



Department of Social Work

ADMISSIONS HANDBOOK



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Introduction

The Social Work Department adheres to the general admissions policy for Oakwood University. Oakwood University welcomes applications from people whose principles and interests are in harmony with the ideals and traditions of the University as expressed in its mission, values, and policies.

The Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) requires all accredited social work programs to have a formal admission process for social work students. Those students, who possess an interest in human well-being and wish to develop specific knowledge, values, and skills related to the profession, are invited to major in Social Work. Formal admission into the Department of Social Work is acquired by completing an application packet that is reviewed by the department faculty. The purpose of this application process is to assess the suitability of each applicant for the profession of Social Work and provide a structured format for students to begin their Social Work education journey. The admissions process includes: the completion and submission of application materials and a formal interview with the Social Work Department faculty. Application information for admission to the department is primarily disseminated in the course SW202 Introduction to Social Work, as a class requirement.

Students are encouraged to apply during their sophomore year. All students applying to the Department of Social Work should proceed as outlined in this Handbook.

Admissions Procedure

Phase I

Students must obtain admittance to Oakwood University and declare Social Work as a major. Applications will not be considered unless students have formally completed this process.

Phase II

1. Students are formally oriented about the department's admissions process through the course SW202 Introduction to Social Work. This course provides students with all the required information concerning the expectations and requirements of a Social Work major. Students are required to read the department's *Admissions Handbook* and *Student Handbook*. A copy of each handbook is available to students enrolled in the SW202 course via D2L. The handbooks are also available online at the Oakwood University Social Work Department's website under the Social Work Resources and Links.

2. Signed the “Agreement Form of Acknowledgement and Compliance” (see Appendix) and have given a signed copy to the SW202 faculty instructor.
3. Attained a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 by the conclusion of the Spring semester of their freshman year.
4. Completed the Student Self-Assessment (see page 13). The assessment results are to be included as part of the departmental entrance forms. This assessment is designed to help students develop introspection into their personal values, ethics and expected competence as it relates to the field of social work. The assessment is also used to aid in the determination of each student’s suitability for the profession of social work. It is anticipated that students will use this assessment as a means for personal evaluation and professional growth.
5. Have demonstrated a commitment to the profession as reflected in participation in Social Work class discussions and assignments (i.e., SW201 and SW202), the application material, and active participation in the various departmental clubs.
6. Have demonstrated written and verbal skills that are commensurate with collegiate level expectations.

Phase III

Each student is required to complete 15 hours of service learning as a part of this course. The instructor conducts a formal evaluation of the student’s performance in their service learning assignment. As part of the course, the student will interview with the faculty and members of the advisory board. During the interview, a series of questions are asked to ascertain the student’s motivation for and readiness for admission to the department. The second component of this interview process consists of the student’s response to a short case scenario. The basis of using this technique is to uncover the student’s thoughts, attitudes, and introductory skills around a social work issue. Students are informed that the purpose of using this exercise is to illustrate the kind of situations that they may encounter in social work practice. There are no right or wrong answers. A time limit of 10 minutes is given to each student, after which the student is told to return to the interviewing room to discuss thoughts in relation to the case scenario. The faculty provides the student with feedback on the scenario and on the interview. The student is invited to ask questions of the faculty concerning the Social Work Department or any questions that they may have. Finally, the student is briefed on the process from this point forward. The faculty, utilizing the Admission Interview Evaluation Rubric, generates a score for the student.

Social Work Code of Ethics

All six core values of the NASW Code of Ethics (service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity and competence) are embedded in the entry orientation for students in the course SW202 (NASW, 2008, p.1).

Another critical component of the program is the development of students who recognize that the incorporation of Christian values is a direct fit with social work values and ethics. As a Christian institution, the program seeks to produce Christian social workers, who manifest the caring attributes demonstrated by Jesus Christ (e.g., Fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance). Students are introduced to the relationship between Christian values and social work values through assignments within the SW202 course.

