

**ACU Graduate Council
December 16, 2024
10am – 11:30am
Online via Zoom**

Present: W. Carroll, JD Wallace, M. Lee, D. Wall, C. Flanagan, A. Huddleston, M. Long, R. Slaymaker

Absent: T. Baggs, D. Perkins, L. Merchant, T. Womble

Guests: C. Miertschin, D. Kennamer, D. Andreas, R. Milligan, W. Crawford, J. Smith

Note: Since Dr. Andreas is not tenured, COMM/CAHSS replaced her with Dr. JD Wallace to comply with Faculty Senate criteria for council membership.

Meeting began at 10:01 am.

- Prayer by Bill Carroll
- Approval of minutes from 11/12/24

Minutes passed by General Consent

Information Items:

1. BIBM 696 – Revise Title and Description

W. Carroll—Dr. Merchant described the need for this title and description change to more accurately describe the course and reflect what actually happens in the course – therapy and theology.

2. MAGS—Close Program
3. MDiv, MDiv Missions, MACM, MAGS—Remove Senior Review Requirement
4. Certificate of Practical Ministry—New Program

Mason Lee—In response to low enrollment numbers, the GST faculty have voted to close the MAGS degree. The Senior Review is listed as a requirement as multiple GST degrees. This review is now a course requirement in a required course for these degrees, and the GST voted to eliminate this articulated degree requirement since it is now handled curricularly. Certificate of practical ministry was developed in partnership with the OGP and ACU-Dallas and can be delivered online and in person. After following the new program process, GST voted to approve the program—and it just admitted its first seven students this morning.

Action Items:

W. Carroll: Council has multiple options for handling these action items that come from Social Work. We can handle them all individually. We can discuss the course divisions as a group and vote on them as a group, and discuss the new courses as a group and vote on them as a group,

but the program changes will still need to be handled individually. We can try the previous model, and after discussion pull specific items from the group out for individual votes if concerns arise for some but not all of the items in a group. (Council indicated a desire to attempt to handle course changes and new courses as a group while reserving the option to hold individual votes on items)

R. Slaymaker: Launching MSSW option online in summer 2025. Need to meet Jan addendum deadline to start courses under current catalog. Council on Social Work Education required new standards in 2022 to be implemented by next fall. The MSSW curriculum had not been revised since 2006 and it is time to imagine what the curriculum could look like incorporating the CSWE move to a standards-based model. The central part in these changes and new courses is making sure SLOs align with standards, which will also ease reporting. We are also focused on eliminating antiquated verbiage. The last piece is weaving ADEI standards throughout the curriculum.

5. SOCW 625: Revise Title, Description, Content

R. Slaymaker: Primary theories class for students without major of social work. Outcomes changed to be tied to new standards.

6. SOCW 641: Revise Title, Description, Content

R. Slaymaker: Current policy course (we currently have 2 in first year of program... we will now only offer 1 in the future, so we combined policy content into 641). Used to be about learning about social/economic policies (and second was around practice)... now combined with those. "Social welfare" is very antiquated—wanted to remove from title.

7. SOCW 651: Revise Title, Description, Prerequisites, Content

R. Slaymaker: First practice course for first-year students. Work with individuals. CSWE has developed a process called "plan-change process": engagement, assessment, intervention, evaluation. Looking at just engagement and assessment in this course. Will now have 3 practice courses instead of 2.

8. SOCW 681: Revise Title, Description, Prerequisites, Content, Number of Credit Hours

R. Slaymaker: First practicum course (out of two... minimum of 400 hours). Social work is moving away from "field" when talking about placements/practicum. Changing learning outcomes. Used to be four credit hours each... able to reduce that to three credit hours in an effort to reduce tuition.

C. Flanagan: asked if hours changed + about licensure for students

R. Slaymaker said they can apply for LMSW right when they graduate. They then can qualify for the additional three thousand hours of clinical supervision required to get LCSW. Most degree plans at this level are not sixty-four hours, so this should help with

marketing/recruiting

9. SOCW 682: Revise Title, Description, Prerequisites, Content, Number of Credit Hours

R. Slaymaker: Second course related to first year of practicum. Goal: to complete 200 hours in fall, 200 in spring (min 400 comes from CSWE requirements).

10. SOCW 702: Revise Title, Description, Content

R. Slaymaker: Bridge course to demonstrate they met competencies before they go into advanced courses. Last year, changed from 6-hour course to 3-hour course (because removed thesis). Shifting away from research course to practice course). Changing learning outcomes because shift happened last year in council

C. Flanagan: is this offered every summer?

R. Slaymaker: intensive... now three weeks via Zoom in the mornings + time in afternoons to work on work or assignments due. Synchronous for last two years. Helpful for students' flexibility.

