

MEREDITH COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Admissions Packet

Welcome to social work at Meredith College! We are pleased that you are interested in becoming a professional social worker through our Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program.

The Meredith BSW is an accredited degree program that will prepare you to enter professional practice and/or to apply for advanced standing status in a master of social work program. The Meredith program, like all accredited social work programs, requires each prospective student to be formally admitted before she may enroll in the first social work practice course, SWK 390 Generalist Practice with Individuals. A student is eligible to apply for admission to the social work program with the completion of a minimum of 6 hours in social work courses but no more than 12 semester hours in social work. The 6 hours in social work must include the following courses: *Introduction to Social Work* and one of the two required *Human Behavior for Social Work Practice* courses.

Your social work adviser will also serve as your adviser for the admission process. Please discuss with her any questions you may have about the program or admission procedures. You must submit all your admissions materials to your social work adviser. In order to successfully complete the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Work Degree, you must complete a two level admission process.

Level 1

- Completion of SWK 100 *Introduction to Social Work* and either SWK 220 *Human Behavior for Social Work Practice – Birth through Adolescence* or SWK 225 *Human Behavior for Social Work Practice –Adulthood through Death* with a grade of C or better
- Declaration of the Social Work Major

Level 2

- Student Information Form
- Personal Narrative
- Evaluation of volunteer performance while enrolled in SWK 100
- Two letters of recommendations, one from a social work faculty member and one from a non social work faculty member who has taught you in a class

When the completed application packet is received by the Social Work Program faculty, the faculty will set up an interview with the student. Upon review of the application packet and completion of the interview, the program director will send written notice to you regarding the status of your acceptance into the program.

The social work faculty admissions committee meets once each semester to make decisions about students who have submitted their admission application packets.

Use the following checklist to be sure you complete each step of the admissions process:

- ___ **Declaration of Major:** Complete the enclosed form, present to the social work program director for signature and then submit it to the Office of the Registrar.

___ **Application for Admission:** Complete the enclosed application form and submit it to your social work adviser.

___ **Essay:** Write an essay according to criteria specified on the application form and submit it to your social work adviser, who will assist you in this process.

___ **Recommendations:** A recommendation for admission must be provided by: 1) a Meredith College social work faculty member who has taught you in at least one course and 2) a second faculty member from another discipline (at Meredith College or another institution who has taught you in at least one course.

___ **Admission Interview:** Once your application materials have been submitted, a member of the social work faculty will contact you to schedule an admission interview.

___ **Notification of Admission Decision:** You will be informed in writing of the decision of the Admissions Committee in reference to your application.

___ **Appeal Process:** Should you object to the committee's ruling, you may appeal the decision in writing to the Social Work Program Director.

MEREDITH COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Admissions Packet

Date: _____

Identifying Information:

Student Name: _____ ID: _____

Local Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Status at Meredith:

Total Credit Hours Completed to date (Include transfer credits) _____

List Social Work Courses Completed:

Social Work Major Declared: Yes _____ Semester/Year No

If no, please complete the Declaration of Major, present to the Social Work Program Director for her signature and then submit to the Office of the Registrar.

Many community agencies are now requiring a criminal background check prior to volunteer, pre-professional service learning and or field practicum experiences. While a history of legal charges and or convictions do not usually preclude volunteer, pre-professional service learning or field practicum experiences in social work, it is imperative that the Director of the Social Work Program have this information during the application process in order to gage the possible impact on a career in social work. Please discuss any past, present or pending legal issues of concern with the Director of Social Work.

Faculty References: List below the names of faculty members (must have taught you in class) who have agreed to complete a Recommendation Form.

Faculty Member
Meredith Social Work Program

Faculty Member
Institution and Department:

Work and Volunteer Experiences: List all work and volunteer experiences, the setting where you gained those experiences, the types of activities involved and your total hours on a separate sheet of paper.

Essay: On Becoming a Social Worker

Write an essay of four to six typewritten pages using APA style and 12-point font. Discuss your interest in becoming a professional social worker, focusing specifically on the following:

- Your personal experiences in receiving help and the ways in which they have influenced your career plans.
- Individuals and groups who have influenced your decision to become a professional social worker.
- Personal attributes that would be assets to you in the role of social worker.
- Personal attributes that need strengthening if you are to become an effective social worker.
- Personal attributes experiences and attitudes that could affect your ability to help people who differ significantly from you. Specifically address all conditions that apply, including class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.

If you have questions or need more information, contact your social work adviser or Dr. Cynthia Bishop, Social Work Program Director.

MEREDITH COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
Admissions Packet

Policy on Student Problematic Behavior, Ethical Misconduct, Impairment, and Incompetence

I. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to clarify and identify the level of professionalism and ethical conduct expected of the students in the Council on Social Work Education-accredited Social Work Program at Meredith College, and to describe the procedures for identifying, assessing, and addressing issues related to problematic behavior, ethical misconduct, impairment, and competence.

The Social Work Program at Meredith College has a responsibility to protect clients, students, faculty, and the public from harm. Social Work faculty and students are governed by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW).

II. Definitions

Problematic Behaviors refer to a student's behaviors, attitudes, or characteristics that may require remediation, but are perceived as not excessive or unexpected for professionals in training. Performance anxiety, discomfort with clients' diverse lifestyles and ethnic backgrounds, and lack of appreciation of agency norms are examples of problematic behaviors that are usually remediated and not likely to progress into ethical misconduct, impairment, or incompetence.