Student Self-Assessment

The Student Self-Assessment, developed by Elizabeth Blue and Jay Woltestoroff (2003), provides a venue for informing students about the core values in the field of social work, and an opportunity to reflect on their own spiritual growth. A review of this self-assessment encourages students to initiate self-examination of their own values in relation to those of social work. Upon examining the 12 areas of the Student Self-Assessment, students are immediately challenged to think about ethical concerns, especially those relating to boundaries (i.e., separation of one's life from one's work, management of dual relationships, and over-identification with clients), competence (life-long learning, basic and cultural competence, and social justice), impairment (personal impairment and importance of self-care).

The Department seeks to develop Christian students, who will make a positive difference in this world. Students applying to the Oakwood University Social Work Program are expected to become competent at the generalist level with social work competencies outlined in the 2015 EPAS. Each competency is accompanied with a specific set of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that outline the generalist practice level, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components (2015 EPAS). The EPAS competencies are as follows:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
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

Preparation for the Entrance Interview SW202 Introduction to Social Work

Preparation for the social work admissions interview is conducted in SW202 Introduction to Social Work. Students are oriented about the admissions process and its specific requirements. Students are informed that:

1. The admissions interview is not a test, in which there are right or wrong answers, but rather an opportunity for faculty and students to mutually explore the student's readiness and fit for the profession of social work.
2. The interview is an open discussion that provides them an opportunity to talk in greater depth about themselves and their readiness for entrance into the social work program.
3. A review of the Student Self-Assessment. Orientation of the Department's evaluation of the admissions process, specifically the rubric, used to assess each applicant. The rubric used is designed to bring together all the components of the admissions process (i.e., assessing the student's oral and written skills, submission of all admissions documents, etc.). If the student receives a score below 70%, he/she will be asked to reconsider the decision to become a social work major, and the program will assist the student in finding another major of study.

All applicants are required to take a battery of tests provided by the Oakwood University Career and Testing Center. These tests are designed to assist students in gaining a better understanding of themselves (i.e., personality strengths and areas for improvement). All students must review the results of these tests with a counselor from the Career and Testing center prior to being interviewed. This helps to ensure that the student has a sound understanding of each test. This battery of tests includes:

Myers-Briggs (MBPI)
Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EII)
Temperament Inventory
Burns Anxiety and Depression Scale

Diagnostic Tests Explanations

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

This questionnaire is clinically designed to assess a person's emotional quotient (EQ). Emotional Intelligence is the mental ability we are born with, which gives us an emotional sensitivity and potential for learning management skills that can maximize our long term health, happiness, and survival. Strong emotional intelligence skills are important for developing

decision making, boundary setting, communication, unity with others, and determining continuing developmental needs.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

This evaluation is a measure of personal dispositions and preferences that enables one to identify his/her personality type. Knowledge of one's "type" gives a person insight into those factors that may promote or hinder his/her development and/or performance in specified academic, work, or social environments, as well as his/her suitability for them.

Temperament Inventory (TI)

This questionnaire aims to identify inherited personality characteristics that may be regarded as potential resources for satisfying the psychological requirements of various work tasks and environments, as well as interpersonal relationships. It also identifies the weaknesses associated with each temperament that may inhibit a person's ability to function adequately.

Burns Depression and Anxiety Inventory

The Burns Anxiety Inventory (BAI) is an assessment tool used to measure anxiety. Developed by psychiatrist David Burns, this inventory, or checklist, could be self-administered, or administered by a clinician. It can help people to monitor their own anxiety over time, and to become more aware of anxious symptoms. It also aids clinicians in diagnosing anxiety disorders.

Testing Dates

Designated dates are set aside for student interviews each semester, and students are required to attend any appointments that have been scheduled with a Career Services and Testing counselor.

Written Materials

Each student is required to submit the following documents:

1. The Admissions Application
2. An Autobiographical Sketch
3. All test results from the Career and Testing center
4. A current Résumé
5. The Applicant's most recent Unofficial Transcript
6. Two professional reference letters on professional letterhead
7. A Certified Background Check

The Admissions Interview

Traditionally, all available departmental faculty members participate in the admissions interviews. Nine standard questions are used during the interview; follow-up questions may also be asked from the faculty based on the student's response to prior questions posed. This helps create an equitable interview process for all students. These questions are based on the 12 areas of the Student Self-Assessment.

