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“This document is provided as an advising resource only. Official curriculum requirements are listed in the JMU Undergraduate Catalog [substitute JMU Graduate Catalog for grad programs]. In the case of discrepancies, the University Catalog is the official curriculum students must follow. This document was reviewed by Dr. BJ Bryson on 6/12/23.”

BSW STUDENT ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST

This page is designed to help students complete each of the following tasks:

- _____ Start planning your admission process early by scheduling an appointment with your academic advisor. The dates for submission are October 15 (Fall term) and March 1 (Spring term). Three references (name and email addresses) are due earlier to a link sent from the Social Work office, ensuring all your materials are in on time. You will be invited to the Canvas Admission site, where you will find admission materials.
- _____ Read this entire application thoroughly before completion! The Social Work Department's webpage version is in .pdf (you can only read it). You will need your EID and password to access it. The version on Canvas will allow you to fill in and complete the form.
- _____ Submit your three professional references (name and email address) to the link provided early. References submitted directly to the Social Work Department receive a submission link returning your reference to the department.
- _____ Read the NASW Code of Ethics and at least one other professional ethical statement [IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers) International Code of Ethics or NABSW (National Association of Black Social Workers) Code of Ethics or LASW (Latinx Association of Social Workers) Mission Statement or (UDHR) Universal Declaration of Human Rights]. These are referenced in the application process.
- _____ Read the Social Work Student Handbook, available from the Social Work Department website, with your EID and password.
- _____ Download a copy of your transcripts for submission through *MyMadison*.
- _____ Draft and finalize your personal statement following the prompts on the form. Be sure to respond to each area. Using headings to organize your document. The JMU University Writing Center can support your writing efforts. Your social work academic advisor reviews your completed application, emphasizing that your responses are adequate. However, ultimately the responsibility is yours.
- _____ Student Agreement Form should be reviewed with your social work academic advisor, and signatures occur. Under limited situations, faculty have specific processes for remote signatures. Students should strive for an in-person meeting with their academic advisor.

Your signature on this form signifies that you have read, understand and agree to follow the policies and procedures in the Social Work Handbook and that you have read and agree to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.
- _____ Compile all admission documents into one .pdf file for submission on the Admission Canvas site.

Please ensure that materials are completed, clear and promptly submitted no later than the stated deadline in the Social Work Student Handbook for the semester after you complete SOWK 287 and SOWK 288 or as stated in a letter from the department's Academic Unit Head (AUH). Pay attention to the dates on the Admission Flow Chart reviewed at the mandatory semester admission discussion. Failure to submit materials may result in a Professional Behavior Chart, negatively impact on the admissions decision, or on enrollment in required social work courses.

PLEASE TALK WITH YOUR SOCIAL WORK ACADEMIC ADVISOR ----EARLY!

ADMISSION TO THE B.S.W. PROGRAM

Overview

You may declare a major in social work at any time. You will be assigned a social work faculty academic advisor to assist you in developing your course of study, monitoring your academic progress, assisting you with career development, and with admission to the B.S.W. Program. This document provides information for those applying to the program.

Timeline

You must apply to the program the semester immediately following successful completion of SOWK 287 (Introduction to Social Work) & SOWK 288 (Human Rights, Social Economic and Environmental Justice). Admission packet due dates are October 15th or March 1, regardless of other holidays or weekends. Students should work with their faculty academic advisor to develop their admission packet and meet the deadline.

Submission

Students should work with their faculty academic advisor in developing admission materials and reviewing how they will complete program requirements. This should include

- a discussion of the NASW Code of Ethics & the International Federation of Social Work Code of Ethics or other professional ethical statements,
- a review of the student's course and progression plan,
- how the student will complete their 50-hour pre-field experience,
- review of their personal statement written,
- an initial discussion of career or graduate education plans, and
- any potential field experience concerns.

Students submit an admission packet they developed and reviewed with their academic advisor during the designated semester. The admission materials include

- Student Agreement Form for Admission to the B.S.W. Program (signed)
- Application completed using WORD as no handwritten applications are accepted,
- Personal Statement (well written responding to prompts)
- Resume in the SOWK 287 format provided
- Unofficial JMU transcripts (including evaluation by the Office of the Registrar of transfer credits if applicable) and
- Email addresses and names of at least three persons for references.*

**References should reflect individuals who know of your work, service, or volunteer experiences from a variety of sources. You are encouraged not to have more than one reference from a location/source.*

Process of Determination

Declared social work majors who have successfully completed the SOWK 200 level courses are invited to apply to the program. There are three determinations made in reviewing student applications.

- For a determination of **unconditional admission** (full admission), the student must have a 2.0 overall average with no single grade lower than a "C (2.0)" in the 200-level social work courses, and to have completed the 20 hours of community service-learning required in SOWK 287.
- For a determination of **conditional admission**, the student may be considered to have a deficit in one of the main criteria areas that may be resolved within one semester. This could be a GPA below 2.0 overall average, not completing the 20 hours of community service-learning required in SOWK 287, incomplete application components such as a resume or reference, or an incomplete personal statement that is not hand-written.
- For a determination of **no admission**, the student would have failed to submit appropriate materials for successful evaluation and review.

