SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

APPLICATION TO BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK
(BSW) DEGREE PROGRAM

Introduction

Students are formally admitted into the social work major by the Department of Social Work. The student admission and academic/professional assessment process is required by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which is the national social work education accrediting body. In addition, the faculty believes this individualized formal admission and assessment process enhances the educational and professional development of each social work major.

CSWE accreditation standards are used by individual states to enforce legal requirements or licensing regulations for social work practitioners. It is recommended that students review Indiana’s licensing regulations for social workers at (http://www.in.gov/pla/).

Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Policy

The Department of Social Work is fully committed to the University's Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity policies and procedures. The formal admissions process of the Department of Social Work, along with all other aspects of the Department, is designed to provide an academic and administrative environment in which understanding of and respect for human diversity, including age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, gender identity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation is practiced. The Department's admissions practices operationalize the University’s non-discrimination and affirmative action policy which can be found at http://www.bsu.edu/legal/

In addition, the Department of Social Work follows the university’s Sexual Harassment and Consensual Sexual and Romantic Relationships policies which views sexual harassment as a form of illegal sex discrimination. The full text of the University’s Sexual Harassment policy can be found at http://www.bsu.edu/legal/article/0,1375,24288-4086-8479,00.html and the Policy of Consensual and Romantic Relationships can be found at http://www.bsu.edu/legal/article/0,1375,24286-4086-39085,00.html


Inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination and affirmative action policy should be referred to the Director of University Compliance (765) 285-5162.

Student Privacy and Records Policy

The Department of Social Work maintains an academic file for each social work major. The formal admissions application materials submitted by the student become a part of the permanent file. The BSW program honors and complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, which requires academic institutions to provide access to academic records by the student, and prohibits the release of any information to another party unless a signed authorization has been obtained. Full details on student privacy in relation to departmental
records can be accessed in the Office of the Dean of Students, located in the Administration Building, Room 238, and online at http://cms.bsu.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/Registrar/ForFacultyandStaff/FamilyEducationalRightsandPrivacyAct.aspx

**Formal Admission Process and Procedures:**

**Timeframe**

Formal admission to the social work major occurs during the semester in which you intend to complete your 200 level social work classes or the first semester of your junior year. Students must be admitted prior to registering for SOCW 325. The formal admission application process and materials are reviewed biannually during town hall meetings. Attendance at the town hall meeting is mandatory for all students seeking admission to the major. The timely completion of formal admission to the BSW program is in the student’s best interest in order to allow time for students to improve academic skills, acquire additional knowledge, and to raise grade point averages necessary for successful completion of the BSW degree. This is particularly true for students who have lower grade point averages. It is important not to delay the formal admission process once the 200 level social work courses are nearing completion.

**Application Materials**

Application materials for formal admission to the major can be obtained on the Social Work department’s webpage. Students should fill out the electronic document (Appendix A) and include the name and email address of a minimum of two (2) academic references. In addition to the faculty references, students will need to submit a complete volunteer field evaluation form from their SOCW 200 (or equivalent) course.

**Application Process**

Students will complete the admissions packet, including a personal narrative, and submit it electronically by the Fall, Spring, or Summer due date.

Due Dates are as follows:
- Fall- October 1
- Spring- March 1
- Summer- July 1

The Admissions Committee will review all application materials and determine whether or not the student needs to meet with the committee for an interview. **An interview will be required** if:

- the student’s academic performance is within close range or significantly below the 2.5 minimum GPA requirement;
- their required 25 hour volunteer evaluation indicated poor performance
- their self-disclosure statement indicated a pending charge, conviction, or substantiated child abuse or neglect
- poor or questionable performance was noted in one or more reference forms
- content in their application packet indicates a potential conflict with the NASW Code of Ethics, Ball State University’s Code of Conduct, or their ability to successfully complete BSW degree requirements.

