



Social Work Program Student Handbook

Chatham University
107 Woodland Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Social Work Program at Chatham! This book contains valuable information about the requirements and policies of the program. If you have a specific question that is not answered here, please contact a member of the social work faculty or staff:

Program Director Professor	Field Placement Coordinator Assistant Professor	Associate Professor
Melissa Bell, Ph.D., MSW, LSW Coolidge 227 412-365-2768 mbell@chatham.edu	Erica Maloney, DSW, MSW, LSW Coolidge 222 412-365-1884 e.maloney@chatham.edu	Christine Sarteschi, Ph.D., MSW, LCSW Coolidge 223 412-365-2759 csarteschi@chatham.edu
Administrative Assistant		Social Work Program Librarian
Phoebe Walczak Coolidge 235A 412-365-1444 p.walczak@chatham.edu		Kate Wenger, MLIS JKM Library 412-365-1670 kwenger@chatham.edu

Visit our Website:

<https://www.chatham.edu/academics/undergraduate/social-work/index.html>

PREFACE

This manual provides information to students, field instructors, and agency personnel regarding the field education components of Chatham University's Social Work Program. Copies of the relevant forms are available in the Social Work TEAMS Channel: [Field Documents and Templates](#).

This manual contains a description of the program including goals and objectives, course requirements, learning objectives, and suggested timeline for the major. The manual also explains the administrative policies and procedures of the Field Education program and sets forth the basis of cooperation between the Social Work Program at Chatham University and the field instruction agency.

“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 and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally.”

Council on Social Work Education, 2015

INTRODUCTION TO CHATHAM UNIVERSITY

Chatham University was chartered in 1869 under the name Pennsylvania Female College. The College was founded to provide women with an education comparable to that which men could receive at the time. In 1890, the institution's name was changed to Pennsylvania College for Women, and then, in 1955, to Chatham College. The college became Chatham University in 2007 when it was granted university status. Chatham began admitting students of all genders to its undergraduate programs in 2014.

The current mission of Chatham University states: "Chatham University prepares its students to build lives of purpose, value, and fulfilling work. Through professional skill development and liberal arts learning, Chatham prepares its graduates to be informed and engaged citizens in their communities; to recognize and respect the diversity of culture, identity, and opinion; and to live sustainably". To this end, our work in and out of the classroom prizes our core values of sustainability; women's leadership and gender equity; community engagement; and diversity and inclusion.

The University encourages all students, beginning in their first year, to be involved in community activities and organizations. The University offers a study-abroad experience for all students. The University is also home to The Women's Institute, The Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics, and the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship. Interaction between the centers and The Social Work Program provides increased opportunities for social work students to learn about politics and policy as well as providing opportunities for students to be actively engaged in political activity.

Liberal Arts Foundation

Chatham University has had a strong commitment to the liberal arts since its inception in 1869. While the University has evolved throughout history in response to society's changing needs, it remains committed to undergraduate liberal arts education. The liberal arts curriculum provides a strong foundation for the professional social work program by offering a breadth of knowledge and experience that will enhance the students' understanding of themselves, their society, and the world at large. As students experience the liberal arts and question society and themselves, they develop a different perspective of themselves, society, and what they believe to be true about each. This increased awareness, knowledge, and understanding gives students the capacity to deal with a variety of cultural contexts and individual differences. The liberal arts preparation at Chatham enhances students' ability to assess multidimensional problems, incorporating ethical and cultural dimensions that expand and enhance technical or professional expertise. The core liberal arts requirements also assist the students in developing a variety of interests so that they may develop to their fullest potential and be encouraged to engage in life-long learning.

To this end, Chatham requires all students to participate in and complete all general education requirements. Additional liberal arts foundation courses required for social work majors are outlined in the Social Work Curriculum section.

SOCIAL WORK AT CHATHAM

When Jane Addams visited Chatham College in 1907, she found an institution dedicated to the education of women and committed to community service. At that time, the College offered a progressive social service certification program, which uniquely blended classroom teaching with service work in the community. The program was the precursor to Chatham's service-learning initiatives of today and provided the historical legacy that continues with the undergraduate social work program.

The Social Work Program at Chatham University began in 1999. It received its initial accreditation in February of 2003 by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) with retroactive accreditation back to its first graduating class of 2001. The Social Work Program is defined, in part, by some of the unique aspects of Chatham University. Chatham is a small, non-sectarian university offering admission to a wide variety of students from across the world. Its small size encourages a close relationship between students and

faculty, thus providing a strong mentoring relationship for students. The small size of the social work program allows for significant contact between the University and the field placement sites, as well as with other social welfare agencies and organizations within the community. Chatham, with its institutional commitment to the needs of all people, global understanding, diverse cultures, the environment, and research. Chatham University provides an environment that is particularly congruent with social work education.

The Social Work Program at Chatham emphasizes a strengths-based generalist approach throughout its curriculum. This approach embodies and advances the concepts of individuality, self-determination, empowerment, and participation in social change and political activism. Set within a college that is historically all women, students are still encouraged to focus on the empowerment of women as well as other oppressed groups. The Social Work Program is part of the Department of Social Sciences.

Careers in Social Work

A BSW prepares students for entry-level generalist social work practice. Social work offers a wide variety of job opportunities and job settings. For example, social workers work in mental health agencies, child welfare agencies, schools, hospitals, research settings, community agencies, federal, local, and state government, advocacy groups, nursing homes, employee assistance programs, colleges and universities, private practice, outpatient clinics, HMOs, and group homes.

Specifically, BSWs may serve in the following roles/fields:

- Jr. Clinician, Community mental/behavioral health
- Milieu clinicians
- Juvenile probation
- Adult prison reentry
- FBI Agent
- Medical settings
- Immigration and Refugee resettlement
- Adoption /foster care
- Advocacy/organizing.
- Developmental Disabilities
- Gerontology
- Addiction services and counseling
- Early intervention
- Housing and safety net services
- Community outreach and organizing
- Psychosocial rehabilitation
- Politics and lobbying
- Community nonprofits
- Child protection
- Community living and support services for people with disabilities
- Counsel rape victims, crime victims
- Provide crisis intervention services
- Provide information referrals, and coordination of resources for individuals and families to obtain resources they need or to make decisions about family members or life transitions (obtain meals on wheels so someone can live independently, help children with special needs, obtain in home tutoring or assistance with transportation)
- Work with communities or neighborhoods to assess needs and develop resources to meet those needs (e.g. help establish a playground, or community program for seniors)

OUR PROGRAM

Mission Statement

Our mission is to prepare students to be competent generalist social workers and to prepare students, as appropriate, for graduate study in social work. The program incorporates the core social work values of service, integrity, and human dignity throughout the curriculum and promotes the importance of human relationships, social and economic justice, human rights, environmental justice and sustainability, and scientific inquiry. The values, knowledge, and skills necessary for work with diverse populations, for critical thinking, and for continued professional development form the basis for student learning and professional competency.

The program builds upon Chatham University's long-standing liberal arts foundation that incorporates the humanities, the arts, science, and technology. It prepares graduates to help improve the quality of life for the groups they serve and to identify, ameliorate, and prevent conditions that contribute to poverty and limit human rights. In order to promote the wellbeing of individuals, groups, and communities, a common core of knowledge, skills, local and global perspectives, and values enables graduates to function in a broad range of settings and serve diverse client populations. As beginning generalists, graduates will approach the strengths and needs of client systems in an ethical manner that considers the environmental context and utilizes research-based interventions with client systems of individuals, families, groups, or communities.

Accreditation

The Chatham Bachelor of Social Work program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (<http://www.cswe.org/>). This means employers and colleagues nationwide will recognize that your degree has prepared you for professional social work practice. It also means that, should you choose to pursue a graduate degree in social work, you will be eligible for advanced standing in most MSW programs. Advanced standing allows BSW graduates to complete a Master of Social Work Degree in as little as 10 months.

Program Goals

The overarching goal of the Social Work Program is to prepare competent social work practitioners for beginning generalist practice with diverse populations. The seven goals listed below reflect the mission of undergraduate social work education and its intersection with the particular strengths and mission of Chatham University.