11. SOCW 725: Revise Title, Description, Content, Prerequisites, Course Terms

R. Slaymaker: Change of name to Spirituality + SW is better so that other grad students in other programs can be aware they may want to take it. Now Spirituality in Diverse Pops (more broad/open + ADEI). Groups/orgs/community level. Spiritual side of assessments.

12. SOCW 744: Revise Title, Description, Content, Remove Cross List

R. Slaymaker: This course went toward Cert in Social Services Admin. Historically required in spring semester. Learn how to write a grant, budget—middle management of nonprofit work. To reduce title, "Nonprofit Management" is succinct enough. Now an elective, not required. Eventually moving to tracks/concentrations in future—one will be in NP Mgmt/Leadership. Open to any grad student

Flanagan: this remains a spring class?

Slaymaker: yes, remains spring

13. SOCW 748: Revise Content

R. Slaymaker: Revised course last year. Updated away from antiquated terms. Focuses on assessment + interventions. Primary change: current outcomes (since name/description were changed last year).

14. SOCW 751: Revise Title, Description, Prerequisites, Content

R. Slaymaker: First advanced level practice course. Changes to wording—showing exactly what it is + ADEI + SLOs changed. Focuses on system-level. Currently have a pre-

requisite but decided that can be dealt with in advising rather than waiving pre-requisites

B. Carroll: SW manages student enrollment in courses?

R. Slaymaker: yes... enrollment happens within SW office. Program Director approval is required—informal approval process but one that ensures students are ready for the course

15. SOCW 781: Revise Title, Description, Prerequisites, Content, Number of Credit Hours

R. Slaymaker: Advanced practicum course (First of two). Changed credit hours. Reduced advanced standing hours as well. Changed wording away from “field.” Instead of worrying about pre-reqs, pre-placement application process, so this reinforces what they’re already doing rather than focusing on courses they’ve completed (done during audit process). Diff: student has to complete 500 in advanced standing (250 fall/250 spring).

16. SOCW 782: Revise Title, Description, Prerequisites, Content, Number of Credit Hours

R. Slaymaker: Second of advanced sequence of practicum. Difference: currently have pre-reqs/co-reqs. Allows more flexibility in online option as to how courses will be sequenced

D. Wall: On competency 2: why is there a question mark there?

R. Slaymaker: can ask field faculty for sure... but SW conducts a policy day every year in Austin. Goal is to have faculty to go with students if possible. Question mark may be marker of what to do in years when they can’t go.

D. Wall: Competencies vs. advanced competencies?

R. Slaymaker: 600 level “general competencies” but advanced competencies can be different by program. The term “Advanced” came from faculty (wrote themselves), not from CSWE.

Motion to approve items 5-16 by C. Flanagan; seconded by D. Wall ; all in favor. Motion passes.

17. SOCW 610: New Course

R. Slaymaker: Standard degree plan (600 level). Many students coming into program are not quite ready as far as professionalism—need additional support. This course hits on ethical + professional behavior in SW. History of SW profession. First course any online or res student will take before moving into other sequences. Focused on professional writing—APA + note taking/documentation. Introduce ethics of SW

C. Flanagan: will this class include fragility that might prevent effectiveness?

R. Slaymaker: yes, “use of self” and primary motives. This will be a gatekeeping course in many ways—check-ins required, not completely synchronous. Making sure students are ready for their placement.

C. Flanagan: this is a heavy lift these days. Sometimes have a hard time noticing those things until practicum.

R. Slaymaker: may not be a catch-all but might show white flags, yellow flags... before they see red flags in practicum. For res students, this will be part of training/orientation in first few weeks

18. SOCW 635: New Course

R. Slaymaker: Currently offer "Diversity, Power, and Oppression"—this replaces that + includes more social justice. Social/racial justice > marginalized/oppressed pops in US + help understand ACTUAL history (systemic bias/barriers of certain pops). Not just racial but also religious, abilities, etc. Eventually will be closing Diversity, power, opp course.

D. Wall: on syllabus, may be discrepancy under grades possible/weighting. Case study should be 40% (not 30%).

R. Slaymaker: yes, will make note.

19. SOCW 653: New Course

R. Slaymaker: Practice 2—looking at intervention and evaluation. Individuals/groups. For some reason, haven't had a groups course for 20 years... making sure to incorporate that. Removing policy requirements allows extra practice courses.

D. Wall: on syllabus: under grades/weighting: doesn't add up to 1,000 + doesn't match percentage.

R. Slaymaker: will make note to adjust math

JD Wallace: are the weights or the points accurate?

R. Slaymaker: will check both to make sure

20. SOCW 655: New course

R. Slaymaker: This is a course on communities and organizations. Pulled some content from 652 practice course but more focus on macro level theories. Maybe eventually close 652 course and only have this one

D. Wall: assessment/grading—don't match what's in course outline.

R. Slaymaker: will take a look at that... will remove that from the outline

B. Carroll: As a reminder, the syllabus is illustrative, and we are voting on the course, not the syllabus, but feedback to improve the syllabus can be helpful to colleagues.