Interview Questions

The nine standard questions posed during the oral interview are:

1. What process did you go through in choosing social work as a major? What other options did you examine? Competency 1.0
2. What qualities or abilities do you have that will enhance your ability to be a social worker? Competency 1.0
3. How do you deal with people who are angry with you? Competency 1.0
4. How do you feel about confronting someone on a behavioral issue if it is necessary—professionally or personally? Competency 1.0
5. While growing up in our families, most of us learn behaviors that help us to thrive and/or survive. What behaviors have you learned that could be considered positive qualities for social workers to possess? What childhood behaviors have you had to “unlearn” as an adult? What childhood behaviors have you learned as a child that you had to do differently as an adult? Competency 1.0
6. How open are you to working with people who are different from you? How well prepared are you to interact effectively with people who are different from you (e.g., race, ethnicity, culture, gender, physical capabilities, age, and religion)? Competency 2.0
7. What social issues would you be willing to advocate for, and why? Competency 5.0
8. Professionally, where do you see yourself five years after you graduate from Oakwood University? Competency 1.0
9. How do you take care of yourself when many demands are made of you? What kinds of personal support systems do you have? Would you consider attending counseling if needed? Competency 1.0

These questions are designed to test the student’s self-awareness and insight into several areas considered essential to the field of social work. Often, students have a well-intended desire to help people, but they have not critically examined themselves to determine their suitability to sustain professional social work practice over an extended period. These questions begin the process of assisting the student to critically think about themselves, their goals, motives, strengths, and weaknesses.

The second component of this interview process consists of the student’s examination of a short case scenario. The basis of using this technique is to uncover the student’s critical thinking, attitudes, and introductory skills relative to a social work issue. Students are informed that the purpose of using this exercise is to illustrate the kind of situations that they may encounter in social work practice. A time limit of 10 minutes is given to each student, after

which the student is told to return to the interviewing room to discuss thoughts in relation to the assigned case scenario.

At the conclusion of the interview, the student is provided with immediate feedback by the faculty members who conducted the interview.

The faculty's feedback is based on the twelve areas of the Student Self-Assessment, identifying specific strengths and specific areas for personal growth. Students are also informed about any specific concerns that any of the interviewers may have based on the information presented during the interview and/or faculty insights based on classroom experience. Students are informed that the professional goals identified in the Student Self-Assessment will be revisited in the field entry process and how that process works. The students are also informed that they are expected to use this admissions process as a foundation for their professional growth and development.

A written letter from the Chair is generated within 10 to 15 business days, notifying the student of the Department's final decision.

Categories for Admission to the Social Work Program

Admission to the Social Work program will consist of three possible outcomes: Acceptance, Denial or "Provisional Acceptance".

1. **Acceptance** - the applicant has met the minimum requirements for full acceptance into the Social Work program.
2. **Provisional Acceptance** - the applicant must meet one or more specific entrance requirements to receive final acceptance. All students who have been granted "provisional acceptance" must also meet with their departmental faculty advisor within two weeks of being notified. The advisor will review with the student all stipulations that must be met to receive full acceptance into the program, and a subsequent plan should be developed at that time.
3. **Denial** - the applicant was not accepted because of failure to meet one or more of the admission requirements. The applicant may be requested to reapply later. Gatekeeping to the profession is one of the responsibilities of social work faculty. Based on the entire interview process (which may include areas such as classroom decorum and references), students whom the faculty feel are not suitable for the social work profession may be denied admission, encouraged not to reapply, or advised concerning other career options.

Every student, who has been denied entrance into the program, is required to meet with their assigned departmental faculty advisor within two weeks of receiving notification. At that time, the student will receive guidance and support from the advisor throughout the transition

process, including the process of grievance and reapplication to the program. The student may also be referred to the Career and Testing center for vocational testing, to determine the student's best career fit.

Record Keeping

All information and documentation that has been submitted by the applicant will be on file in the Social Work Department and will remain confidential. A student's status in the program will be reconsidered if the student does not successfully complete a social work course after two attempts. Students who are not officially enrolled and/or fully accepted in the program will not be eligible to take the following courses: SW334, SW340, SW350, SW380, SW390, SW400, SW420, SW451, SW452, SW453, SW454, SW455 and SW480.