Goal 1: To prepare generalist social workers who demonstrate professionalism informed by critical thinking in all aspects of their practice.

Goal 2: To develop generalist social work practitioners who demonstrate the appropriate professional knowledge, behavior, values, and skills to serve client systems of diverse sizes and types.

Goal 3: To prepare generalist social workers who integrate knowledge about how individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations grow and change within the context of their environments.

Goal 4: To develop within generalist practitioners both an appreciation of the impact of the cultural context on social work practice and the human condition and the competencies, including cultural humility, necessary for respecting and engaging diversity and difference in practice.

Goal 5: To prepare generalist social work practitioners who utilize social work values and ethics, as stated in the NASW Code of Ethics, in their professional decision-making throughout their professional practice and social work careers.

Goal 6: To prepare practicing social workers to respond to changing environmental contexts, issues related to human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice, in an effort to improve the quality of services through advocacy and policy-based practice

Goal 7: To prepare generalist practitioners who can conduct and use research to inform practice decisions and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Program Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) provides a competency-based foundation for the social work curriculum. The CSWE Education Policy (EPAS 2022) is available online at: <https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/standards/2022-epas> and is available from any social work faculty member.

The Social Work Program at Chatham seeks to prepare students to practice as generalist social workers. These competencies, operationalized by practice behaviors, drive the development of the generalist social work practice curriculum, including the acquisition of skills for working with individuals, couples, families, groups, communities, agencies, and organizations. These competencies are acquired first in the classroom and then in the field placement:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

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:

- 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;

- demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- 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:

- advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- 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:

- demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- 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:

- apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- 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 wellbeing, 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:

- 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
- 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:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- 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:

- 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
- 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:

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- 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:

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

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Criteria for Admission and Continued Enrollment

In addition to intellectual ability, professional social workers must be able to engage in constructive helping relationships with people. They must possess good judgment and a high degree of emotional stability. It is not in the best interest of the program and the profession that students who do not possess characteristics

necessary for professional practice continue in the program. It is also not in the student's best interest to pursue a professional career path that is not appropriate for them.

Expectations for admission, continued enrollment, and graduation from the program include:

Academic Performance: Students must maintain a GPA of at least 2.25 and a C- or higher in all social work courses. Students who do not have at least a GPA of 2.25 after completion of their graduation and social work major requirements will not be permitted to graduate with a BSW.

Ability to Develop Constructive Helping Relationships: Students shall act in a manner that shows recognition of individual worth and dignity and must be willing and able to communicate clearly and effectively. Students who have drug, alcohol, mental health, or criminal justice problems that consistently and significantly impact their performance may not be able to develop these constructive professional relationships.

Standards of Professionalism: Poor or tardy class or field placement attendance, failure to notify instructors or field supervisors of illness when unable to attend class or field placement, and violations of the Chatham Honor Code are examples of unprofessional behavior and demonstrate a poor potential for successful social work practice.

Upholding Social Work Values and Ethics: Students must exhibit an appreciation and respect for human diversity and a willingness to serve all people in need, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, ability, or sexual orientation. Students must uphold the NASW Code of Ethics.

Declaring a Major and Advising

Students who are interested in pursuing a social work major are encouraged to meet with a member of the social work faculty to discuss any aspect of the major or the profession. A social work major may be declared by completing the major declaration form available from the Registrar or online via My.Chatham>Documents & Forms> search for desired form. Students are then identified as part of the social work program and receive information about issues and activities of interest to social work majors.

Any student interested in the major is also welcome to select a member of the social work faculty as their advisor. Declared social work majors must have an advisor who is a member of the social work faculty. Advisors meet with students at least once per term to review progress, address academic challenges, and discuss course sequencing and requirements.

In order to complete the major, students must have a GPA of 2.25 at the beginning of their junior year and maintain that average until graduation. They must also earn a C- or higher in all courses required for the social work major. Social work majors must apply to and be accepted for the 12-credit field placement completed during the senior year. In addition to grades, the process of evaluation will include other academic criteria such as the demonstration of professional behavior and the personal maturity to work in a professional social work environment.

Transfer Students

Transfer students will be evaluated on an individual basis in relation to program admissions criteria. The University evaluates transfer credits and, in general, accepts liberal arts courses for transfer with a grade of at least a "C-." The social work faculty will assess transferred courses for credit for liberal arts requirements, the pre-professional sequence, or the major. No major credit is given for experiential learning, life, or work experience. Credit for life or work experience may be granted toward the pre-professional or liberal arts requirements.

Generally, only courses from other CSWE-accredited social work programs will be considered for transfer for major requirements; such course work will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis. Field education will not be accepted in transfer.

Transfer students must also complete the application process for the field placement as outlined in this manual. The Chatham social work program has affiliation agreements with local community colleges that provide guidance in applying transfer credits to those incoming students.

Students with Special Needs

Chatham University is committed to providing an environment that ensures that no individual is discriminated against on the basis of their disability. Students with disabilities, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and who need special academic accommodations, should notify the director of the Office of Academic and Accessibility Resources (OAAR) Center as soon as possible. The OAAR Center will work with the student and the course instructor to coordinate and monitor the provision of reasonable academic accommodations.

Affirmative Action

Equal opportunity is integral to employment and education at Chatham University because we recognize that the University's present and future strength is based primarily on people and their skills, experience, and potential to develop, no matter what their race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other legally protected status. This policy of nondiscrimination is applied to student admission and retention, as well as personnel decisions. In addition, the social work program promotes equal opportunity for all in its curriculum.

Policy Against Harassment

The University provides an environment free from any form of sexual or discriminatory harassment. Each individual has the right to an environment that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including sexual harassment.

Specifically, the University expressly prohibits any form of harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other legally protected status. Sexual harassment and other forms of discriminatory harassment are unacceptable conduct, anywhere on the University campus, whether in the University's offices or in other work-related or educational settings and will not be tolerated by the University. Discriminatory harassment in the workplace is also prohibited by law.

If a situation concerning harassment of any kind arises, please contact the Field Placement Coordinator immediately.

Honor Code and NASW Code of Ethics

Chatham University students pledge to maintain the Honor Code, which states in part: "Honor is that principle by which we at Chatham form our code of living, working and studying together. The standards of honor at Chatham require that all students act with intellectual independence, personal integrity, honesty in all relationships and consideration for the rights and well-being of others." Information about the Honor Code may be found in the Chatham Student Manual. Social work majors are also expected to uphold the NASW Code of Ethics as students and professionals (available at <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/default.asp>).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without attribution. This includes using someone else's exact words, paraphrasing those words or using a person's ideas without a citation (a reference to the author and the article and/or web site). Plagiarism is stealing and it is a serious form of academic dishonesty. It violates both the Chatham Honor Code and the NASW Code of Ethics. Plagiarism will result in, at a minimum, a grade of zero for the assignment. Other penalties (such as referral to Judicial Board) may occur at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to understand what

plagiarism is and to use the proper format for quotations and references. If in doubt, it is better to over reference. The format used in the Social Work Program is that of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th ed.* (2020).

CURRICULUM

The social work curriculum focuses on the development of foundation knowledge about generalist social work practice, including the acquisition of social work practice skills for working with individuals, couples, families, groups, communities, agencies, and organizations. These skills are acquired first in the classroom and then in the field placement. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredits social work programs and mandates specific areas of curriculum content.

Required Courses

The courses required for a social work major at Chatham University are listed below.