21. SOCW 667: New + only research course in 1st year. Currently have 2 in 1st year (one is research methods + second is statistics/evaluation). Reducing research requirements overall. New standards require less research... just making sure they know how to know what's evidence-informed. Will only bring them to proposal.

Flanagan: you've eliminated thesis?

Slaymaker: yes. Thesis is optional... or applied research project, which is 2 semesters in

advanced year. Now moving away from 2 semesters of research courses.

22. SOCW 742: New Course

R. Slaymaker: Back to advanced level. This course had never gone through council—was being taught as 740 “special topics.” Now integrated health and behavioral health—no longer special topics. 2nd track would be integrated health/behavioral health. Open to all grad students. Maybe cooperative with Josh Rhodes because of some overlap. Very relevant area from SW—allied health. Already teaching course; no longer special topic.

23. SOCW 753: New Course

R. Slaymaker: Second of three practice courses. Focuses on families and groups. Focuses on assessment and intervention for these groups.

24. SOCW 755: New Course

R. Slaymaker: Third course of three. This one focuses on communities and organizations. Will replace 752 when we close that.

25. SOCW 767: New Course

R. Slaymaker: New advanced research course. Don’t feel like they need 2 courses to hit competencies so this is designed to accomplish the outcomes in one semester. Focus less on research methods and more on single-system design, program evaluation, policy implications to meet policy requirements for CSWE. Only gets students to a research proposal (without actually having to conduct the project). Pondering a possible course in the future to allow students to actually conduct... if they don’t want to do another track.

General Questions from council about the slate of courses

A. Huddleston: In each syllabus, land acknowledgement statement from Jumanos and Comanche... how do you know which groups of people to include? (Should Apache/Tonkawa be included?)

R. Slaymaker: can distribute a map... but in our situation, found a local historian that knew about indigenous pops in this area. He provided a lot of that info.

A. Huddleston: in courses that Amy Boone reviewed, in her letter, noted need unique Christian perspective. Where are y’all with that?

R. Slaymaker: we’ve been discussing for about a year... wondering if we should have a school-wide statement for SW ed or have individual instructors create their own? Currently, individual instructors are creating their own. Pondering having a school-wide system that integrates faith, ethics, values that intersect those areas. Knows it’s a requirement per the Adams Center. Like

the one from Baylor. Drafted one but haven't come back to that yet. Also... do we need an AI policy? Want to be sure they're giving space to both of those.

C. Flanagan: where does crisis work/suicidality fit into this? Where is this approached in curriculum?

R. Slaymaker: First course of the sequence looks at suicide ideation + try to make sure faculty has experience.

C. Flanagan: Rand George has a lot of experience in that area.

Motion to approve items 17-25 by A. Huddleston; seconded by JD Wallace; all in favor.

Motion passes.

26. MSSW—Revise Program

R. Slaymaker: After we went through college council, K. Witemeyer looked at catalog changes. Foundation courses now = 30. Advanced courses now = 30. Advanced standing seminar now = 30 + option of 2 electives that were just approved to hit a total of 33 (down from 38).

B. Carroll: Is the MSSW now in better alignment with programs at other institutions?

R. Slaymaker: Yes, aligning. The lowest we've seen is 52 hours. Advanced standing is much more in line. 38 is high. Usually 30-33 hrs.

Motion to approve MSSW Program Revision by D. Wall; seconded by M. Long; all in favor.

Motion passes.

27. MSSW—Revise Admission Requirements

R. Slaymaker: We started by asking what do we need to know to accurately assess students' abilities in this program? Biggest change is moving to three letters of recommendation and explicitly requiring academic and professional abilities. Personal statement: 4 themes as framework/umbrella Second writing sample: upper-level writing sample. Accredited SW program students wrote better than those from other programs. More focused on practicum evaluation for all BSW students. Will accept midterm evaluation but MUST receive final eval. Video conference "may be requested." Maybe 5-10% of students are concerning... may need that interview.

Motion to approve revised admission requirements for the MSSW by C. Flanagan; seconded by D. Wall; all in favor. Motion passes.

28. SSA Certificate—Revise Program

R. Slaymaker: B. Carroll reminded us in a meeting that change to our curriculum might impact this certificate. Adjusted the certificate to reflect programmatic change in research courses. Had planned to rename but that is not a part of this as the department is trying to decide what to rename it... hopefully to do by next catalog year. Open to students from other programs... can sub/waive where needed to make cert work

B. Carroll: Grateful to have helped with this, and pointed out to council that it is helpful to include OGP early in conversations about significant change.

Motion to approve revisions to the SSA Certificate by A. Huddleston; seconded by D. Wall; all in favor. Motion passes.

Meeting ended at 11:23 am.