If the application materials are incomplete, the student will be notified in writing and asked to meet with their Academic Advisor and re-apply the following semester.
If the student application materials meet or exceed all expectations, then the student will be notified of their full admission to the major, without the need for an interview. Students who are formally admitted to the major will be directed to visit the Social Work department to complete the additional admissions documents, including the admissions contract and signing up for the mandatory orientation meeting.

If an admission interview is deemed necessary by the Committee, the student will be notified in writing by October 15th (Fall applicants), March 15th (Spring applicants), or July 15 (Summer applicants). All of the Admissions Committee members will attend student admissions interviews. After an admissions interview, the Admission Committee Chairperson will notify the student, in writing, of their admission status within five (5) business days of the interview. The admission status can include: full admission to the major, conditional admission to the major, or denial of admission to the major.

Notification letters indicating conditional admission will include specific, behavioral expectations and a timeline for the student to work towards full admission. In order to remedy problem areas or academic deficiencies students may be referred to any number of university or community services such as the University Learning Center, The Writing Center, the Scholarship and Financial Aid office or the Student Voluntary Services office. Additional recommendations may be made such as going to the Counseling Center. Students are notified by mail after the first semester if they have successfully met the required conditions and have attained full acceptance.

Notification letters indicating denial to the major will include specific feedback and a description of reason(s) for denial. The letter will also include a recommendation to follow-up with academic advising.

Admissions Committee

The Admissions Committee will consist of a minimum of four faculty members from the Social Work department.

Criteria for Formal Admission

The following admissions criteria have been established by the Department of Social Work. To seek formal admission an applicant must have:

1. Earned at Ball State University a minimum 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 point scale in 100 and 200 level Social Work courses required for the major;

2. Electronically submitted a completed Social Work BSW Application Packet to the Chair of the Admissions Committee. Application materials must demonstrate writing skills adequate for entry-level social work practice.

3. Have on file a completed Volunteer Field / Learning Contract and Evaluation Form for an approved Volunteer Field Experience. This minimum 25-hour Volunteer Field Experience is a course requirement for SOCWK 200. For students transferring in an equivalent of SOCWK 200 from another academic institution, a copy of an evaluation of their volunteer/internship experience, or its equivalent, must be submitted;

4. Signed an Admissions Contract verifying:
   • Permission for social work faculty to discuss her/his progress in the social work program with relevant social work faculty members as needed;
• Permission to discuss her/his criminal history with potential field supervisors and other relevant field agency personnel as needed when practicum arrangements are being made.

• Request form for senior practicum semester. Please Note: The field practicum is offered only during the spring and summer semesters each calendar year. The concurrent courses, SOCWK 460 and SOCWK 462, total 15 semester hours of course work and are completed during the final semester of completing the BSW degree requirements. All other course work and graduation requirements are to be completed before enrolling in SOCWK 460 and SOCWK 462. Please also note: During practicum, the general policy is that no other courses may be completed, and a student may not be employed. Such policies are based on the fact that practicum is full-time (40 hours per week), with a concurrent seminar which requires research and papers. Any exceptions or special circumstances must be discussed in advance with the Practicum Coordinator. Since practicum experiences are usually unpaid, it is in the student’s best interest to do advance financial and academic planning to avoid difficulties.

• Date and time of mandatory orientation meeting

5. Focused upon general career/educational goals consistent with professional undergraduate social work education;

6. Demonstrated the absence of a criminal history of any of the following offenses: felony, felony assault / assault, drug related offenses, theft, domestic violence, child abuse, murder or manslaughter, felony DUI (bodily injury), and sexual assault, stalking or rape; *

7. Received favorable evaluations from at least two Ball State Social Work faculty members or from at least two faculty members from a CSWE accredited social work program.

8. Attended the mandatory admission orientation meeting. Fall applicants must attend the orientation meeting in November. Spring applicants must attend the orientation meeting in April. Summer applicants must attend the orientation meeting in August. Conditional admission students must attend orientation meetings.