Course Number	Title	Prerequisites	Credits
<i>Required liberal arts courses</i>			
BIO 135	Applied Human Biology or other approved biology course (other science courses may be used to meet this requirement, please work with your advisor)		3
PSY 101	General Psychology		3
<i>Required pre-professional social work courses</i>			
SWK 101	Introduction to Sociology		3
SWK 102	Introduction to Social Issues, Social Justice, and Social Work		3
PSY 213	Statistics and Research Design	PSY 101	3
<i>Required professional courses</i>			
PSY 314W	Foundations of Behavioral Research	PSY 213	3
SWK 201W	Human Behavior in the Social Environment	PSY 101	3
SWK 321	Social Welfare and Social Justice		3
SWK 322W	Social Welfare: Women and Policy		3
SWK 351	Interviewing and Assessment with Individuals	SWK 102	3
SWK 352	Interventions with Individuals and Families	SWK102	3
SWK 354	Practice with Groups	SWK102	3
SWK 355	Practice with Organizations and Communities	SWK102	3
SWK 451a-e	Field Placement	SWK 451a-e pre-or co-requisite	1-5
SWK 490	Integrative Capstone in Social Work	Field Placement, co-requisite	3

Course Sequencing

To complete all requirements for the social work major in a timely manner, students should plan their courses carefully in consultation with their faculty advisors. A sample course sequence is shown below.

Fall Term	Spring Term
First Year = 32 credits	
SWK 101 Introduction to Sociology (3 credits)	PSY 101 General Psychology (3 credits)
SWK 102 Introduction to Social Work, Social Justice and Social Issues (3 credits)	SEE mission course (3 credits)
ENG 105 First Year Writing (3 credits)	Humanities (3 credits)
SDE 101 (1 credit)	Social Science (3 credits)
Arts (3 credits)	Wellness (1 credit)
Elective (3 credits)	Elective (3 credits)
<i>16 credits</i>	<i>16 credits</i>
Sophomore Year = 31 credits	
SWK 201W Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE) (3 credits)	SWK 352 Interventions with Individuals and Families (PRO) (3 credits)
SWK 351 Interviewing and Assessment with Individuals (PRO) (3 credits)	PSY 213 Statistics (3 credits) (Math/Quant gen ed and pre-req for PSY314W)
BIO 135 Applied Human Biology with lab (4 credits) (Or other Science with a lab)	GBL mission course (3 credits)
EGR mission course (3 credits)	Gen Ed Depth (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	Elective (3 credits)
<i>16 credits</i>	<i>15 credits</i>
Junior year = 30 credits	
SWK 321 Social Welfare and Social Justice (3 credits)	SWK 322W Social Welfare: Women and Policy (3 credits)
PSY 314W Foundations of Behavioral Research (3 credits)	SWK 354 Practice with Groups (3 credits)
Gen Ed Depth (3 credits)	Gen Ed Depth (3 credits)
Elective (3 Credits)	Elective (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	Elective (3 credits)
<i>15 credits</i>	<i>15 credits</i>
Senior Year = 28 credits	
SWK 451-5 Field Placement (6 credits)	SWK 451-5 Field Placement (6 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	SWK 490 Integrative Capstone Seminar (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	SWK 355 Practice with Organizations and Communities (3 credits)
Elective (3 credits)	Wellness (1 credit)
<i>15 credits</i>	<i>13 credits</i>

FIELD EDUCATION

Field Education is the signature pedagogy of social work education. The fundamental educational aspect of the field placement is to put into practice, under the supervision of the Field Instructor, concepts learned in the classroom. The field placement provides a setting in which students can apply theories and principles of generalist social work practice that have been presented throughout the curriculum. Thus, field placements constitute a vital part of social work education in which students learn and work under the supervision of practicing social workers in real world settings. The field placement provides practical, hands-on experience in doing social work while integrating the knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom. As a major

component of professional education, the field experience provides a bridge between the classroom and employment or graduate school.

Students complete field placements, offered in a broad variety of settings, during their senior year. Generally, students are in field for 16-18 hours per week. This schedule can be modified, if necessary, at the discretion of the Field Placement Coordinator and the agreement of the field supervisor although all students must complete a total of 500 hours at their placement. Field placements are graded on a Pass/Low Pass/Fail basis. Students also must take SWK490 Integrative Capstone during their senior year in order to share field experiences and help integrate academic preparation with practice.

Please note that the 500 hours of field placement **MUST** be done in an agency that has been approved and is supervised by Chatham's Field Placement Coordinator, Dr. Erica Maloney. **NO** credit is given towards the 500-field hour placement requirement based on life experience, work experience, or internships/externships completed at another institution or in another academic program at Chatham. The field experience is the signature pedagogy of Social Work Education, as such it is highly structured and supervised. Without exception, students cannot earn a BSW degree without completing a 500-hour practicum.

However, it is important to note that earning a BSW degree qualifies students (who meet institutional GPA requirements) for advanced standing in MSW programs across the country. Advanced standing students are exempt from all or most year one MSW coursework and only need to complete one MSW field placement instead of two, which allows for MSW completion in just one year at many universities.

Students must apply for field placement during their junior year and demonstrate that they have developed the basic knowledge, skills, and values to be successful at field placement and in the profession. The specifics of the application process may be found in the section titled, "Application for Field Placement." Once accepted for field placement, the Field Placement Coordinator meets with the student to assess student areas of interest and assign placement. Prior to beginning field placement, the student visits the agency and meets with supervisory staff.

Students may complete field placements at family service agencies, medical settings, mental health agencies, community advocacy organizations, juvenile and criminal justice settings, child welfare agencies, and many other sites. The Social Work Program has contact with many local agencies that may be used for student placements. Agencies must be able to offer generalist social work experience and training and provide supervision of student work. The Field Placement Coordinator maintains regular contact with both students in field placement and their field instructors.

Admission to Field Placement

Applicants who meet the following criteria by the end of the fall semester in their junior year are ready to apply for field placement for the following fall. Students who wish to begin field placement in the spring semester (and plan to graduate the following December), must have met the following criteria by the end of the preceding spring term:

- The applicant must be a junior (have completed at least 60 credits) to apply for field placement.
- The applicant must have an overall GPA of 2.25 and a C or higher in all social work courses.
- The applicant must complete and submit this application for field placement to the Field Placement Coordinator by November 15 for fall placements and March 1 for January placements.
- The applicant must have read the Social Work Student Handbook prior to completing this application. The applicant's signature on this form confirms that they have done so. The handbook can be found on the Social Work TEAMS Channel: [Field Documents and Templates](#).

Child Abuse Clearances and Criminal Background Checks

Some agencies require that students complete a Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Record Check (Act 34) and/or Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 33) before beginning a field placement at their agency. Agencies may also require you to complete FBI Fingerprinting. The costs

associated with background checks are the student's responsibility. The Field Placement Coordinator will provide guidance on this process.

- **Criminal History** <https://www.psp.pa.gov/pages/criminal-history-background-check.aspx>
- **Child Abuse:** <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/Clearances/Pages/PA-Child-Abuse-History-Clearance.aspx>

Clearances obtained for previous work or internships must be less than one year old on the first day of field placement. Students also may be asked by their field placement agency to update their clearances during their placement. Agency policy differs regarding clearances, and all students must abide by the policy at their agency. While a history of criminal activity or a substantiated child abuse report will not preclude students from all field placements, it will significantly limit the choices available. Please discuss any concerns with the Field Placement Coordinator prior to your senior year.

For fall-start field placements, students must apply for all required clearances by February 1. For spring-start field placements, clearances must be completed by October 1 of the prior year. Students are required to submit receipts confirming application submission to the Field Placement Coordinator, Dr. Erica Maloney, by the applicable deadline. Out-of-state and international students should contact Dr. Maloney to discuss deadlines and any unique circumstances. If you have concerns or questions regarding your clearances, please consult Dr. Maloney prior to submitting your application.

Act 31

All students entering field will complete ACT 31 training for mandated reporters. This 3-hour training can be accessed (free of charge) by clicking on the following link: <https://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu/>. Students will receive a link to an assigned TEAMS folder from the Field Placement Coordinator when they complete their field application. Once the training is complete, the student will upload the certificate to their TEAMS folder. The students should also keep a copy for their records and share with their field placement site.

Field Placement Activities and Areas for Student Development

Following is a suggested flow of field placement activities and areas for student development:

Orientation: Students begin field placement with an orientation to the agency. Orientation activities should include:

- Introduction to the staff with whom the student will be working,
- Introduction to the appropriate administrators within the agency,
- Identification of space and resources that the student will need to do their work,
- Review of important policies and procedures, including channels of communication, HIPAA, and confidentiality,
- Training in the forms, documentation, and procedures that the student will be required to use,
- Information and training on safety practices used within the agency,
- Identification of how and when supervision will occur, and
- A tour of the agency with accompanying discussion of the structure, mission and funding of the agency.