Ethical Misconduct occurs when the NASW Code of Ethics is not followed. This code is intended to provide both the general principles and the specific decision rules to cover most situations encountered by professional social workers in their professional activities. It has as its primary goals the welfare and protection of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. It is the individual responsibility of each social worker to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct. Social workers promote social justice and social change, respect and protect human and civil rights, and do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

Impairment is defined as an interference in professional functioning that is reflected in one or more of the following ways:

- Inability or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior;
- Inability or unwillingness to acquire professional skills and reach an accepted level of competency; or
- Inability or unwillingness to control personal stress, psychological disorder, or emotional reactions that may affect professional functioning.

Incompetence is defined as a lack of ability. This lack of ability may include inadequate professional or interpersonal skills, or academic deficiency. When students continue to provide social work services beyond their current level of competence they are violating the ethical standard of competence.

III. Procedures

Problematic behavior, ethical misconduct, impairment, and/or incompetence may be identified in a variety of ways and by a variety of persons, including but not limited to students, faculty, supervisors, clients, and/or members of the public. Any concerns regarding a social work major raised by faculty should be brought to the attention of the Director of the Social Work Program. Confidentiality must be assured. The Social Work Program Director will inform all full-time Social Work faculty about the potential concern. This issue will be discussed within 10 days unless, in the judgment of the faculty, it must be dealt with immediately. Areas to be reviewed and discussed at this meeting will likely include the nature, severity, and consequences of the student's actions. The following questions may be posed at this stage (adapted from Lamb, Cochran, & Jackson, 1991):

1. What are the actual behaviors that are of concern, and how are those behaviors related to the goals of the program and/or work of the agency?
2. How and in what settings have these behaviors been manifested?
3. What were the negative consequences of the problematic behaviors for the program and/or the agency or others) e.g., clients, other students)?
4. Who observed the behaviors in question?
5. Who or what was affected by the behaviors (program, faculty, staff, students, clients, and/or agency)?
6. What was the frequency of the behaviors?
7. Has the student been made aware of the behaviors before the meeting, and, if so, how did she respond?
8. Has the feedback regarding the behaviors been documented in any way?
9. How serious are the behaviors on the continuum of ethical and professional behavior?
10. What are the student's ideas about how the problem may be solved by remediation?

While each case is different and requires individual assessment, the following factors may indicate that the problem is more serious and may represent impairment, rather than a problematic behavior. If the student situation appears as an impairment, rather than a problematic behavior, then the student will not be able to or be willing to acknowledge, understand, or adequately address the following issues.

1. How the program, faculty, staff, and/or other students suffer from the behavior.
2. How the quality of academic work or service delivered by the student suffers.
3. How the problematic behavior interferes with professional and/or academic functioning.
4. That the problematic behavior has the potential for ethical or legal ramifications if not addressed.
5. That a disproportionate amount of time and attention by the faculty and/or agency field instructor is required for direct supervision and/or remediation.
6. That the problematic behavior does not change as a function of feedback.
7. That the problematic behavior negatively affects the public image of the program, the department, the college, or the agency.

Ample time will be allowed in this meeting for the student to present her view of the situation and to ask questions. If the Director of Field Education determines that action must be taken in this situation, she/he will develop a written plan for remediation or other appropriate course of

action. Students may submit their own written ideas for remediation or course of action to the Director of Field Education which will be taken under consideration.

The students will be given the opportunity to accept the plan for remediation or course of action, to provide a written rebuttal, and/or appeal. The first level of appeal by the student should be submitted in writing to the Director of the Social Work Program. If the student is in disagreement with the resulting decision by the Social Work Program Director, then the second level of appeal by the student should be submitted in writing to the Department Head of Psychology and Social Work. If the decision of the Department Head is unacceptable to the student she may appeal to the Dean of the School of Education, Health and Human Sciences. If the student is not in agreement with that decision a last appeal may be made to the Vice President for Academic Programs whose decision is final.

The remediation process will follow the written plan. Examples of actions that may be included in the remediation plan include – but are not limited to-an increase in didactic instruction, a decrease in course load, a decrease in or temporary suspension of academic enrollment, increased faculty advisement and/or faculty and agency supervision, or leave of absence and mental health counseling/therapy. Faculty consultation with the counselor/therapist will be required before the student is admitted or readmitted to the field practicum.

Progress must be reviewed by the Social Work Program Director, or designee, and/ or the academic advisor before the student is allowed to continue in the social work program or to graduate. If progress is viewed as insufficient, the faculty may recommend either a change in the remediation plan or dismissal from the social work program.

Signatures:

Student

Date

Social Work Faculty

Date

The student's signature on this document verifies that she has read and understands the policy.

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Admissions Packet

Faculty Recommendation

(Name of Student)

requests that you recommend her for admission to the Meredith College Social Work Program, which is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The primary objectives are to prepare students for beginning professional social work practice and/or for continuing the study of social work in advanced degree programs.

Please complete this form and send it to:

Dr. Cynthia Bishop, Social Work Program Director
3800 Hillsborough Street, 303 Ledford Hall, Raleigh, NC 27607
O: 919-760-8304 F: 919-760-8054 bishop@meredith.edu

Please rate the student on each item below by placing an X in the appropriate column.

Evaluation Item	Needs Improvement	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Exceptional
Level of maturity and emotional stability					
Consistency in class attendance					
Punctuality in meeting deadlines					
Cooperative attitude					
Academic Performance					
Quality of interpersonal relationships					
Respect for difference and diversity					

Please check the response that represents your recommendation regarding this student's admission to the Meredith College Social Work Program.

- Strongly Recommend Admission
- Recommend Admission
- Recommend Admission with Reservations (Please comment below)

Do Not Recommend Admission (Please comment below)

Please comment on reservations for admission to the social work program:

Please comment on favorable attributes the student can bring to the social work profession:

Please comment on any unfavorable attributes you believe the student would need to strengthen in order to become an effective social worker:

Course/s Taught to this student _____

Faculty Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Thank you for completing this recommendation.