.g., absences, tardiness, late assignments);

- failure to demonstrate appropriate ability to develop and maintain helping relationships (e.g., inability to be nonjudgmental, failure to allow client self-determination, inconsistent follow-through);
- failure to develop skills of self-awareness requisite for professional practice; and
- failure to evidence writing skills requisite for professional practice.

Student Remediation Process for Academic and Professional Criteria

For students who have challenges meeting the program's academic and/or professional criteria as outlined in the *Social Work Student Handbook* and the *Social Work Practicum Manual*, the faculty have developed the following remediation guidelines. In doing so, the social work program is committed to providing students full access to program, departmental, and university resources for student academic success and professional development.

1. The student is instructed to schedule an informal professional advising session with their social work faculty advisor. The student and the advisor mutually develop a professional improvement plan. For example, the advisor may refer the student to the Career Center to complete mock interview sessions or résumé-building exercises.
2. If the student does not complete the remediation plan as advised, the advisor will refer the student to the social work program director or practicum director for a formal remediation planning meeting.
3. The formal remediation plan will be mutually developed in writing, copied to the student and the student's faculty advisor, and filed in the student's academic advising folder. As part of the plan, the student will be required to follow up with the program/practicum director to review and discuss the student's progress. The student will be informed that lack of progress may result in practicum/program dismissal.
4. In the event of program dismissal, the decision will be communicated to the student in writing and filed in their academic advising folder. If the student wishes to challenge the decision, they may do so in adherence with UM's formal grievance policies and procedures as outlined in the UM Student Handbook.

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:

- Most agencies/organizations that provide field education or volunteer placements for social work students require a criminal background check prior to accepting students.
- Most agencies hiring social workers also require criminal background checks prior to employment.
- Some state licensure laws for social workers inquire about whether the applicant has been charged with, or convicted of, a misdemeanor or felony.
- If you have misdemeanor or felony charges, you may be placed in a field education setting; however, your options for placements may be limited based on your criminal record. Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with any of the Social Work Faculty.

Relevant University of Montevallo Student Policies

Alabama Act 2024-34 (SB 129) Statement

The University of Montevallo ("UM") is committed to compliance with SB 129 (filed as Alabama Act 2024-34). SB 129 does not impact First Amendment rights or limit the protections in place for academic freedom, intellectual diversity, or free expression. If any "divisive concepts" (as defined in SB 129) are discussed as part of academic instruction and class discussion, they must be discussed in an objective manner. No student shall be penalized for refusing to support or endorse such a concept. UM remains committed to providing equal access and opportunities for all its students and employees and to rigorous academic inquiry and learning.

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement

The University of Montevallo provides equal access to qualified students. If you have a disability (medical, physical, learning, psychological, etc.) and wish to request disability-related accommodations to complete course requirements, contact Disability Support Services (located in Main Central [Lower Level], rear entrance; 205-665-6250). Course requirements cannot be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided based on disability documentation and course objectives. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively (i.e., they can only be provided from the time the instructor receives notification from Disability Support Services).

Title IX and Sexual Harassment

Sex Discrimination Reporting, Support, and Response

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Montevallo is committed to creating a learning environment free from sex discrimination including, but not limited to, sex-based harassment; domestic and dating violence; sexual assault; stalking; and discrimination or harassment on the basis of pregnancy or a related condition, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Policy 01:114: Sexual Misconduct, Nondiscrimination and Harassment Policy

All mandatory reporters must report all disclosures of sex discrimination, including those made in relation to an assignment and/or educational prompt, to the Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Alex Maxwell. The Title IX Coordinator will reach out to the individual(s) reported to have experienced the discriminatory conduct to provide resources, support, and information after receiving a report. Reported information will remain private.

If you have (or someone you know has) experienced any form of sex or gender-based discrimination or violence and wish to speak to someone confidentially, please contact UM Counseling Services or UM Health Services. For more information regarding Title IX procedures, reporting, or support measures, please visit Title IX and Sexual Harassment on the Human Resources page.

Any person may report sex discrimination (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to have experienced the conduct), in person, by mail, telephone, video, or email using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator. A report may be made at any time (including non-business hours) by using the UM CARES and Maxient reporting link.

Pregnancy and Related Conditions

The University of Montevallo does not discriminate on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions in its education program or activities. Students who are pregnant or who are experiencing related conditions are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Alex Maxwell, to learn about their rights and resources available to support their academic success or to report discriminatory or harassing conduct on the basis of their pregnancy or related condition. Mr. Maxwell's office is in Main Hall (phone: 205-665-6020; email: amaxwel2@montevallo.edu).

Student Email Statement

UM email is an official means of communication among students, faculty, and administrators at the University of Montevallo and may be the official means of communication between you and your instructors. You may receive very important UM email messages from offices on campus for which some timely response will be required. The official email system for students is identified by userID@forum.montevallo.edu and can be accessed at the UM Email Address on the current IS&T Account Setup page.