Development of Professionalism: The student should be oriented to their role(s) in the agency and demonstrate an understanding of the roles of others, including how the various roles interface/interact. This is an important step toward the development of a professional self. The student should be able to interact with client systems in a professional manner according to the nature of the relationship and types of services provided by the student and the agency. The student should begin to develop a professional relationship with their supervisor. This includes participating appropriately regarding the purpose and place of supervision, the time scheduled for supervisory conferences, and their responsibility in achieving the objectives of field education. While classwork has included discussion and application of confidentiality, it should be discussed in the context

of the placement agency. Potential ethical dilemmas should also be considered. Self-awareness and the conscious use of self should play a significant part in the development of professionalism in the student.

Developing Relationships/Interviewing/Assessment: The development of constructive, professional relationships is a fundamental part of generalist social work. Experiences with agency personnel, community resources, and clients should be planned to foster this ability in the student. Each student has studied and practiced the process of engaging clients and conducting interviews. The Field Instructor should add to this base by assisting the student to plan, conduct, and evaluate their interviews. The student should start by reading appropriate agency records or case files and observing interviews. They then should move toward being involved in actual work with clients as soon as the Field Instructor determines they are ready and generally within 4 to 6 weeks of starting placement. Students need to develop competence in obtaining information, analyzing situations, and planning change.

Families/Groups: The student has studied family and group dynamics and should have the opportunity to apply these principles in practice. If the agency works with families and groups, the student will observe the Field Instructor and other social workers at the agency interacting with families and groups and develop their own caseload of families and/or co-facilitate a group, or groups. The Field Instructor should emphasize the importance of work at the mezzo level and encourage the development of skills in this area.

Community Activities/Macro Practice: The student should develop an understanding of the relationship of the agency to the wider community. Identification of community social problems and other agencies working in the same field is one step toward accomplishing this objective. Wherever possible, students should be involved in consumer/community organizing, reviewing and critiquing relevant local, state, and/or federal policies, and attending community meetings or related trainings and workshops.

Writing/Documentation: Every student should have experience with recording social work data, summarizing material, record-keeping, and writing letters.

Closure: Closure/termination is an important component of the professional relationship and planned change. Field Instructors should begin to prepare students for the termination process approximately one month before the end of the placement. Supervision should include assisting in appropriate termination and/or referral of clients. One month before placement ends, students should prepare a checklist of incomplete assignments, written materials that need to be completed and reviewed, reference materials that need to be returned, and other relevant tasks.

Evaluation of Practice and Research: The student has learned that evaluation and feedback are important in the field of social work. The Field Instructor should continually encourage the student to evaluate their practice. The concept of evaluation of practice means that the student utilizes appropriate research methods to ascertain the effectiveness of their interventions with clients and/or overall program effectiveness. Common tools/formats used to evaluate practice include single subject design, surveys, questionnaires, schedules, focus groups, before and after comparisons (pre-test/post-test), comparison of progress notes to treatment goals, statistical analyses of case records, etc.

The student should demonstrate both the knowledge and skills required to evaluate their own practice. In addition to evaluating their own practice, the student is expected to engage in a broad-based evaluation of some aspects of the agency's work or the student's learning tasks.

Supervision Methods/Use of the Supervisory Meetings: Methods for supervising students might include modeling, role-playing, or live supervision. Some Field Instructors use process recording as a supervisory and learning tool. The Field Instructor should meet with the student on a weekly basis. Regularly scheduled supervisory meetings use the Field Learning Plan as a guide. The student may also make use of their journal

entries to prompt discussion during meetings. The student is to participate actively in supervision and submit materials as required by the Field Instructor, as well as meeting agreed upon deadlines as set forth in the Field Learning Plan. The Field Instructor should ensure that supervision meetings have a focus, adhere to the established guidelines, and provide the student with critical feedback related to the assignments. In keeping with the strengths-based approach emphasized in the Social Work Program, the Field Instructor should build on student competencies as well as making suggestions for improvement or change.

Field Journal

Journal – Due Weekly

The purpose of the weekly journal assignment is to integrate knowledge gained from coursework with experiences in field placement. A particular emphasis is placed on social work values and ethics, gender issues, as well as professional development. Students are to turn in their journal to the Field Placement Coordinator weekly through their assigned TEAMS folder for field placement by Tuesday night for the previous week. The journal must include hours for each week, the name of the site and field instructor, an on-going tally of total hours and a summary of the activities the student completed at the field placement. The journal is to also include ethical issues that are confronted while in field placement.

The journal is a personal and reflective exercise, not just an accounting of tasks completed. In general, journal entries should summarize experiences, discuss learning and professional growth, and document progress toward the student's learning plan objectives. The focus is "What Did I Learn?"

Consider the following areas when making journal entries:

- Evaluate the perspective of others,
- Try to make connections between social work theory/perspectives and practice (for example: strengths, generalist, developmental theory, solution focused, SBIRT, Motivational Interviewing, ecological, etc.),
- Explore your own feelings and experiences in relation to classroom learning.

Time spent completing journal entries does not count toward required field hours. Please note, students do not need to use APA formatting for their journal.

Students must also complete weekly time logs using their time sheet. Field Instructors must sign off on hours monthly. Remember, one entry per week is due on Tuesday nights before midnight. Each weekly entry should be at least 1-2 pages double spaced. Students should use the following subheadings:

- Brief overview of week's activities,
- Something you are proud of,
- Something that challenged you or a mistake that you made,
- Describe at least one evidence-based social work theory, intervention, or perspective that you referenced while in the field. Provide a succinct but specific explanation of how you integrated the theory into your work,
- Something new that you learned this week,
- Describe how you navigated specific ethical issues,
- Items on the learning contract that you addressed during the week.

Field Learning Plans

Two Field Learning Plans and two evaluation forms are required for each student. Forms can be found at the following link: [Field Documents and Templates](#).

The first Learning Plan specifies the goals for the first semester of placement, and the second follows the First Evaluation of Field Placement and specifies goals for the remainder of the placement. While the format is the same for each Plan, each has different tasks and time frames detailed on them, reflecting the objectives for the first and second halves of placement. The initial Field Learning Plan should be completed within 4 weeks after the student starts their placement.

The development of the Field Learning Plans is the responsibility of the Field Instructor but should be developed with student input. The first step in developing the Field Learning Plan is assessing the strengths and educational needs of the student. The student and the Field Instructor should have an open discussion

of the student's expectations, previous course work, work and life experience, career goals, and learning style before they begin to complete the Field Learning Plan. Although the Field Learning Plan is to be developed jointly by the student and the Field Instructor, the Field Placement Coordinator is available to assist the student in developing and revising learning objectives throughout the term.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the Field Learning Plan is received by the Field Placement Coordinator in a timely manner. The Field Learning Plan should be received by the Field Placement Coordinator no later than week 4 of placement and will be maintained in the student's academic folder. Upon review, the Field Placement Coordinator may make suggestions for modifications or additions.

Each Field Learning Plan should reflect objectives and tasks appropriate for the period of placement. The second Field Learning Plan builds upon the first. Items in the first Field Learning Plan that have been accomplished are deleted, ongoing tasks are maintained, and new tasks are added to create the second learning plan. The Field Learning Plan should be reviewed during the student's regular supervisory meetings with the Field Instructor and serves as a foundation for discussion when the Field Placement Coordinator conducts site visits.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Two Field Learning Plans and two evaluation forms are required for each student. Forms can be found on the Social Work TEAMS channel: [Field Documents and Templates](#).

Two evaluations of student performance are required, one at the completion of the first half of placement (after 200 to 300 hours of field placement have been completed) and one at the end of placement. These evaluations are to be completed during the last two weeks of each half of the placement. A link to the online evaluation will be sent to the Field Instructor by the Field Placement Coordinator. The student and Field Instructor will each complete their own draft of the evaluation and then meet to discuss and complete the evaluation. This encourages the student to evaluate their own work. The completion of the final copy of each evaluation is the responsibility of the Field Instructor. The evaluation is completed via an online link that utilizes the Social Work Education Assessment Project (SWEAP). The student has the right to provide a written statement of the evaluation if they wish to explain, clarify, or dispute any part of the evaluation.