Oakwood University
Department of Social Work

SW202 – Introduction to Social Work
Student Self-Assessment

Student: _____ Evaluation Date: _____

Advisor: _____ Mid Term ____ Final

The following instrument is a tool that the faculty encourages you to use to aid “you” in assessing your ongoing professional growth in the field of social work. Growth and development in this profession is a lifelong process. Being able to take an introspective and critical view of yourself is an essential characteristic for healthy social work professionals. The ratings indicate suggested strengths and areas for growth and development as viewed by the social work faculty at the time of your admissions interview. This instrument will again be used to evaluate your professional and personal growth, and preparedness for your senior practicum experience in the course SW350 Pre-field Orientation. This instrument, developed by Elizabeth Blue and Jay Woltestoroff (2003), is based on the Student Self-Assessment for admission to the social work program.

During the course SW202 Introduction to Social Work, you will rate yourself initially and at the end of the semester.

*Student Assignment: Please rate your abilities in the following area on a scale of 1 to 6. A rating of **“1”** indicates you feel you have a major problem with this issue. A rating of **“6”** would indicate that you feel you never have difficulty with this issue and that this area is a strong point in your character.*

Please note that in your junior year, during the course SW350 Pre-field Orientation, you will rate yourself. Your instructor will rate you as well. During the Pre-field interview the ratings will be shared and discussed. This self-evaluation will serve as part of your field interview process as you prepare for your senior practicum. The instructor’s final evaluation will be part of your grade. The final evaluation must demonstrate competency in all areas. Competency is a rating of no less than “4” ***in all*** areas.

As discussed with your instructor, please read each statement and circle the best response as it applies to you.

		Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Demonstrates an ability to relate to people with warmth and empathy, communicating feelings appropriately.	1	2 3	4 5	6
2.	Demonstrates an accepting attitude towards one's total self, including being responsible for meeting one's own physical, emotional and spiritual needs.	1	2 3	4 5	6
3.	Demonstrates an openness to change in themselves and others.	1	2 3	4 5	6
4.	Demonstrates a recognition of the essential worth and dignity of all human beings.	1	2 3	4 5	6
5.	Demonstrates an appreciation of the value of human diversity; an ability to accept differences in people and be accepting in the face of what seems, on the surface, to be strange and baffling behavior; to know and understand social rules and behaviors.	1	2 3	4 5	6
6.	Demonstrates a capacity to develop self-confidence and initiative in working with people and an ability to relate to people without inappropriate over identification.	1	2 3	4 5	6
7.	Demonstrates an ability to handle problems in daily living; to appropriately deal with stress and reality.	1	2 3	4 5	6
8.	Shows the capacity to recognize injustice when it occurs and the willingness to try to change the situation, procedure, policy or system, which created the injustice, in order that it might become more just.	1	2 3	4 5	6
9.	Demonstrates the ability to accept constructive criticism and suggestions in good faith by persons qualified to provide feedback.	1	2 3	4 5	6
10.	Shows the beginning ability to identify personal strengths, limitations, and motivations, especially as related to a decision to work with people.	1	2 3	4 5	6
11.	Demonstrates the beginning ability to express thoughts with clarity, in both written and verbal form.	1	2 3	4 5	6
12.	Ability to discipline self as demonstrated by the consistent completion of individual and group assignments, class attendance, punctuality, and consistent adherence to deadlines.	1	2 3	4 5	6

Comments, plans, or areas needed to be corrected, that were collaboratively discussed with the student.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Faculty Signature: _____

Date: _____

Oakwood University
Social Work Department
Application for Admission
(Please Type)

Office Use Only	
Date Received:	Interview Date:
Action Taken:	Date Student Notified:

To Be Completed by Applicant:

Name: _____

Student I.D. Number/SS#: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Permanent Address:

Permanent Telephone Number: _____

Temporary Address:

Temporary Telephone Number: _____

Cell Number: _____

E-mail Addresses: _____

Classification: _____ Declared Major: _____

Credit Hours: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

Introduction to Social Work Professor: _____

1. In your opinion, what is the profession of social work all about?

2. Why did you choose Social Work as your desired profession?

3. On a separate sheet of paper, please discuss the following:
a. Your level of in-class participation b. In-class conduct c. Quality and ability to consistently complete your class assignments d. Interaction with your departmental advisor
e. Involvement in Social Work Club(s).