Please remember the following:

- You are responsible for monitoring and managing your account regularly, even during breaks.
- You are responsible for all announcements, requests, and/or sensitive information delivered to your UM email account.
- You may electronically forward your UM email to another email address (e.g., @gmail.com, Outlook), but at your own risk. The University is not responsible for the handling of forwarded email. Having email forwarded does not absolve you from the responsibilities associated with communication sent to your official UM email address.
- If you have any questions regarding or problems with your UM email account, contact the Solution Center (205-665-6512). When classes are in session, the Solution Center is available Monday–Thursday, 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., and Friday, 7:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. When classes are not in session, it is available Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Course Withdrawal Policy

Information on the Course Withdrawal Policy is available in the *2026–2027 Undergraduate Bulletin*. During the drop/add period, as noted on the University Calendar, a student may add a class without the professor's permission, and a student may drop a course without incurring a grade of W either through the student's Banner Self Service account or in the Registrar's Office. Courses dropped during the drop/add period will be deleted from the student's transcript. Students must initiate the drop process; failure to attend class does not constitute a formal drop. See the University Calendar for specific dates and the University refund policy for details regarding tuition and fees associated with dropping a class in this time frame.

After the drop/add period, students may add courses only with the written approval of the professor, department chair, and college dean. Students who wish to withdraw from a course

after the drop/add period and receive a grade of W (withdrawn) must do so by the final withdrawal date shown in the University Calendar either through Banner Self Service or in the Registrar's Office. The course withdrawal period ends at midnight on the date specified in the University Calendar; this date is approximately 60 percent through the academic term. A grade of W does not affect the student's GPA. Students must initiate the course withdrawal process; failure to attend class does not constitute a formal course withdrawal.

After the course withdrawal period ends, a student may not withdraw from a course except in the most extenuating circumstances. Students should note that this policy typically applies only to situations that justify late withdrawal from all courses in which the student is enrolled, not just from one course. See the Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances policy in the *Undergraduate Bulletin*. Failure to adhere to the published course withdrawal deadline in the University Calendar does not qualify as an extenuating circumstance under this policy.

A student who is withdrawing from the final course in which the student is enrolled in a given term must submit to the Registrar's Office a withdrawal form signed by the Student Aid Office.

Please note that the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Defense may require partial repayment if a student using veteran educational benefits withdraws from a course after the drop/add period. Students using veteran educational benefits who are considering a schedule change after the drop/add period should see the University's School Certifying Official located in the Office of Veteran and Military Affairs. There may also be consequences for members of other student groups such as athletes or international students. Athletes must have approval from the University's Compliance Officer in Athletics to withdraw from a course. International students must have approval from the Designated School Official in the Registrar's Office. See also the Registrar's Office's Withdrawal & Drop Policy web page, which includes links to the appropriate forms.

Course Withdrawal for Non-Attendance

In order to comply with federal regulations pertaining to the proper disbursement of financial aid, students are administratively withdrawn from classes which they have "never attended" or "never participated" as reported by instructors. Registration adjustments are made soon after the beginning of each term so that student financial accounts are updated in a timely manner. A student who attends or participates in a class for any length of time cannot be withdrawn from that class for having never attended.

Instructors are required to submit a date of last attendance for a student who receives a failing grade (F or NC) at the conclusion of each term. These dates may be used for the purpose of adjusting student financial accounts in order to ensure compliance with financial aid regulations. Students are ultimately responsible for their class schedules and for completing the withdrawal process within the established deadlines. No course withdrawals for non-attendance will be processed after the conclusion of the term.

Grade Appeals

Information on the Grade Appeal Policy is available in the *2026–2027 Undergraduate Bulletin*. The University of Montevallo respects the right and professional responsibility of faculty

members to assign grades based on their professional judgment of student performance. This procedure is designed to provide students at the University of Montevallo with clear instructions for appealing the assigned grade for an individual assignment (individual grade) or a course (final grade) and is valid for undergraduate, graduate, on-campus, online, degree-seeking, temporary, dual enrollment, and enrichment students.

This procedure does not apply to individual or final grades assigned as a result of an academic integrity incident. Instead, the student should follow the process outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy and procedure.