Successful admission requires evaluation by two faculty members of a student's written application, a GPA of 2.0, a correctly formatted resume, an unofficial copy of your transcripts, a well-written personal statement, and professional references. The personal statement is used to assess your writing ability as well as your choice of social work as a profession. Additionally, students are evaluated on the basis of community service and life experiences, academic performance, communication skills, work-related or volunteer efforts, ability to work with others, motivation, professional value orientation, and career plans. Work-related skills and characteristics students are expected to demonstrate that are posted within every required social work course include:

- Punctuality
- Attendance
- Follow Through/Dependability
- Meeting of Deadlines
- Handling of stress
- Using humor appropriately
- Assumption of responsibility for actions
- Flexibility
- Work organization
- Acceptance of written feedback (200-level courses)
- Acceptance of verbal feedback (200-level courses)
- Effective use of written feedback (300-400 level courses)
- Effective use of verbal feedback (300-400 level courses)

PERSONAL STATEMENT of SOCIAL WORK PHILOSOPHY: Since you are entering a profession that values critical self-reflection and a commitment to lifelong learning, this personal statement is designed to encourage honest self-assessment and introspection while maintaining a professional voice. This statement aims to provide insight into what brought you to social work and how you will honor its values and principles as a member of the profession. In corporate relevant life experiences, volunteer and/or community service experiences, internships, and work experiences relevant to social work completed In no more than 1200 words, address the following:

1. Describe briefly what makes the social work profession the right fit for you.
2. The NASW Code of Ethics states, “social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients.” How will this influence your role as a social worker?
3. According to the NASW Code of Ethics, “social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.” Describe how you plan to commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion across identities as a social worker.
4. Identify an additional principle or consideration that stands out to you and explain how it exemplifies to you what it means to be a social worker. Look at these other codes of professional ethics
 - IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers) International Code of Ethics or
 - NABSW (National Association of Black Social Workers) Code of Ethics or
 - LASW (Latinx Association of Social Workers) Mission Statement or
 - (UDHR) Universal Declaration of Human Rights
5. What are your personal strengths and qualities that will help you become an effective social worker? Based on your self-assessment, identify at least two personal areas of needed professional development and your specific plan for addressing these areas.

Optional: Are there any additional factors that you consider crucial or wish the BSW faculty to consider

REFERENCE LINK INSTRUCTIONS

Overview

Professional references are individuals who can affirm your qualities and temperament for becoming a social worker, while providing insights into your work ethic, skills, strengths, achievements, and challenges. They may be able to share your positive personality or character traits, or attest to your potential serve others or barriers overcome.

Early submission of references is encouraged. Discuss possible individuals to use as references with your academic advisor. Be sure you have correct contact information including correct spelling of names and email addresses.

Process

References should be received by the due date (October 15 or March 1). Your responsibility is to submit the names and emails of *three* references in a timely manner that allows for their response to the program’s request. You do not need to wait until your entire packet is complete to submit your references. Delays in receiving references by the due date may result in the postponement of the application review until the next due date, which impedes your progression in the program.

A high-value reference is a person who:

- could speak to your strengths and challenges as a worker or volunteer
- directly supervised you in work, service-learning, or volunteer experience
- that you provided childcare or elder care responsibilities recently

References that are generally discouraged:

- Family members – even if they are in a helping profession
- Same-age peers – like a friend, Greek life member, faith-based group member, or co-worker
- A mature co-worker with limited knowledge of your work experience
- Your third-grade teacher whom you liked but have had no contact with since the third grade
- More than one person from the same area of life, business, or volunteer experience

The Link

A link to enter the name and email of your three professional reference persons will be sent to eligible students at the start of the semester. While we require three, there is room for up to five referees. You are required to provide three references.

TRANSCRIPT SUBMISSION

Students should submit a recent unofficial copy of their JMU transcript from their *MyMadison* account. The transcript should indicate completion of SOWK 287 and SOWK 288 with identification of any other courses being taken at the time of application.

RESUME LINK WITH UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

SUBMIT A RESUME that identifies your volunteer/community service experiences, internships, and work experiences relevant to social work. Go to the University Career Center, third-floor Student Success Center for assistance. *Use the SOWK 287 format.* It is the only acceptable resume format for submission.

[Get assistance in developing a professional resume appropriate for submission.](#)

Student Agreement for Admission to the Social Work Program

Please sign YOUR INITIALS in the space before each statement or question below. Your initials indicate that you have read, understand, and completed each area as listed below.

_____ I have read and agree to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.

_____ I have read and understand the Social Work Department's policies and procedures outlined in the department's Social Work Student Handbook and agree to follow the guidelines.

_____ I have read and understand the University's student policies as well as student rights and responsibilities as articulated in the Undergraduate Catalog and the University Student Handbook, both available online.

_____ I understand that my GPA may be reviewed periodically to determine compliance with the JMU-BSW requirements.

_____ I understand that my misrepresentation of any information requested as part of the admissions, or any other formal process used in the Social Work Department may be grounds for denial of admission or dismissal from the program.

_____ I have discussed with my faculty advisor my academic plan for progression to graduation, including prerequisites for required social work courses, transfer credits, maintaining my GPA, and the potential negative outcome for deviations from the plan, such as adding a semester to your graduation schedule.

_____ I have discussed with my faculty advisor my plan for completion of the 50-hour Pre-Field Service and the rules that govern the selection and reporting of this experience prior to the first day of the semester when taking the 3Ms.

_____ I understand that if I have personal, medical, mental health, legal, or substance abuse problems/issues or psychosocial distress that interferes with my ability to meet program requirements, I am expected to take remedial action. I understand that my academic advisor may be a source of support, and they may refer me for additional services either on campus or within the community. Such conversations are held confidential.

Student Printed Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor Signature _____ Date _____