

Structured Part-Time M.S.W. Program Policies

- I. **Introduction.** Students admitted to the part time program must select a structured curriculum plan from the options provided. Sixty (60) credits are required for the M.S.W. degree unless otherwise noted for M.S.W. options such as a certificate or dual degree. The program is designed so that students complete degree requirements within four years.

Students must complete all foundation courses prior to enrolling in concentration courses except when a waiver is granted and the M.S.W. Program Director approves an individualized part time plan.

The part-time program cannot be completed ENTIRELY at nights and on weekends due to field placement requirements and due to daytime scheduling of some concentration courses.

- II. **Course Load.** Students must be admitted to the program prior to enrolling in any M.S.W. courses. Students must complete a minimum of six credits every fall and spring semester. Students are billed on a per credit hour basis for one to eight (1-8) credits. While nine credits constitutes **part-time M.S.W.** study, nine or more graduate credits are considered full time study by VCU, thereby requiring full time tuition and fees.
- III. **Sequence of Courses.** To ensure proper course sequencing, each student must complete an educational plan with his/her adviser (see attached planning form).
- IV. **Field Instruction** (Placements at community agencies). Students pursuing the M.S.W. degree as a part-time student may select one of two options to complete field instruction requirements:

A. Two consecutive semesters (typically fall and spring): Two days per week (14 hours) for the Foundation placement or three days per week (21 hours) for the Concentration placement.

B. Block placement: Five days per week (40 hours) for one term, typically summer. **Note:** A student will be allowed to complete **only one** block field placement that must be approved by the student's faculty adviser and the Director of Field Instruction.

View field policies at: <http://www.socialwork.vcu.edu/msw/field.html>

Students in the part-time program, either in Richmond or NoVA, must submit a field placement application to the Director of Field Instruction one full semester prior to the term that they intend to begin each field placement.

- V. **Advising.** Prior to new student orientation, each part-time student is assigned an adviser.
- VI. **Part-time Curriculum Options.** Students may change from part-time to full-time status after completing the first 30 credits of the M.S.W. program. A request for such a change must be submitted to the Senior Associate Dean and have the advisor's approval.

Part-time students pursuing a three-year M.S.W. program will complete the foundation curriculum over a two year period (see Structured Part-time Program Options), followed by one year of full-time concentration studies. They also may decrease the full time fall/spring concentration course load to no less than 9 credits by taking summer electives, any required concentration courses offered in the summer, and/or after completing summer block concentration field if the foundation field placement was not a block. Any three-year plan must reflect the sequencing of courses within a content area and ensure that field instruction is taken concurrently with, or following completion of, the practice course sequences. (Approved April 2003 by M.S.W. Program Faculty Committee)

Forms for reporting and/or requesting changes can be found at www.socialwork.vcu.edu/msw/forms/index.html.