Procedure to Appeal a Grade

Students who believe that an assigned grade is unfair or incorrect should take the following steps:

1. The student must first confer with the faculty member involved to review their academic work and its assessment in an attempt to resolve issues informally.
2. If the student is not satisfied and wishes to continue the appeal, they will request a Grade Appeal Form from the chair of the department offering the course. This form must be completed and submitted to the department chair within 10 business days of the date the student is notified of the individual grade or within 20 business days of the posting of the final grade. The form must be submitted with an attached written statement of the rationale/basis for the appeal and any supporting materials such as graded work, assignment instructions, and/or course syllabus. The written appeal must state clearly the reason(s) for the appeal of the grade and the desired remedy.
3. The Department Chair will review the documents submitted by the student and will discuss the case with the faculty member, who will be given a copy of the written appeal. Within five (5) business days of receiving the student's appeal, the Chair will contact the student to schedule an appointment. The Chair's decision will be rendered at the conclusion of the conference with the student or within five (5) business days after the meeting. Note this may be delayed if the University is closed or during a semester or summer break. If the Department Chair supports the student's appeal, the faculty member will be asked to reassess the student's grade.
4. If the Department Chair does not support the student's appeal, or the Department Chair does support the student's appeal and the faculty member declines to change the student's grade, the student may appeal to the dean of the college offering the course. At the student's request, the Department Chair will send all materials to the college Dean, who, after discussion with the Chair and the faculty member, will schedule an appointment with the student. The Dean may or may not request that the Chair and faculty member attend the conference. The Dean will render a decision at the conclusion of the conference or within five (5) business days after the meeting. Note this may be delayed if the University is closed or during a semester or summer break. If the Dean supports the student's appeal, the faculty member will be asked to reassess the student's grade. The decision to change the grade will remain with the faculty member unless the Dean has clear, convincing, and objective evidence that the grade has not been calculated according to criteria communicated to students by the instructor.

Other Information

Business Day.A business day is any day the administrative offices of the college are open for business.

Timeliness. Every effort will be made to address complaints in a timely manner. However, students should be aware that action on complaints filed after the end of the semester or part of term, while the University is closed, or during a semester break may be delayed. Every attempt will be made to resolve appeals by the end of the semester in which they are filed for individual grades or by the beginning of the next semester for final grade appeals.

Relationship to the Academic Integrity Policy

If a student incurs an academic integrity violation and the student accepts the consequences (or the student's appeal, if any, is rejected), then any grade penalty resulting from said violation cannot be used as a basis for any future grade appeals. In this situation, only grades that are not related to the student's academic integrity violation are eligible for grade appeals. On the other hand, if a student's appeal of an academic integrity violation is accepted, then any grade that had been impacted by the consequences of the academic integrity violation is again eligible for grade appeals. Note that student appeals of academic integrity violations can only be made within the time limits stated in the Academic Integrity Policy. Also, students must appeal an academic integrity violation in a course, and the appeal must be resolved in the student's favor, before the student may appeal any grades impacted by said violation (see Academic Integrity Policy).

Academic Integrity Policy

Students at the University of Montevallo uphold the values of the University by refraining from every form of dishonesty in college life and by doing all that is possible to create a spirit of honesty and integrity on campus. Students are expected to follow the behaviors within the Student Code of Conduct, but this policy specifically addresses academic misconduct.

As stated in *The Fledgling*, academic dishonesty (referred to on our forms as a violation of our Academic Integrity Policy, and thus an Academic Integrity Violation) is defined as cheating or plagiarism. Cheating is the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid, whether written, oral, or otherwise, in order for a student to receive undeserved credit on work that is their own responsibility. Plagiarism occurs when a student uses the words or the ideas of another without acknowledging that they belong to someone else.

Briefly, there are five main ways in which a student can commit plagiarism:

- using the exact words of another person's work/writing without acknowledgement of the source through the use of quotation marks and correct citation/documentation;
- rephrasing a passage by another writer without giving proper credit;
- using someone else's facts or ideas without acknowledgement;
- using a piece of writing for one course that was already used in a previous course (or in courses in which one is simultaneously enrolled) without express permission from both instructors to do so; and
- presenting fabricated or falsified citations or materials.

Students may not give or receive unauthorized aid in completing academic work and meeting academic requirements. Only the faculty member teaching the course can authorize assistance, use of resources, etc. Students who are uncertain about whether conduct would constitute an academic integrity violation are responsible for seeking clarification from the faculty member prior to engaging in such conduct. Accountability measures for academic integrity violations are determined based on the seriousness of the offense and on whether the student has a record of other instances of academic integrity violations.

If the academic integrity violation pertains to a non-course degree requirement, such as a standardized examination, then the student may fail to receive credit for the degree requirement for which the violation occurred. The consequences for the violation of a non-course degree requirement may be imposed by the appropriate department chair or college dean.

If the academic integrity violation pertains to an assignment in a course, the faculty member teaching the course in which the violation occurred may determine the course-based consequences (e.g., an academic integrity development plan, a zero on the assignment, a grade of F in the course).

In addition to these consequences, the faculty member or academic administrator should refer all serious academic integrity violations to the Office of the Provost for record keeping and/or possible further sanctions via the Academic Integrity Violation Form. (Individual faculty members may define what constitutes a serious academic integrity violation in their course[s], provided that their definition is included in the course syllabus.)