* Students are welcome to seek clarification regarding the Department’s criminal history policy from their social work Faculty Advisor or other social work faculty.

**Appeals Regarding Denied Admission**

Students denied admission by the BSW Admission Committee may appeal the decision within ten business days by submitting a written appeal to the Chair of the Social Work department. The written appeal must specify the reasons for the appeal. The Chair may ask for additional information from any involved parties. The Chair will make a decision regarding the appeal and will notify the student in writing of the decision within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal.

**Permission to Enroll in SOCWK 325**

Departmental permission to enroll in the required course SOCW 325 will be granted only to social work majors who have been granted formal admission to the BSW program. During the semester that the formal admission process is being completed, social work majors can enroll in SOCW 310, 320, 340, or 370 courses.
Retention Standards after Full Formal Admission:

Admission to Senior Level Practice and Research Courses

Once formally admitted, students must:
• earn and maintain a 2.5 cumulative grade point average in required social work courses in order to be granted permission to register for the senior level social work courses (SOCW 410, SOCW 430, and SOCW 440);
• Successfully complete MATHS 125 or its equivalent in order to be granted permission to register for SOCW 440.

Admission to Practicum

To receive permission to enroll in the social work practicum (SOCW 460 and SOCW 462) majors must have earned and maintained a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 in all required social work courses for the major. Grades of C or better must be earned in SOCW 325, SOCW 410, SOCW 430, and SOCW 440. The Department of Social Work does not accept a C minus as meeting the 325/400 level academic requirement.

Felony Convictions

Students who have been convicted of a felony or certain misdemeanors raise serious concerns regarding their appropriateness for the profession of social work since the protection of clients is of the utmost concern.

An increasing number of health, social service, family, children/youth and elderly serving agencies routinely complete criminal and driving record background checks when hiring new staff in order to provide greater client protection. These background checks, as well as drug screenings, verification of professional references, and standard health assessments are also routinely required for student interns.

In keeping with current practice in most social service agencies today, the Department of Social Work routinely conducts a registry and directory check through the Indiana Sheriff’s Office and the Indiana Sex and Violent Offender Directory on all students registered for SOCWK 200 Social Work Practice I. In addition, the department routinely conducts Indiana Department of Child Services background checks. A major assignment in this course consists of a volunteer experience in a social service related agency. These same registry and directory checks are completed also at the time a transfer student is admitted to the university and declares social work as her/his major and the semester prior to senior practicum.

Students who are charged or have been convicted of the following offenses are not generally eligible for formal admission to the major. Decisions are made on a case by case basis.
• Felony
• Felony assault / assault
• Drug related offenses
• Theft
• Domestic violence offenses
• Child abuse or neglect offenses (substantiated cases)
• Murder / manslaughter offenses
• Felony DUI (with bodily injury)
• Stalking, sexual assault / rape offenses

Students with felonies or misdemeanors (this includes drug offenses and drunk driving charges) may be admitted provided the convictions are not recent or pending and the student can document
successful completion of probation or mandated requirements. Such students, if accepted, must sign a waiver saying that they understand that their criminal history may limit their professional options once they have completed the BSW degree, and that they authorize the Department of Social Work to discuss their criminal history with staff of potential field practicum sites. Failure to sign the waiver or to grant such authorization will result in non acceptance to the major and consideration for field placement. Students who are concerned with prior or pending felony or misdemeanor charges should discuss their concerns with the Chair of the department, their Academic Advisor, or the Admissions Committee Chair.

Any information that would be revealed in a background or registry check must be disclosed by the student applying for formal admission to the major and during field placement planning. Failure to disclose criminal histories will result in a denial of formal admission to the major or a dismissal from the program.