Evaluations are submitted to the Field Placement Coordinator before grades are due (an Academic Calendar detailing grade submission dates, university holidays, etc., will be provided at the beginning of each placement) and will be maintained in the student's academic file. The evaluation of student performance will be reviewed during a meeting with the student, Field Instructor, and Field Placement Coordinator.

As evaluation is a continuous process, the Field Instructor should provide on-going verbal evaluation of the student's progress during regular meetings, and written evaluations or documentation if problems arise. It is important that the Field Instructor keep the Field Placement Coordinator apprised of any current or potential problems (see *Problems in Field Placement* on page 27 for more information regarding problems in field placement). There should be few surprises at the final evaluation. The Field Instructor may wish to keep a log of meetings and pertinent information from their supervisory meetings with the student.

The Field Placement Coordinator makes at least three site visits for each student in placement spaced throughout the year. More visits may be scheduled to address concerns or at the request of the student or field instructor. Field instructors are encouraged to contact the Field Placement Coordinator by phone or email at any time to address questions, concerns, or problems that may arise.

Students receive a grade of Pass, Low Pass or Fail for Field Placement. A passing grade indicates that the student has completed the requisite hours and made acceptable progress toward attaining the course objectives and developing competencies. A Low Pass indicates that the student has made only minimal progress in several competencies or has identifiable and documented deficits in one or more areas. A student earns a failing grade when they have not demonstrated the ability to make acceptable progress toward either the course objectives or developing competencies. The Field Placement Coordinator is

responsible for assigning the grade. Grades will be assigned based on the written evaluations, on-site meetings, and consultation with the Field Instructor.

Student Evaluation of Field Placement Form

Each student completes an evaluation of their field experience at the end of the last term of placement. The Student Evaluation of Field Placement Form is available on the Field/Capstone TEAMS channel. It is to be returned to the Field Placement Coordinator before grades are submitted for field. The evaluation is part of the Social Work Program's assessment process. Student evaluation of Field Placement plays an important part in determining whether agencies are providing appropriate educational opportunities for social work majors and whether they will be used for future placements.

REGISTRATION FOR FIELD PLACEMENT

Credit Requirements

- Students must complete 12 field credits over the course of the senior year.
- Due to prerequisites, most students will need to submit an override form to register for field placement. The form is submitted by the student but please plan with your advisor.
- Course codes listed in the course schedule (SWK451A–E) correspond to options for enrolling in one to five credits per course and may be combined as needed to reach the required 12 credits.
 - Course codes may not be reused for field credits.
 - Example 1: A student graduating in the fall may enroll in SWK451D (4 credits) and SWK451B (2 credits) during the spring term, SWK451A (1 credit) in the summer term, and SWK451E (5 credits) in the fall term. This sequence totals 12 credits without repeating course codes.
 - Example 2: A student graduating in the spring may enroll in SWK451A (1 credit) and SWK451E (5 credits) during the fall term, followed by SWK451B (2 credits) and SWK451D (4 credits) in the spring term, also totaling 12 credits.

These examples are just two of many potential combinations that could be used to reach 12 credits without reusing codes.

Field Placement Sequence

- Field placement is designated as fall/spring or spring/summer/fall, depending on the student's expected graduation date.
- Field placement does not begin in the summer, except for students in an Office of Children, Youth, and Families field placement.
- Split field placements are not permitted. All 500 hours must be completed at one site, unless extraordinary circumstances require otherwise.

Course Load Recommendations

- Students are strongly encouraged to take no more than three courses while completing field placement.
- Academic overloads (more than 19 credits) are discouraged. Please see Chatham's catalog overload policy for more information regarding overloads.

Senior-Year Academic Planning

- Students should plan their entire senior year, including field placement credits for each term, during or before the semester in which they register for their first field placement.

- The capstone course may be taken in either semester of the senior year and must be incorporated into the student's academic plan.

Key Academic Policy Reminders

A grade of C- or higher is required in all major and minor courses. Although grades from D- to D+ for major and minor courses may appear in the credit total on my.chatham, credits will only count once for a retaken course and thus do not count toward graduation requirements, including the 120-credit requirement.

Students must follow all rules related to double counting and other relevant program guidelines. Students should refer to the advising page and academic catalog for full policy details.

Student Responsibility for Meeting Graduation Requirements

Students in the Social Work Program are required to meet with their advisor each semester to develop and maintain an effective academic plan for timely graduation. Although advisors provide guidance and recommendations, students are responsible for registering for and successfully completing all required courses. Students who do not meet with their advisor or who choose not to follow recommended coursework may fall behind in their academic plan, resulting in potential delays to graduation. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that all graduation requirements are fulfilled.

Placement Appeal Process

Students who are not accepted into field placement may appeal, in writing, within seven days, to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Dean will respond, in writing, within two weeks. Students may appeal the decision of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will respond within two weeks. Appeals received at times other than during regular academic terms may require a longer response time.

FIELD EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of Students, Field Instructors, and Field Placement Coordinator

The student will:

- Obtain all necessary clearances,
- Demonstrate a commitment to social work values and ethics,
- Establish a weekly work schedule cooperatively with the agency in order to complete all required hours,
- Be responsible to the agency for scheduled hours. If, for any reason, a student cannot attend field according to schedule, the appropriate person at the agency must be notified as soon as possible. The student is expected to make up missed time,
- Meet weekly with the Field Instructor,
- Learn about the placement agency (its policies, procedures, practice approaches, and populations served), seek and use supervision responsibly, and read professional journals or seek out information relative to the field experience,
- Complete all written assignments such as process recordings, case records, journals, etc.,
- Be actively involved in developing the Field Learning Plans and in the evaluation of their performance,
- Work within the guidelines set forth by the agency and Field Instructor and adhere to all agency policies, procedures and documentation requirements,
- Inform the Field Instructor and/or the Field Placement Coordinator of problems that may arise during the field experience,
- Respect confidentiality,

- Demonstrate professional behavior.

The Field Instructor will:

- Demonstrate a commitment to social work values and ethics,
- Demonstrate an understanding of generalist practice and familiarity with the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS),
- Provide the student with at least one hour of supervision weekly and be available to the student at other times as well,
- Provide a guided professional social work experience in working with clients,
- Provide opportunities for the student to learn about the services of the agency, including those in which the student may not be directly involved, through reading, observation, and participation in agency activities (staff meetings, trainings, case review meetings, etc.),
- Provide opportunities for all levels of generalist social work intervention. For agencies that primarily employ micro and mezzo level interventions, macro practice may be on-site or connected with another agency and may include attending board meetings, observing or participating in activities aimed at evaluating or modifying policies and programs at the agency level and/or the community level, proposing new programs, etc.,
- Develop two learning plans in collaboration with the student,
- Provide two evaluations of the student's performance via an online link that is provided by the Field Placement Coordinator,
- Inform the Field Placement Coordinator regarding concerns about a student in between evaluations, particularly regarding potential violations of the Code of Ethics or potential legal issues,
- Meet with the student and the Field Placement Coordinator at least three times during the academic year, and
- Participate in an on-going relationship with the university to facilitate communication, including participation in orientation, trainings, and workshops.

The Field Placement Coordinator will:

- Ensure that all students entering field have met all prerequisites prior to beginning field,
- Refer to agencies students who have professional goals compatible with those of the agency. This selection process is done jointly with the student,
- Ensure that an Affiliation Agreement is signed before placing a student,
- Provide orientation, consultation, and training to new Field Instructors including information about Chatham's social work curriculum and the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards,
- Provide opportunities for further training and consultation to all Field Instructors on an on-going basis,
- Be available to agencies and Field Instructors as needed to address questions, concerns, and inquiries and share in problem solving,
- Monitor progress of students in consultation with Field Instructors,
- Make at least three site visits during each academic year, or more if appropriate,
- Assign grades for field placement for the student based on the evaluation and consultation with the Field Instructor, and
- Meet with students on campus on a regular basis.