The Office of the Provost will serve as the central recording center for all Academic Integrity Violation Forms. Thus, if a student has multiple violations on record, the Office of the Provost may take action as they deem appropriate (e.g., by recommending an Academic Integrity Development Plan, referring the case to the Academic Integrity Council, or implementing the Academic Integrity Council's recommended disciplinary action, such as suspension or expulsion).

The following is an outline of the process for resolving allegations of academic integrity violations. (The Academic Integrity Council, in collaboration with the Provost, Deans, and Chairs, is charged with determining and communicating the full procedure.)

1. The instructor responsible for the course at the time of the incident will determine the appropriate course-based consequences AND complete the online Academic Integrity Violation Form as soon as possible, but within 21 business days from the date the assignment was graded.
2. Upon filing the online Academic Integrity Violation Form, the instructor of record will note whether the referral is for record keeping only ("Faculty Discretion") or for further review and consideration by the Academic Integrity Council ("Disciplinary Referral"). An instructor who recommends Disciplinary Referral can also recommend an appropriate disciplinary action for the student.
    a. Notice of the Academic Integrity Violation Form will automatically be distributed to the instructor of record, the chair of the department in which the incident occurred, the dean of the College, Student Affairs, and the Registrar.

   b. After two "Faculty Discretion" referrals for the same student, the Office of the Provost will automatically refer the case for further consideration by the Academic Integrity Council. (Moreover, in response to multiple violations by the same student, further disciplinary measures may be taken at the discretion of the Provost's Office.)
   c. If necessary, a hold will be placed on the student's account until the case is fully resolved, thereby prohibiting the student from dropping or withdrawing from the course. (See Point 9c.)
3. The Provost's Office will promptly contact the student via email to inform them that an Academic Integrity Violation Form has been filed. This email will state the charges against the student and include copies of any documentation of the incident. Once this email has been sent to the student's official UM email address, the student is considered to have been notified of the charges. (The faculty member who filed the Academic Integrity Violation Form will be copied on this email as well.)
   a. If the instructor responsible for the course chooses to refer the case for "Faculty Discretion" and no further action is taken, the Provost's Office will inform the student of this. The Provost's Office will also warn the student that any further incidents will merit further action.
   b. If the instructor responsible for the course chooses to refer the case for "Disciplinary Referral," or if the case is automatically referred to the Academic Integrity Council, the Provost's Office will notify the student of the situation and inform them that a hearing will take place.
   c. Once the student has been notified of the academic integrity violation charge, the course-based consequence(s) determined by the instructor will be carried out.
   d. The student may discuss the academic integrity violation charge with their instructor if desired. The discussion should take place either (i) via email or (ii) in person with another faculty member, or the department chair, as a witness to the discussion. (Instructors may choose the format of the discussion and may also ask to initiate the discussion.)
4. In cases of "Disciplinary Referral" or automatic referral, the Academic Integrity Council will call a hearing according to their procedures. The accused student should attend the hearing; however, the hearing will take place even if the student fails to attend.
5. Upon completion of the hearing, the Academic Integrity Council may recommend accountability measures at their discretion. Depending on the severity of the allegation and/or the number of allegations, these measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:
   a. no further action;
   b. targeted instruction and/or guidance;
   c. a zero on the assignment;
   d. an F in the course;
   e. suspension; or
   f. expulsion.
6. The Academic Integrity Council will forward its recommendation to the Provost's Office. Upon approval from the Provost's Office, appropriate course-based actions and/or administrative actions will be carried out, and notification will be sent to the

student, the student's advisor, the instructor, the Department Chair, the Deans of the college in which the incident occurred and the college in which the student is enrolled, Student Affairs, and other appropriate parties (Registrar, Director of Housing and Residence Life, etc.).

7. Students who wish to appeal the course-based consequences determined by their instructor must do so by contacting the Office of the Provost within 5 business days of being notified of the academic integrity violation charge to request that the case be reviewed. If the instructor who submitted the Academic Integrity Violation Form selected "Faculty Discretion" (and the case was not automatically referred to the Academic Integrity Council), the appeal will be reviewed by the Academic Integrity Council; if the instructor selected "Disciplinary Referral" or the case was automatically referred to the Academic Integrity Council, the appeal will be reviewed by the Office of the Provost (or designee). The process outlined below will be followed:
    a. The faculty member will be informed of the pending appeal.
    b. The appropriate reviewer(s) will make a determination of the validity of the charges.
        i. If the reviewer fails to find sufficient justification for the charges, then the Office of the Provost will inform the student, the instructor, the Department Chair, and the Dean. The instructor will be asked to reassess the assigned grade, or reassess the course-based consequences, etc., and will be notified that he or she may be in an untenable legal position if he or she elects not to do so. The faculty member's reassessment of the grade/consequence may or may not result in a different grade depending on the quality of the student's performance on the assignment(s).
        ii. If the reviewer finds that the charges are justified, the Office of the Provost will notify the student, the student's advisor, the instructor, the Department Chair, the Deans of the college in which the incident occurred and the college in which the student is enrolled, Student Affairs, and other appropriate parties (the Registrar, the Director of Housing and Residence Life, etc.) of the outcome of the appeal. In the case of a student appeal of a faculty-imposed consequence, the reviewer may not impose a consequence stronger than the initial one.
8. In the case of "Disciplinary Referral" (or automatic referral), students who wish to appeal the recommendation of the Academic Integrity Council must submit a written formal appeal to the Office of the Provost within 5 business days of the announcement of the Academic Integrity Council's decision. The Office of the Provost, or designee, will make a decision on the appeal; this decision will be final.
9. When an academic integrity violation charge is filed against a student in a course, that student's eligibility for withdrawing from the course is determined as follows:
    a. If, in the final outcome of the case (taking into account the result of any appeals), the student is given the consequence of "F in the course," then the student cannot evade this consequence by withdrawing from the course. In this situation, the student will not be allowed to withdraw from the course under any circumstances, including circumstances which would normally constitute grounds for "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances."