Students who plan to seek licensing as social work practitioners should contact professional, federal, and state regulatory agencies to determine current regulations regarding felony convictions. Examples of regulatory agencies are listed below:

National Association of Social Workers – National Office
http://www.naswdc.org/

National Association of Social Workers - Indiana Chapter
http://www.naswin.org/

Professional Licensing Agency
http://www.in.gov/pla/social.htm
*State agency regulating social work licensure in Indiana
APPENDIX A
SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

APPLICATION TO BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK
(BSW) DEGREE PROGRAM

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date _______________________

Name ____________________________________________________________

Ball State Student ID-Number ________________________________________

Current Address

___________________________________________________________________
Street / City State Zip County

Permanent Address (if different)

___________________________________________________________________
Street / City State Zip County

Phone Number with Area Code _________________________________________

Email Address ______________________________________________________

Emergency Contact

Name ______________________________________________________________

Phone Number ______________________________________________________
SELF DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Have you ever been convicted of any felony charges?  YES or NO

Have you ever been convicted of any misdemeanor charges?  YES or NO

Are there any current pending felony charges that have been filed against you?  YES or NO

Are there any current pending misdemeanor charges that have been filed against you?  YES or NO

Have you ever been convicted of a crime against a child or children?  YES or NO

Have you ever had a substantiated case of child abuse and/or neglect?  YES or NO

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, list all criminal convictions you have received, as well as any current pending criminal charges that have been filed against you.

______________________________________________________________________________
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Failure to disclose criminal background is grounds for dismissal from the program. If a student has a criminal history or other previous professional/legal challenges, he or she must discuss these circumstances with the Department Chair and/or Field Coordinator as these challenges may impact eligibility for malpractice insurance, field placement, employment, as well as his or her future licensure.

ACADEMIC RECORD

Students applying to the BSW Program must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 in courses required for a social work major. The Admissions Committee will review all applicants’ transcripts to ensure their academic record meets these requirements. By signing and dating below you are indicating that your academic standing is suitable for BSW admissions. If your current GPA does not meet these requirements, you are still able to apply for admission into the program. The Admissions Committee can consider your application for conditional admittance or request students submit a waiver discussing their academic record.

______________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature  Date
**EMPLOYMENT AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

Please list all employment and volunteer experiences in chronological order starting with the most recent. Please be specific in describing the positions held. If more space is needed, use a separate sheet and attach.

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<th>Supervisor Name and Contact Information</th>
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<td><strong>Position Held</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dates of Employment or Volunteering</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Job Duties</strong></td>
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EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT

Please list all extracurricular experiences in chronological order starting with the most recent that have influenced your decision to pursue a social work career. Extracurricular experiences include membership in student or professional organizations and/or leadership activities.

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PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Prepare a personal narrative not to exceed four (4) typed pages in length. For this narrative, respond to ALL the items listed below. This narrative is a critical part of your application folder. Consider it your opportunity to communicate with the BSW Admissions Committee about yourself. Please utilize APA style to format the paper and cite sources, particularly in discussing your selected social issue.

Part One: Explain the reasons for your interest in social work. Elaborate on both personal and societal factors that have influenced your decision to pursue social work as a profession. This can include any life experiences that have influenced your decision.

Part Two: Discuss the field(s) of social work that is of the most interest to you. Describe the skills you believe a successful social worker in this field must possess.

Part Three: Demonstrate self-awareness by discussing your strengths and weaknesses as it relates to working with populations at risk, specifically clients of various cultures and backgrounds.

Part Four: Identify a social issue facing our society. Briefly describe this problem and discuss how social workers might intervene with the social issue. You should cite at least two sources for this part of the paper using correct APA citations.
SELF ASSESSMENT OF SCHOLASTIC AND PROFESSIONAL APTITUDE

Please respond to this brief self-assessment questionnaire.