Selection and Training of Field Instructors

The appropriate selection of an agency-based Field Instructor is an essential component of the field experience. Field Instructors are appointed by the Field Placement Coordinator. As a small program with a small number of field instructors active at any given time, our interface with field instructors consists primarily of individual meetings with them rather than group orientation and training. The Field Placement

Coordinator meets with potential Field Instructors prior to their appointment to orient them to the supervision process (if they have not supervised BSW students in the past) and to make them aware of the requirements for supervising Chatham BSW students. The Field Placement Coordinator also provides an orientation to the Social Work Program at Chatham including its mission, goals, and competencies and curriculum.

Topics covered during this orientation include the field calendar/time frames, required forms, supervision requirements, approaches for addressing potential problems, and CSWE standards and educational policies. The Field Placement Coordinator provides the Field Instructor with the link to the online Chatham BSW social work TEAMS channel: Field Documents and Templates. The page includes a link to the CSWE Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards, the Chatham University Social Work home page, the NASW Code of Ethics, the Social Work Student Handbook, and a template of the Field Learning Plan. Field Instructors receive training at the start of each academic year with the Field Placement Coordinator either on campus or via Zoom based on the Field Instructor's preference.

The Field Placement Coordinator visits the field placement site at least three times during the student's field placement. The visits generally occur at the beginning of the field placement, the middle of the field placement (between 200-300 hours) and the end of the field placement. If the Field Instructor has any concerns about student performance or learning opportunities, they are strongly encouraged to contact the Field Placement Coordinator between visits by email or phone. Additional visits will be scheduled as requested. All calls and emails are typically addressed within a business day. If the Field Placement Coordinator is away from the office, an outgoing message is provided which contains contact information for another faculty member of the social work program.

Criteria for Appointment for Field Instructor

- Completion of a MSW or a BSW degree,
 - **Note:** Every effort will be made to place students with a field supervisor who holds an MSW and/or BSW with at least two years of post-graduate experience. In the unlikely event that a placement site does not have a social worker on staff, the Field Placement Coordinator will work closely with the student to provide social work supervision.
- Demonstrated competency in practice,
- Sufficient time to provide a minimum of one hour per week of planned supervision,
- Commitment to the values and ethics of the social work profession and an understanding of the generalist practice model,
- Availability to the Social Work Program for communication regarding the student and for planned Field Instructors' workshops,
- Sufficient experience at the placement agency to orient and educate the student about the agency and the specific skills and interventions pertinent to the population served,
- Ability to provide feedback to the Social Work Program about the field instruction process,
- Familiarity with the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards to understand and integrate baccalaureate social work curriculum content and competencies into the field experience,
- Interest in student education and the capacity to conceptualize and transmit knowledge,
- Ability to perform an educational assessment, develop a learning plan, and assess student progress,
- Completion of the Application for Field Instructor Appointment and submission of a current résumé to the Field Placement Coordinator.

Selection of Placement Sites

Agencies are identified as potential field placement sites through recommendations by the Social Work Advisory Board, through faculty contacts, through existing Field Instructors, or through suggestions from students. The

Field Placement Coordinator makes an initial determination as to whether the agency is interested in hosting students and whether the agency has the potential to provide appropriate field placements.

The Field Placement Coordinator visits potential Field Placement agencies to determine whether they offer experiences for generalist social workers that align with the mission, goals, and competencies of the Social Work Program and are willing and able to provide educationally directed field instruction to social work students. Agencies are required to enter into an Affiliation Agreement with the University. The number and types of sites available is constantly evolving based on agency changes, staff availability to supervise social work students, the changing community environment, and shifts in state and national resources and policies. No agency promises that students will be placed in that agency.

Criteria for selection of placement sites include:

- Ability to provide experience in generalist social work consistent with CSWE standards, by the program's competencies, and suitable for baccalaureate practice,
- Adherence to social work values and the NASW Code of Ethics regarding human diversity and a policy of nondiscrimination toward staff, clients, and students. Agencies that provide an opportunity for the student to work with diverse populations are given preference,
- Potential for in-depth skill development by students, including exposure to a variety of social work experiences, direct work with client systems at all levels, and opportunities to work with culturally, ethnically, socio-economically, racially, and sexually diverse client systems,
- Agency ability and commitment to provide high quality, focused learning experiences for students,
- Potential Field Instructor(s) with MSW(s) or BSW(s) or other social work degree,
- Willingness to enter into an Affiliation Agreement with the University.

Affiliation Agreement

Chatham University has an Affiliation Agreement used by all professional programs (allowing some modifications for each program). The Agreement outlines the responsibilities of each partner. The Field Placement Coordinator ensures that an Affiliation Agreement is signed by the appropriate personnel of the agency and the University before a student begins placement at the agency. Two copies of the agreement are sent to the agency/organization. Both copies, each bearing the original signatures of appropriate agency personnel, are returned to the Field Placement Coordinator, who then forwards them to the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Once signed by University officials, the Field Placement Coordinator will forward one fully executed copy to the agency for its files. The University keeps the other fully executed copy and ensures that a copy of the University's insurance certificate is forwarded to the agency.

Problems in Field Placement

Most field placements are mutually rewarding for the student and the agency. As in any other life experience, though, there may be some difficulties. Most issues or problems, if quickly and properly identified, can be resolved by the Field Instructor and the student. In some cases, the Field Placement Coordinator may be involved. Problems that arise in the field placement are commonly the result of:

- A mismatch of student interest and opportunities available in the field placement,
- A mismatch of student skills/abilities and responsibilities in the field placement,
- Unclear expectations of either the student or the Field Instructor,
- Too much or too little structure in the field placement,
- A lack of regular and structured supervision or instructional meetings with the student,
- Repeated absences or lateness,
- Inappropriate use of technology (e.g., texting) during agency activities,
- The student's lack of preparedness for supervisory/instructional meetings,
- Inability of the student to receive feedback or lack of feedback from the Field Instructor,
- Improper or unprofessional behavior while at the agency,
- Infraction of agency policy,

- Not completing tasks as assigned at the field placement.

If the student experiences any kind of difficulty with the field experience, they should:

- Discuss the problem in a professional manner with the Field Instructor and attempt to resolve it at the agency level,
- Inform the Field Placement Coordinator of the issues involved and the results of the discussion with the Field Instructor,
- If the student feels there is no satisfactory resolution resulting from the meeting with the Field Instructor, the Field Placement Coordinator will schedule a meeting with the student and the Field Instructor to review the issues and agency response,
- If a satisfactory solution cannot be achieved, the student may be withdrawn from the agency and placed in another agency.

If the Field Instructor is concerned about the student's performance, they should:

- Immediately bring the issue to the student's attention so that the student is able to respond by making appropriate changes,
- Consult with the Field Placement Coordinator so that they can discuss the issues with the student during regular meetings and offer suggestions to the Field Instructor,
- If the issue is deemed to be a serious one, the Field Instructor, after discussing the issue with the student, should document the problem in writing and inform the Field Placement Coordinator, who will then schedule a site visit to meet with the student and Field Instructor,
- Work with the student and Field Placement Coordinator to modify the Learning Plan and/or devise a written plan of action to resolve the problems, including a timeframe for completion or achieving satisfactory performance,
- If the student and the Field Instructor feel that the placement is not a good match for the student, the Field Placement Coordinator should be contacted to determine if the student should be withdrawn from the placement.

Withdrawal/Termination from Placement

Ideally, withdrawal or termination from field placement should be agreed upon by all involved. However, the final decision to approve withdrawal rests with the Field Placement Coordinator and hosting agency. The agency has the right to terminate a student with whom it is unwilling or unable to work. Withdrawal is viewed as a response to less serious complications which may involve the match of the student with the placement agency and/or the Field Instructor, whereas termination implies more serious problems.

There are instances when problems cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction and/or the skills and interests of the student are not well matched with the initial placement. In such cases, another placement might better serve the student's learning needs. If, after consultation between the Field Placement Coordinator and the Field Instructor, the decision is made to withdraw the student from placement, the student and Field Placement Coordinator will meet to re-assess the student's needs, skills, and interests and then select another placement site. If problems arise in the second placements that are not easily resolved, the Field Placement Coordinator will consult with the Social Work Program Director to determine a plan of action.