b. If the final outcome of the case (taking into account the result of any appeals) still allows the student to receive credit for the course, then the student's eligibility for withdrawal depends upon the timing of the incident and/or the timing of the final conclusion of the case:
    i. If the case fully concluded on or before the last day to withdraw, then the student may choose to withdraw, provided that they do so on or before the last day to withdraw. In this situation, if the student does not withdraw on or before the last day to withdraw, then they can no longer withdraw unless they are approved for "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances."
    ii. If the academic integrity violation incident took place on or before the last day to withdraw, but the final conclusion of the case occurred after the last day to withdraw, then the student has a window of 5 business days after the final conclusion of the case in which the student may choose to withdraw. After that window of 5 business days has passed, the student cannot withdraw unless they are approved for "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances."
    iii. If the academic integrity violation incident took place after the last day to withdraw, then the student cannot withdraw unless they are approved for "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances."
c. If a student may ultimately receive an "F in the course" as a consequence of an academic integrity violation charge—for example, if (i) the faculty member filing the Academic Integrity Violation Form chooses "Faculty Discretion" with the course-based consequence of "F in the course," (ii) the faculty member chooses "Disciplinary Referral," or (iii) the case is automatically referred to the Academic Integrity Council—then a hold will be placed on the student's account (temporarily preventing the student from dropping/withdrawing from the course) until the case, including any appeals, is fully resolved. After the case is fully resolved, the student's eligibility for withdrawal is determined by the rules laid out in Points 9a and 9b.
d. If a student allegedly committed an academic integrity violation but withdrew from the course before an Academic Integrity Violation Form could be filed, then the instructor can still file the form against the student (provided that the form is filed in a timely manner) and the resolution procedure will still be followed.

10. If a student incurs an academic integrity violation and the student accepts the consequences (or the student's appeal, if any, is rejected), then any grade penalty resulting from said violation cannot be used as a basis for any future grade appeals. In this situation, only grades that are not related to the student's academic integrity violation are eligible for grade appeals. On the other hand, if a student's appeal of an academic integrity violation is accepted, then any grade that had been impacted by the consequences of the academic integrity violation is again eligible for grade appeals. Note that student appeals of academic integrity violations can only be made within the time limits stated in this policy; see Points 7 and 8. Also, students must appeal an academic integrity violation in a course, and the appeal must be resolved in the student's favor, before the student may appeal any grades impacted by said violation (see Grade Appeals).

Rights of the Accused Student

The accused student has the right

1. to be informed of the charge against them, to receive copies of any documentation supporting the charge, and to be informed of any recommended accountability measures;
2. to be informed of the date and time of a hearing, if necessary, and the procedures involved;
3. to present witnesses, documentation, and other evidence at the hearing, and to have an advocate present;
4. to continue in the course without prejudice until the outcome of the hearing; and
5. to appeal the decision.

Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty, Staff, and Administration

Faculty, staff, and administration have the right and responsibility

1. to establish norms of conduct related to academic integrity in their classrooms and assign grades accordingly;
2. to help promote a culture of academic integrity by reporting suspected violations of the Academic Integrity Policy;
3. to be informed of the procedures of the Academic Integrity Council; and
4. to be present (either by choice, or as required by the Academic Integrity Council) at any hearing related to a charge of academic integrity violation levied by the faculty.

Other Information

Business Day.A business day is any day the administrative offices of the university are open for business.

Timeliness. Every effort will be made to carry out the Academic Integrity Violation resolution procedure (including review of any appeals) in a timely manner. However, the procedure may be delayed due to factors such as the semester (or part of term) ending, the university being closed, or semester breaks.