0 = Do Not Know
1 = Outstanding
2 = Above Average
3 = Average
4 = Below Average

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SOCIAL WORK CODE OF CONDUCT

The Social Work Code of Conduct is designed to promote the growth of ethically responsible students and future professionals by setting standards for academic integrity and overall ethical conduct. The purpose of this Code is to instill a sense of individual responsibility on the part of each student and to foster a departmental culture of honor and trust. By way of this Code, students are challenged to rise to academic excellence, with professional ethics as a central feature of academic expectations. Academic standards in the social work program include those that are scholastic and professional in nature; in combination, both are seen as the primary indicators of readiness for professional practice.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all students are expected to know and follow the ethical standards established by Ball State University and the National Association of Social Workers.

- Ball State University’s Student Handbook, which includes policies on disciplinary offenses and academic misconduct such as plagiarism and cheating, can be found at http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/student code
• The National Association of Social Workers’ *Code of Ethics*, which will be reviewed and applied in your social work classes, can be found at http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp

**Ethical Standards**

The ethical standards promulgated in this Code coincide with the ethical principles established in the NASW Code of Ethics. (Initial each standard on the line provided.)

*Service:* I will engage in human service volunteer activities to the best of my ability and in a socially responsible manner during my social work courses, and during my senior practicum, as outlined by the department with full cognizance of the serious nature of working with vulnerable segments of society. __________
**Importance of Human Relationships**: I will engage faculty as partners in my growth and engage clients as partners in the helping process. In working with clients, I will avoid conflicts of interest that would interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment, which includes setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

**Social Justice**: I will engage in activities to gain sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural/ethnic diversity and, further, become committed to promoting the achievement of individual and collective social and economic justice.

**Dignity and Worth of People**: In the spirit of a respectful culture of learning, I will treat my fellow students, my teachers, my field supervisors, and other departmental personnel in a caring, respectful, and courteous fashion, mindful of individual differences, as well as cultural and ethnic diversity. I will resolve any conflicts that arise in a manner that reflects the behaviors expected of future social work professionals. Additionally, I will support the concept of client self-determination.

**Integrity**: I understand that I am expected to demonstrate personal integrity in meeting the objectives of the social work program and in fulfilling all degree requirements. I will carry out my role as learner honestly, honorably, and responsibly. The academic products I prepare and submit to meet program requirements will be produced through my own efforts and will not involve the use of term paper mills or be the result of any other form of unauthorized aid—nor will I submit in whole or in part the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor. I will meet and maintain academic standards of the institution and the department, and I will refrain from academic dishonesty of any sort.

**Competence**: In order to become a culturally competent practitioner, I will conscientiously participate in educational activities that promote sensitivity to, knowledge about, and appreciation of cultural diversity. I will strive to develop an awareness of self as a person and as a future professional helper and will commit to ongoing learning throughout my career.
Advisement Information

In order for the BSU social work program to maintain its integrity and accreditation, students must follow the program’s curriculum design, adhering to prerequisites and co-requisites, as explicated in programmatic and university documents. Students should contact their primary social work advisor to discuss a plan of study.

As a student, I agree to the following:

I will see my primary social work advisor before registering for any coursework and understand that any shortcuts to this established procedure involves a serious risk of not completing requirements in a timely manner. __________

I understand if I do not enroll in the courses I have been advised to take during advisement sessions, the department assumes no responsibility for making later course sequencing exceptions in order to keep me on target in meeting my desired graduation timeline. __________

I understand that if I attempt to enroll in courses without having the required pre- or co-requisites, I will not be allowed. __________

My signature below indicates that I have read this document carefully and fully understand its contents.

_________________________________________  __________________
Student Signature                                      Date
REFERENCES

A minimum of three references are required from individuals who have knowledge of your academic and/or professional qualifications. This includes two academic reference checklists from Social Work professors and a complete evaluation from the supervisor of your volunteer contract for SOCW200 (or equivalent). The student is responsible for asking recommenders to complete a recommendation checklist in advance of submitting their application. The student will provide the name and email address of reference when submitting their application. The department will contact the references with the request and due date. Students who are still in the process of completing volunteer hours for SOCW200 may apply for conditional admittance into the program and obtain the volunteer reference at the end of their volunteer experience.