Diana R. Garland School of Social Work

**MSW Concentration Guidelines**

The MSW Concentration is an option designed collaboratively by a student and a supervising faculty member to develop a student’s knowledge base more comprehensively in one arena of social work knowledge and practice. The concentration may go more deeply into one of the program’s areas of specialized practice, or it may span the areas of specialized practice, but it does not replace the specialization (clinical or community). Students completing requirements of the concentration receive documentation of completion at the time of the awarding of the MSW degree. This document certifies that the student has completed learning requirements in a substantive area within at least one of the areas of specialized practice. The requirements for the concentration are the same for both Advanced Standing and Standard Degree option students.

At the bottom of these Guidelines are additional information and requirements for established Church Social Work, and Gerontological Concentrations.

**Concentration Plan**

For all concentrations, students will select a School of Social Work faculty member (supervising faculty) with expertise in the area of interest to assist them in planning, engaging, and evaluating learning related to the concentration. Standard Degree Option students may choose to begin a concentration plan at any point in the generalist year. The Standard Degree Option student may develop a beginning plan with a faculty advisor and refine the plan during the generalist year. For both standard and advanced standing students, a plan for completion of the concentration during the Specialized year, to include the substantive area that will be the focus of the concentration and for completion, will be electronically submitted for approval to the supervising faculty no later than 4 weeks into the semester the student begins specialized course work. The plan is developed in collaboration with the supervising faculty who will assist the student in determining how the concentration will be integrated into specialized course work. The supervising faculty will notify the MSW Program Director of the student’s intention to pursue a concentration and of the faculty member’s willingness to supervise the student’s learning. The MSW Program Director will approve the concentration and be responsible for notifying the Curriculum Committee. The student may petition the MSW Program Director for a change of mentor to the faculty member supervising the concentration.

Additional learning activities related to the concentration may also be included as the student and supervising faculty contract for meeting the requirements for completion of the concentration. It is possible for students to include learning that occurred as part of a course of study in an accredited baccalaureate or graduate foundation year if the supervising faculty determines that the learning meets or exceeds expectations for preparation for advanced social work practice.

The supervising faculty is responsible for approving the concentration plan and submitting the approved plan to the MSW Program Director for review. The supervising faculty approves of the plan, with the MSW Program Director reserving the right to review and request changes. If a review, revision or denial is requested, the MSW Program Director and/or the supervising faculty may ask for an additional review by the Curriculum Committee. The MSW Program Director submits all the forms to Curriculum Committee, who reserves the right to review plans, and may be requested to do so by the MSW Program Director.In the unlikely event that the MSW Program Director asks for changes, or denies a plan, the MSW Program Director will provide the faculty member submitting the request and the student with a reason for denial or request for revision.

**Requirements**

The student will plan and carry out a course of study that focuses in the area of concentration. The student will successfully complete advanced learning in areas detailed in the application form below.

# Portfolio:

Documentation of all of the concentration requirements (completed projects and papers, field placement evaluations, documentation of CEU equivalents) is placed in an electronic portfolio, which the student submits to the supervising faculty by the last day of graduate capstone seminar. Portfolios are evaluated by the supervising faculty to determine whether requirements for the concentration were met. Applications for retroactive concentration recognition will not be approved.

**For a Gerontological Social Work Concentration:**

The Gerontological Social Work Concentration is an option designed collaboratively by a student and a supervising faculty member to develop a student’s knowledge base more comprehensively in gerontological social work practice. The concentration will provide specific focus in the area of gerontological social work policy, practice, and research. It is intended to enhance the student’s area of specialized practice but does not replace it. Students completing requirements of the gerontological social work concentration receive a certification of completion at the time of the awarding of the MSW degree. This document certifies that the student has completed the learning requirements for a concentration with persons 55+, within at least one of the areas of specialized practice. The requirements for the concentration are the same for both Advanced Standing and Standard Degree option students.

Students apply for this concentration by completing the Concentration Application Form, documenting in each section of the assignment plan the ways in which papers, presentations, or projects focus on understanding behavior of and practicing competently with persons 55+ and the families, communities, and social policies with which they interact.

**For a Church Social Work Concentration:**

MSW students who are preparing to work in or with congregations and/or missions and ministry programs of the church are encouraged to pursue a concentration in Church Social Work. Students may elect to do the Church Social Work Concentration in a particular, substantive area of church social work. Examples might include: community development; community ministries; counseling; older adults; trauma; disaster relief; youth and children services; etc. Students completing all requirements are awarded the Church Social Work Concentration at the School of Social Work Convocation. This document certifies that the student completed concentration requirements in a substantive area within Church Social Work. The concentration does not replace but builds on the student’s area of specialized practice.

Students must fulfill these additional requirements:

1. Depending on the applicant’s degree program, learning needs, and/or previous academic record, applicants may be required to complete 3-6 elective credit hours. If possible, WOCW 7386 Urban Missions Issues (Truett Seminary-3 hrs) should be considered for elective credit.

1. All degree students who complete a concentration in Church Social Work must do the following for their field internship experience in the Specialized year.

Specialized Internship:

SWO 5190/5790 or 5494/5490 Advanced Internship (8 hrs)

The Church Social Work Concentration students must also complete their advanced practice field education internships in a congregational or faith intentional setting working closely with a congregation(s). The Church Social Work Concentration student will include in his or her internship seminar a focus on church social work in all internship seminar assignments. The program may, from time to time, provide a special section of the field education seminar with special emphasis on Church Social Work.

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**MSW Concentration Application Form**

**Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Faculty Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Concentration Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Concentration Plan:** Complete the Assignment Plan column in the following table with details for how course assignments will help you complete your Concentration .

| **Content Area** | **Course Work** | **Assignment Plan** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Advanced Internship | SWO 5190/5790 or 5494/5490 (8 hrs) |  |
| Advanced Practice Skill | SWO 5375 and 5378, or 5379 and 5376 or 5377 Advanced Practice (6 hrs) |  |
| Advanced Practice Theory | SWO 5335 or 5337 (3 hrs) theory, and SWO 5375/5378 or 5379 and 5376 or 5377 Advanced Practice (6 hrs) |  |
| Advanced Policy | SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs) or SWO 5337 or 5335 (3 hrs) |  |
| Advanced Administrative  Practice | SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs) |  |
| Advanced Research | SWO 5182/5383 or 5282/5283 (4 hours) |  |
| Elective | A minimum of 2 approved graduate elective hours in the area of specialization |  |
| Continuing Education | The equivalent of 3 CEUs from workshops or conferences |  |
| Other | Student and faculty discretion |  |