Student Code of Conduct

The University of Montevallo is committed to the holistic development of its students. Part of this commitment is encouraging academic excellence, accountability, integrity, moral courage, respect, and good decision-making. The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to set clear expectations and community standards for students. The University strives to provide education, foster personal growth, and assist students in building individual character. As a community of educators and scholars, students are expected to maintain behavior that permits everyone the opportunity to freely and safely pursue their educational, co-curricular, and extracurricular goals and activities in an environment founded on respect for the rights of others. UM's Student Code of Conduct is available at https://www.montevallo.edu/campus-life/campus-safety/student-conduct/student-code-of-conduct/

Social Work Advising Program

Advising is an important part of the social work student's educational experience. Within the Social Work Program, there are three types of advising that occur for students: (a) professional, (b) academic, and (c) field education. Additionally, the Program seeks advice and guidance for the Program overall from its constituents.

Professional Advising

Social work education at UM is for a professional career in social work. To be a successful social worker, it is imperative that students who are considering a career in social work be able to identify with the goals, purposes, values, and ethics of the profession. The social work faculty provide support and assistance to students to explore their compatibility with the profession in several different contexts.

Students who plan to declare social work as a major should discuss their choice with the Social Work Program Director or with another social work faculty member. If a student remains interested in the major following this discussion, they will then be identified as a major. Professional advising is a kind of advising that occurs both formally and informally between social work majors and social work faculty. Faculty members in the Social Work Program have a range of professional experience, and students are encouraged to seek out faculty members to discuss the profession, employment opportunities in various fields, the advisability of graduate education, the selection of field education settings, and any other matter related to becoming a professional social worker. The academic advising process is also a place where the advisor will discuss with the student their continuing interest in social work. The admissions process is another opportunity for faculty and students to evaluate the appropriateness of the student for the profession and the profession for the student.

Academic Advising

Academic advising focuses primarily on the progression of the student through the curriculum. Students entering UM have many decisions to make. In addition to the decision as to what to major in, students must decide whether they will pursue a BA degree or a BS degree. The student's academic advisor can help with these decisions. The academic advisor cannot make the decisions for the student but can help the student to understand and consider the various options.

Once the student has made the various decisions, an individualized curriculum plan will be developed to ensure that the student will take the right courses at the right time and that the student will satisfactorily meet the various requirements for graduation. Ultimately, the responsibility for planning, implementing, and completing one's course of study rests with each student. However, the academic advisor can be a most valuable resource in helping the student to undertake this task.

The academic advisor for social work majors will be a member of the social work faculty. Academic advisors are assigned at registration or during the semester a student changes their major. To make maximum use of an academic advisor, students should become quite familiar with the social work curriculum and the various requirements for graduation discussed earlier in this handbook. Academic advising occurs at least once a semester, and it is the student's responsibility to make an appointment with the advisor for academic advising.

Practicum Advising

Practicum advising focuses on the placement of social work majors in their practicum placement during their final semester in the social work curriculum. It requires a commitment of thirty-six (36) hours per week for a total of 450 hours. Students should prepare to have transportation available to them for practicum. The actual daily hours of the practicum are the agency office hours. Entering the social work practicum is an important time for students. This is the part of the curriculum when students practice with the knowledge, skills, values, and critical thought processes learned during coursework. Students will work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations in a social service agency under the direction of an experienced social worker. It is a serious responsibility. The Practicum Director must be certain that students are ready for this responsibility. Successful completion of the required coursework is one indicator of readiness. Other aspects of readiness for field education are motivation, commitment, and a sense of ethical responsibility.

The semester before entering the practicum, students will be asked to submit a written application to the Practicum Director. After reviewing applications, the Practicum Director will interview all students. The purpose of this interview is to discuss progress in the social work major and readiness for the field education experience. Field assignments are individualized, and the Practicum Director will consider readiness, professional educational needs, and the availability of high-quality practicum settings when selecting placements. See the *Social Work Practicum Manual* for a complete description of the policies and procedures for the practicum.

Prior to registration for the Social Work Practicum (SWK 455) and the Field Education Seminar (SWK 456), students should have all other academic coursework completed. Only under special circumstances will requests for coursework in addition to the 12 hours for SWK 455 and 456 be considered, and requests must be made to the academic advisor and subsequently approved by both the Director of the Social Work Program and the Practicum Director. No requests for more than 19 hours will be approved at the Program level. Requests exceeding 19 hours must be submitted to the Chair of the Department of Social Work and Speech Pathology and approved by the Dean of the College of Health Professions.

Student Organizations

Phi Alpha

Phi Alpha is the national honor society for social work students (http://www.phialpha.org/). To be a member of Phi Alpha, the social work student must be a sophomore and have completed a minimum of 8 semester hours of social work courses. In addition, the student must have an overall 3.0 GPA and a 3.25 GPA in social work courses. Students are inducted into Phi Alpha annually on Social Work Day during the spring semester. Dr. Meredith Tetloff is the faculty advisor for Phi Alpha.