In rare instances, the nature of the problem might be serious enough that the placement agency and/or the Field Placement Coordinator will decide to terminate a student rather than negotiating a withdrawal from a placement.

Students in placement must be able to engage in constructive helping relationships with clients and conduct themselves professionally as they interact with supervisors and/or co-workers. This ability is especially crucial as social workers often encounter vulnerable people who are experiencing a variety of psychological problems. It is imperative that social workers possess good judgment, a high degree of emotional stability, and the

ability to communicate in a manner that enhances relationships rather than creating conflict. If the Field Instructor and/or the Field Placement Coordinator determine that there are serious academic problems that cannot be overcome by a change in the Field Learning Plan and/or simple modification of behavior, the student may be terminated from the placement.

Terminating a student from field placement will be based on the following academic criteria:

- Failure to develop constructive helping relationships,
- Unexplained and/or excessive absences,
- Apathetic performance,
- Inability or unwillingness to meet agency standards of professionalism,
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics,
- Violation of agency standards of professionalism or the NASW Code of Ethics,
- A breach of confidentiality,
- Verbal and/or physical abuse of clients or agency staff,
- Personal problems which significantly and consistently prevent the student from engaging in professional social work relationships.

The decision to terminate a student from field placement should be made jointly by the Field Instructor and the Field Placement Coordinator. In some instances, the Field Instructor may request immediate removal due to the nature of the problem or the behavior of the student. The Field Instructor should provide written documentation of problems or concerns as well as the plan of action taken to resolve problems, the timeframe for compliance, and the student's response. If a student is terminated from a placement, it will be the responsibility of the Field Placement Coordinator, in consultation with the Director of the Social Work Program, to determine whether the student will be placed at another site or will fail Field Education. In the instance of student removal from two field placements, no further placements will be made, and the student will be terminated from the social work program.

Termination Appeal Process

A student who is terminated from the Field Placement may appeal in writing, within seven days, to the Social Work Program Director. The Program Director will respond, in writing, within two weeks. Students may appeal against the decision of the Program Director, in writing, within seven days, to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Dean will respond, in writing, within two weeks. Students may appeal the decision of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will respond within two weeks. Appeals received at times other than during regular academic terms may require a longer response time.

Confidentiality/Use of Agency Information

Confidentiality refers not only to the social worker's obligation to protect the privacy of clients and consumers, but also to preserve the confidential nature of communications with colleagues. Students are expected to follow the NASW Code of Ethics as well as HIPAA and agency policies. Students may, however, need direction and guidance in both understanding the policies that pertain to confidentiality and how they are applied at a particular field agency. The Social Work Program teaches the basic principles of confidentiality, HIPAA, and the NASW Code of Ethics. The Field Instructor is responsible for informing and teaching the student how the principles of confidentiality are applied in a particular agency setting. The student is responsible for applying this knowledge and asking for guidance in any situation that is not immediately clear.

In the classroom, students are reminded not to share identifying data when discussing confidential information, and class participants must agree to keep the confidential information within the confines of the classroom.

Student Stipends/Reimbursement

Student stipends are highly valued but not required. Agencies should, however, reimburse the student for expenses incurred in the performance of agency tasks, such as mileage reimbursement for home visits.

Employment of Students by Placement Site

The student and/or the Field Instructor should notify the Field Placement Coordinator if the agency is considering offering part-time or full-time employment to the student before completion of the field education experience. It is the responsibility of the Social Work Program to maintain the integrity and educational focus of the field experience. Since employment may interfere with the student's learning needs, it is not recommended until completion of the 500 required hours of field education. Exceptions to this must be approved by the Field Placement Coordinator and Social Work Program Director.

Field Experience at Place of Employment

If a student is considering doing their placement at an agency at which they are already employed, a request must be submitted in writing to the Field Placement Coordinator. The request should detail how the field placement will be significantly different from the employment situation, including assigned tasks and responsibilities, supervision, and schedule. Students may not use their on-going paid employment as a field placement. The agency must ensure that the field instruction will be educationally focused, not merely an extension of the current position, and ensure release time for the student to complete field instruction.

Transportation

The student is responsible for providing their own transportation to and from placement. The student may choose to drive their own car to field. If so, they are responsible for costs incurred, such as parking, fuel, etc. If the student uses their own car for agency duties, the student and agency must have an agreement regarding reimbursement for mileage and insurance coverage. The Field Placement Coordinator should be informed of this information. The University does not assume responsibility for injuries related to travel and/or transportation of clients. If a student does not have a vehicle and plans to ride the bus to placement, they will inform the Field Placement Coordinator when they apply for placement. This is to ensure that a placement site is identified that is accessible by bus.

Hours/Holidays/Absences

The Field Placement Coordinator establishes start and end dates of placements, as well as various other deadlines for Field Education, and sends them to the agency with a letter confirming student placement.

Students will observe all agency regulations and the agreed upon schedule regarding hours of work. The Field Placement Coordinator should be informed of continued tardiness, excessive absence or overtime. Students must complete 500 hours of field placement. Hours missed in field due to illness or absences for other reasons do not count toward the required hours.

Each student follows the University Calendar in observance of designated holidays. School holidays and breaks, however, should not detract from or interfere with professional care of clients. It is the student's responsibility to discuss the impact of extended University holidays or breaks with the Field Instructor and negotiate a schedule or plan that will ensure continuity of care for clients. Furthermore, in adherence to the Chatham University attendance and class participation policy, every student in field placement accepts the responsibility to attend all required field placement hours.

To obtain the fullest benefit from their field placements, students must participate fully. This implies attending regularly, engaging in agency activity, completing work on time, and making up work missed because of an emergency absence. It is the student's responsibility to let the field instructor know if they will have to miss class for religious reasons, athletics, or other reasons and obtain permission for such. Students in field placement should create their work schedule with their field supervisor, and then the

student should make every effort to attend their internship on time each day they are scheduled, excessive tardiness or missed days can delay the completion of the field course and, subsequently, graduation.

Social Actions and Strikes

It is expected that the student may become involved in the social action components of the agency that are appropriate to the student's learning. However, no student may be required by the agency to participate in an illegal activity as part of the educational program. The social work program will inform students that they may not become engaged in illegal actions while performing field education responsibilities. Students who are in Field Placement at a time when agency employees are on strike may or may not cross the picket lines, depending upon the student's orientation or conscience. In no case shall the student be forced or coerced into crossing a picket line against their own will.

A student's educational program shall not be placed in jeopardy because of a strike in their field placement agency. The Field Placement Coordinator, in agreement with the student and the Field Instructor, shall work out alternative plans for instruction to continue during the period of the strike. If this is not possible, the Field Placement Coordinator may determine that another placement would be more appropriate for the student.

Insurance

Chatham University provides professional liability insurance for all students in placement. Coverage limits are \$2,000,000 per occurrence and \$4,000,000 aggregate.

All Chatham students are required to carry health insurance.

APPLICATION FOR FIELD PLACEMENT

Social work majors must apply and be accepted for the 12-credit field placement completed during the senior year. Applicants who meet the following criteria by the end of the fall semester in their junior year are ready to apply for field placement for the following fall. Students who wish to begin field placement in the spring semester (and plan to graduate the following December), must have met the following criteria by the end of the preceding spring term:

- The applicant must be a junior (have completed at least 60 credits) to apply for field placement.
- The applicant must have an overall GPA of 2.25 and a C- or higher in all social work courses.
- The applicant must have read the Social Work Student Handbook prior to completing this application. The applicant's signature on this form confirms that they have done so. The manual is in student's TEAMS folder and can also be found on the [chatham.edu](https://www.chatham.edu/academics/undergraduate/social-work) social work page: <https://www.chatham.edu/academics/undergraduate/social-work>.