4. Comment upon your previous experience working in the social service field (e.g. employer, job title, employment/volunteer dates, and responsibilities).

5. Social Workers need to be able to relate to other people, communicate effectively (verbal, nonverbal, and written), and demonstrate responsibility in their professional undertaking. How, and on what basis, would you judge yourself relative to these areas?

6. Social Workers must be able to accurately analyze themselves and to continually build insight. Through the battery of tests required for acceptance into this department, what have you learned about yourself? (i.e. elaborate on your strengths and challenges/weaknesses)

7. Are there any additional factors that should be considered when making a decision regarding your acceptance into the Oakwood University Social Work Program?

Many state, county, public and/or private agencies require a criminal history background check on all applicants for employment/internship. We ask the following questions to determine if your conviction history may be reasonably related to the practice/profession of social work. We also require that you complete an official background check using the online services of "Certified Background". The cost the background check is approximately \$50.00.

8. Have you ever been convicted, including a finding of guilt, whether or not the adjudication of guilt was withheld or not entered, an admission of guilt, or no contest plea of a felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor? (Do not include juvenile convictions.) If yes, please explain on the back of this sheet.

_____ Yes _____ No

9. Have you been convicted, including a finding or verdict of guilt, whether or not the adjudication of guilt was withheld or not entered, an admission of guilt, or a no contest plea, of a crime against a minor? If yes, please explain on the back of this sheet.

_____ Yes _____ No

I hereby affirm that I have read the NASW Code of Ethics, Oakwood University and Social Work Department Handbook and agree to abide by all of these policies. I understand that giving false information or omitting requested information in any part of this application could result in the rejection of my application or discontinuance from the department.

Signature

Date



OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Agreement Form of Acknowledgement and Compliance to the Student Academic Standards for the Oakwood University Social Work Program and NASW Code of Ethics.

This is to certify that I have read the Oakwood University Social Work Program's Student Handbook, as discussed in the course SW202 Introduction to Social Work (available online on the Oakwood University Social Work Program's website). As a Social Work major, I agree to abide by the guidelines, principles, and procedures noted in both professional documents. I understand and agree to the following:

1. To abide by the NASW Code of Ethics. I understand that failure to do so can result in disciplinary action by the Social Work Program, up to and including dismissal from the program.
2. To attain a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 by the conclusion of the Fall semester of my sophomore year of this program, and to maintain this GPA throughout my entire tenure in the Social Work Program.
3. To allow information relevant to my academic and professional success to be shared by my social work faculty.
4. A signed copy of this document will be given to my faculty advisor, and placed in my student file. I will retain a copy for my own records and reference.

Student's Signature/Electronic Signature:

Please print your name clearly: _____

Date: _____



OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

GUIDE FOR AUTOBIOGRAPHY*

To help to others, social workers must understand themselves. This assignment is designed to help you review and explore stages in your development from childhood to present. Please write an autobiography using the guide below.

I. Personal Data

- Significant factors such as your sex and birth order in the family, relationships with siblings, parents, extended family, family culture, where you were born, etc.
- Significant moves made by your family during your very early years, which may have affected your life.
- Identify any physical, social or emotional problems that you feel could hinder your relationship with clients or that you feel you have been able to work through. If so, discuss briefly.

II. Divide your life into the following stages and discuss significant events, influences both positive and negative, and give your impression of their effects on you as you know yourself today. Use a subheading in your paper for each area as outlined below:

- Infancy (birth to 3 years)
- Early Childhood (4-6 years)
- Elementary school years (6-12 years)
- Adolescence - in this stage, also discuss achievements and/or difficulties and how you processed them (12-18 years)
- Young Adulthood - include here those persons who may have had influences on your current directions, values, and plans for the future (18-25 years)

Since this autobiography is geared toward a deeper understanding of yourself, you will want to give attention to the overall values and the influences of family and culture, and discuss how they have had impact on the person you are today.

What changes can you see that might be needed to become an effective helping person?

***Please consult your SW202 instructor or your faculty advisor should you need any assistance in this area. This paper must be at least 1500 words (approximately 5 pages) and it must include a cover page, which is not to be included in the paper length of the assignment, and the paper must be typed, double spaced, using 12-pt font and 1-inch margin.**