Social Work Club

The Social Work Club has a long history on the Montevallo campus, dating back to the early 1920s when the Social Work Program was developed. The Social Work Club seeks ways to strengthen and enrich the quality of social work education by encouraging its members to become active in the community and the University. Some activities sponsored by the Club

include making friendship bracelets with the Boys and Girls Club and assisting with storm cleanup on campus in partnership with our Physical Plant.

Post-Graduate Advising and Alumni Relations

Graduation with a social work major occurs after successfully completing all of the requirements set forth in this handbook and the appropriate UM catalog. Upon graduation, students should consider themselves to be professional social workers prepared for entry-level generalist social work practice. Students sincere about their interest in social work as a career, and who have taken full advantage of educational experiences and opportunities at UM, will undoubtedly find a job in an area of social work. Students who approach their job and career in a professionally responsible manner will find that becoming a professional social worker is an exciting, lifelong project.

Employment opportunities are available in many fields. In recent years, many UM social work graduates have found employment in the health care field, including hospitals, nursing homes, and public health departments throughout the state. A number of recent graduates have found employment in mental health and in child welfare.

Graduate education in social work is the choice of some students after graduation from UM. Most UM social work graduates who go on to obtain a Master of Social Work (MSW) are accepted into advanced standing programs. This means that they can complete their MSW in about half the time that it would normally take individuals without a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree. Graduate social work education provides an opportunity for further study and skill development in a specialized area. If students are interested in graduate education in social work, it is important to investigate several schools. Within the last five years, Alabama has seen an increase in the number of online and traditional programs offering the MSW. These programs include Alabama A&M, Auburn University, Jacksonville State University, Samford University, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, The University of Alabama, The University of North Alabama, and Troy University. Outside of Alabama, graduates of the UM Social Work Program have attended graduate school at Case Western Reserve, Florida State University, Tulane, University of Georgia, University of Tennessee, University of Pittsburgh, Rutgers, Syracuse, and Washington University in St. Louis. For a complete directory of accredited MSW programs in the United States, please refer to the CSWE website at https://www.cswe.org

One of the first things that students do upon graduation, which can be started during a student's last semester, is to apply for licensing. This involves completing the required documentation and studying for the licensing exam. Students receive information regarding this process throughout the social work curriculum. Licensing is important for many reasons. The most immediate reason for new graduates is that many jobs require social workers to be (or to get) licensed. It is also an important source of professional identification. The Social Work Program provides many resources to help social work students and graduates prepare for the licensure exam including study materials and practice tests.

Most social work graduates consider it important to join the National Association of Social Workers (https://www.socialworkers.org). Joining and participating in local NASW unit meetings is a good way to meet local social workers, find out about local job opportunities, and get involved in the social work profession.

From time to time, the Social Work Program will call on alumni for assistance and feedback. This help may be in completing surveys, giving financially to the Program, sharing employment opportunities, or speaking with students. No matter what students decide to do after graduation, they should consider the social work faculty as a source of information and support.

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Appendix A: Program Admissions Application



APPLICATION FOR PROGRAM ADMISSION

2026–2027

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: (a) declaring a social work major, (b) applying to the Social Work Program, and (c) 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 and SWK 322
- ENG 101, ENG 102, and ENG 231 or ENG 232
- HIST 101 and 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 maintain a 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 SWK 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: (a) to provide students with an introduction to social problems affecting individuals, families, and communities in Alabama and (b) to promote and reinforce community service as a lifelong 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 a local school for the rest of the hours. Students selecting this option 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 (a) what service does this agency/group provide to the community, (b) what specific social problems are faced by the people this agency/group serves, and (c) what work was completed by the student with this agency or group. This essay should be written in a narrative format, using APA 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 the following:

- 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, and 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; and
- engages in career-long learning.

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

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 (a) the social worker's role and areas of practice within the agency, (b) how each social worker applies the NASW *Code of Ethics*, and (c) what the student learned from each social worker.

2. Reflection on the NASW Code of Ethics. The purpose of this 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 (a) reviews their perceptions of ability to help people; (b) outlines their understanding of the six values of social work (service, social justice, dignity and worth, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence); and (c) compares and contrasts 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 through 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. Students will take the exam online. Passing the exam is not required; the goal is for students to 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 APA 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 to, or may be terminated from, the Program:

- overtly expressed attitudes, values, and behaviors in opposition to or contrary to those found in the NASW *Code of Ethics*;
- evidence of current chemical, alcohol, or drug abuse;
- personality, emotional, attitudinal, or personal issues or difficulties that impair performance, interactions, and relationships with classmates, faculty, agency staff, and/or clients;
- evidence of certain criminal or unlawful activity;
- dishonesty, including lying, cheating, or plagiarizing in coursework or practicum placement;
- consistent failure to demonstrate effective communication skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships;
- consistent failure to meet class obligations (e.g., absences, tardiness, late assignments);
- failure to demonstrate appropriate ability to develop and maintain helping relationships (e.g., inability to be nonjudgmental, failure to allow client self-determination, inconsistent follow-through);
- failure to develop skills of self-awareness requisite for professional practice; and
- 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:

- Most agencies/organizations that provide field education or volunteer placements for social work students require a criminal background check prior to accepting students.
- Most agencies hiring social workers also require criminal background checks prior to employment.
- Some state licensure laws for social workers inquire about whether the applicant has been charged with, or convicted of, a misdemeanor or felony.
- If you have misdemeanor or felony charges, you may be placed in a field education setting; however, your options for placements may be limited based on your criminal record. Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns they 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 website (https://www.montevallo.edu/program/social-work/) or from the Social Work Program Director and submit the completed application 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 the following:

- **Admitted** represents that, in the judgment of the Social Work Faculty, the student meets criteria for admission to the Social Work Program.
- **Admitted 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 the Social Work Practicum.
- **Denied** 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 nonacademic criteria. To attain the requisite GPA, the student should ideally repeat the course 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 highest grade in a course will be used in computing the social work GPA for admission to the Program.
- **Deferred** represents that, in the judgment of the faculty, the student does not meet all the criteria for admission but is offered the opportunity to develop and implement a written remediation plan, consistent with the Student Remediation Process described in the *Social Work Student Handbook* and will be reconsidered at a later date.

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 their 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 admission. The faculty will then evaluate the student's request for reconsideration. The possible decisions are the same four 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 UM's formal grievance process as outlined in the UM Student Handbook.

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION CHECKLIST

_____ Completed Application Form for Admission

_____ Completed Volunteer Service Experience Approval 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 the NASW Code of Ethics

_____ Written Essay About the Licensure Practice Test

_____ Completed Licensure Preparation Verification Form

_____ Social Work Check Sheet From the Registrar's Office

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

General Information	
Date of Application:	
Name:	
Student M Number:	
Local Address:	
Phone:	UM Email:

List of Volunteer Service Agencies
Name of Agency, Contact Person, and Phone Number:
Name of Agency, Contact Person, and Phone Number:
Name of Agency, Contact Person, and Phone Number:

List of Social Workers Interviewed
Name of Social Worker, Agency of Employment, Phone Number, and Email Address:
Name of Social Worker, Agency of Employment, Phone Number, and Email Address:

Academic Criteria
Please list your grades for the following courses:
SWK 203:
SWK 322:
PSYC 306 or FCS 291:
Combined GPA in SWK 203, SWK 322, and PSYC 306/FCS 291 (3.0 required):
Overall UM GPA (2.3 required):

Include the following attachments with this application:

- Written essay on volunteer service
- Written essay about social work interviews
- Written essay on the NASW *Code of Ethics*
- Written essay about taking the Licensure Practice Test

I have read and understand the admission procedures and criteria for admission and continuation in the Program as outlined in this application and the *Social Work Student Handbook*.

_____ _____

Signature Date

I have read the NASW *Code of Ethics*.

_____ _____

Signature Date

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was enacted by Congress to protect individual privacy by assuring the confidentiality of information related to the records and educational experience of students. This statement 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.

_____ _____

Academic Advisor or Program Director Date

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION FORM B

Student Name:	Time Period of Volunteer Service:
Name of Agency:	Name of Agency Supervisor:
Agency Address:	Agency Phone Number:

I do hereby verify that the above-named student completed thirty (30) hours of volunteer work in my agency.

_____ _____

Signature of Agency Supervisor Date

Date	Time In	Time Out	# Hours

Total Number of Hours: _____

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION FORM C

Use this form when volunteer hours are completed at more than one agency. Have the supervisor at each agency complete and sign one block. Total hours across all blocks must equal at least thirty (30).

Student Name: _____

Name of Agency:	Date(s) of Service:
Time Period of Volunteer Service (e.g., 8 a.m.–11 a.m.):	Number of Hours:
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Agency Supervisor:

Name of Agency:	Date(s) of Service:
Time Period of Volunteer Service (e.g., 8 a.m.–11 a.m.):	Number of Hours:
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Agency Supervisor:

Name of Agency:	Date(s) of Service:
Time Period of Volunteer Service (e.g., 8 a.m.–11 a.m.):	Number of Hours:
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Agency Supervisor:

Name of Agency:	Date(s) of Service:
Time Period of Volunteer Service (e.g., 8 a.m.–11 a.m.):	Number of Hours:
Name of Agency Supervisor:	Signature of Agency Supervisor:

Total Number of Hours: _____

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
LICENSURE PREPARATION VERIFICATION FORM

Students will be provided a link to take the online Licensure Practice Test during the semester they are taking SWK 350. After completing the exam, please complete this form and submit it as part of your admissions application.

Name: _____

Date test was taken: _____

Score: _____