Students meeting these prerequisites should submit an Application for Admission to Social Work Field Placement with all other requested materials to the Field Placement Coordinator by November 15 for field placement starting the following fall term or March 1 for field placement starting the following spring term. Within two weeks, students will be notified about the results of their application. Once accepted, applicants will meet with the Field Placement Coordinator and begin the interview process at a cooperating agency.

In addition to grades, the process of evaluation will include other academic criteria such as the demonstration of professional behavior and the personal maturity to work in a professional social work environment. In cases where there is concern about a student's academic readiness to begin field placement, the student will meet with a member of the social work faculty to discuss the reasons for any concerns and develop an action plan. This plan will identify areas in need of remediation and include a timeline and tasks to help the student develop the competencies necessary to begin field placement.

The Social Work Faculty reserve the right, on the basis of an educational judgment, to recommend that an applicant be denied admission or to recommend dismissal of an admitted student whose academic record or

potential or actual performance in field instruction does not meet expectations or whose performance is not consistent with the accepted standards for professional behavior.

Students who are not accepted into field placement may appeal, in writing, within seven days, to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Dean will respond, in writing, within two weeks. Students may appeal the decision of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President will respond within two weeks. Appeals received at times other than during regular academic terms may require a longer response time.

Every effort is made to respond to student preferences for placement if possible. However, the Social Work Field Placement Coordinator and the Field Placement Agency will base the final decision for the placement upon the following criteria:

- Successful completion of the safety assessment,
- Fit between student's abilities, strengths, and weaknesses and agency's educational potential,
- Student preferences,
- Consideration of specific student needs and considerations as per this application,
- Geographical location of agency.

The Field Placement Coordinator will schedule an interview with the student to discuss their areas of interest, specific agencies in which they have expressed an interest, requirements of various agencies (e.g., Act 33/34 clearance, FBI clearances, health screenings, vaccinations, etc.), and the student's transportation requirements. After agreeing on an agency, the Field Placement Coordinator contacts the appropriate personnel at the agency to determine their willingness and ability to accept the student. If the agency is interested, the Field Placement Coordinator provides a copy of the student's resume to the agency. The Field Instructor and/or appropriate personnel contact the student to schedule an on-site interview. The purpose of the interview is to (1) allow the student and the agency Field Instructor to meet each other, (2) assess the efficacy of placement in this agency, and (3) make their expectations known to each other. Field Instructors are encouraged to be frank in their assessment of the student's ability to perform and learn in the environment of the agency. The Field Placement Coordinator, based on their experience with the potential placement agency, is also responsible for assessing the student's ability to perform and learn in the environment and to inform the placement agency of any special needs of the student.

If the student accepts the placement, the Field Placement Coordinator contacts the person who interviewed the student for their feedback. If the outcome of the pre-placement interview is satisfactory to both the agency and the student, the Field Placement Coordinator formalizes the agreement and forwards all necessary materials to the agency. If the student has some questions or reservations but is interested in the placement, the Field Placement Coordinator meets with the student and/or agency personnel to determine whether these questions/concerns can be resolved. If the student has reservations about the potential placement that cannot be resolved, another agency will be considered, and the process repeated.

Timeline

Following is an outline of the general time frame for completion of relevant tasks:

Third and fourth month of first semester of Junior Year: The student completes the *Student Application for Admission to Social Work Field Placement* and submits it to the Field Placement Coordinator along with a current resume. An interview with the Field Placement Coordinator is held to discuss interests/needs. The Field Placement Coordinator ascertains the ability and willingness of the agency to accept a student for placement and whether an Affiliation Agreement between the agency and the Social Work Program is in place; if no Agreement is in place, the Field Placement Coordinator initiates the process to produce the requisite documents and procure the appropriate signatures.

Beginning of second semester of Junior Year: The Field Placement Coordinator sends the student's resume to the agency. The student interviews with the agency, completes the Confirmation Form and returns it to the Field Placement Coordinator. Fall placement is finalized after communication with the Field Instructor.

Early September of Senior Year: Fall term placements usually begin during the first or second week of September. A Field Learning Plan is completed within 4 weeks after the beginning of the placement.

November/December: The Field Placement Coordinator will schedule and complete a mid-term site visit.

December: Completed First Evaluation of Field Placement is due to the Field Placement Coordinator no later than the last week of fall term (typically the second week of December) as long as the student has completed 200 to 250 hours of field. The Field Placement Coordinator emails a unique link to an online evaluation. The evaluation is completed online. The Field Placement Coordinator will schedule and complete a site visit for evaluation approximately 250 hours into the field placement.

January: Learning Plan for spring due last week of January.

April: Completed Final Evaluation of Field Placement is due to the Field Placement Coordinator no later than the last week of spring term (typically the second week of April). The Field Placement Coordinator will schedule and complete the final site visit in the first 2 weeks of the month.

Please Note: Some students, such as those in Placement during the summer term, may follow a different schedule. Students who wish to be in Field during the summer term must be registered for Field Placement credits in that term to be covered by the college's insurance policy. Enrollment during the summer term may have ramifications for financial aid, and students should consult appropriate personnel regarding this matter.

Section II

Will you have the regular use of an automobile during placement? _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

Please list any priorities, needs or concerns which may impact the selection of your placement (i.e., geographic, family responsibilities, health issues, accommodations for disabilities, employment, etc.).

Please list and explain:

As per the **Social Work Program Student Handbook** under the section *Child Abuse Clearances and Criminal Background Checks*: “While a history of criminal activity or a substantiated child abuse report will not preclude students from all field placements, it will significantly limit the choices available.”

Please discuss any concerns regarding Section II with the Social Work Field Placement Coordinator.

Section III

Social Work Field Placement Readiness Essay Questions

Answer the following questions: *(Please attach your answers on a separate sheet. 2 pages total maximum length)*

- What experiences have contributed to your interest in social work?
- What do you hope to do with your social work degree upon graduation?
- What areas in social work interest you and in which areas of practice would you like to pursue a career?
- What current social issues do you believe are pertinent to the practice of social work?
Discuss briefly why you think one of these issues might be relevant.
- What strengths will you bring to your field placement? What areas of weakness do you hope to work on during your field experience?
- Do you foresee any difficulties in completing 500 hours of field placement during your senior year?

Please note: The Social Work Faculty reserve the right, based on an educational judgment, to recommend that an applicant be denied admission or to recommend dismissal of an admitted student whose academic record or potential or actual performance in field instruction does not meet expectations or whose performance is not consistent with accepted standards for professional behavior.

Your signature below certifies that you have read and understood the above statement, and read and understood the *Social Work Program Student Handbook*, and all materials you have submitted for consideration are complete and accurate.

Signature of Applicant _____ *Date* _____

Student Checklist for *Application for Admission to Field Placement*

- _____ I have read and understood the *Social Work Program Student Handbook*
- _____ I have attached my resume to my completed application
- _____ I have attached my Social Work Field Placement Readiness Essay Questions
- _____ I have attached my unofficial Chatham University transcript
- _____ I have attached the Field Placement Preference Worksheet

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications within 14 days of submission. Questions about the application process may be directed to any of the social work faculty.

Melissa Bell, Ph.D.
Social Work Program Director
412-365-2768
mbell@chatham.edu

Christine Sarteschi, Ph.D.
Social Work Faculty
412-365-2759
csarteschi@chatham.edu

Erica Maloney, D.S.W.
Field Placement Coordinator
412-365-1884
e.maloney@chatham.edu

Date Application Submitted _____ **Date Acceptance Letter Sent** _____

Signature indicates application approval

Reviewed by M. Bell _____ Date _____

Reviewed by E. Maloney _____ Date _____

Reviewed by C. Sarteschi _____ Date _____

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF

Melissa Bell, Social Work Program Director, Professor
B.A., Indiana University of Pennsylvania
M.S.W., University of Pittsburgh
Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh. LSW

Erica Maloney, Coordinator of signature, Assistant Professor
B.S.W., California University of Pennsylvania
M.S.W., Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. LSW
D.S.W., Millersville University of Pennsylvania

Christine Sarteschi, Associate Professor
B.S.W., University of Pittsburgh
M.S.W., University of Pittsburgh
Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh. LCSW

Phoebe Walczak, Administrative Assistant
B.A., Seton Hill University