

Interdependent

Messiah College Social Work Department
Spring 2018

“I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” Acts 20:35

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LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Dr. Charles Seitz

Every eight years the Social Work Department goes through the reaccreditation process for the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). A major portion of the undertaking is the writing of a self-study of the department. First, I want to thank Professor George and Dr. Lane for their contributions to the report. I want to also recognize our work-study students, Lindsay Terry and Fatimah Jan for their hard work and contributions to the self-study. Additionally, Donna Zack was invaluable in organizing and producing the final three volume, 954-page program evaluation. Although writing a self-study is hard work, the process allowed the department to update the curriculum to meet the new 2015 CSWE standards for competency development.

Additionally, completing a self-study helps the department identify any gaps or areas to improve. One area of focus was the social work department’s handbook. During the accreditation process the social work student handbook was revised and updated and is available on the social work website. In addition, the department noted a gap related to safety and therefore the department developed and implemented a specific field related safety policy that has been incorporated into the handbook and articulated in

course syllabi. Program assessment data also showed that although students may be meeting benchmarks for the Department’s tenth competency related to faith development, implicit curriculum data suggests that students need to process connections between faith integration and competency development outside of the classroom. To address this area, in the fall of 2017, the department conducted qualitative research facilitated by senior social work student Julia Van Der Hulst, and as a result, during the spring 2018 semester faculty and students have been participating in an informal Bible study coordinated by Hannah Keefer and Lindsay Terry.

An integral part of successful programs is program assessment. The department continues to collect data from multiple sources, including data to meet CSWE standards and it utilizes this data to implement changes to improve the program. However, there are times when student feedback provides the best indicator of quality programming. I will conclude with a recent email from a student who I believe provides the strongest evidence of our commitment to quality social work education at Messiah. “Hello Dr. Seitz, I wanted to include you as

I am letting friends and family know that I have just found out that I have been accepted into University of Pennsylvania’s advanced standing program! Thus far I have been accepted to Penn and Fordham University’s advanced standing programs. I wanted to thank you, Professor George, Dr. Lane, and Donna for creating the atmosphere in which I could become the type of professional that top schools in the country are willing to accept into their programs. I am looking forward to strongly finishing my time at Messiah and transitioning into graduate school. Thank you again.” Thank you to everyone who plays a role in Messiah’s Social Work Program.

Proverbs 16:3 “Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans” (NIV).

Strength and peace,

Dr. Charles Seitz

Department Chair and Professor, Social Work

Messiah College

"Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law." ~ Romans 13:8

IMPACT OF MESSIAH STUDENTS

Professor Michelle George

The Department of Social Work at Messiah College contends that what we believe matters. It affects everything from how we see the world and the people in it to our role and response to the needs we discover. In the case of a Christian, these beliefs are framed by faith. As a social worker, these values are informed by the NASW Code of Ethics. As Christians who practice social work these, at times, seemingly incongruent concepts must be embraced as complementary rather than conflicting. Failing to acknowledge these tensions presents a critical dilemma to the Christian in social work but addressing them does also. Christians in social work need to contend with these tensions rather than attempt to merely dismiss or resolve them. Simplifying something doesn't make it simple. Embracing

tensions and viewing them as complementary rather than conflicting enriches the practice of social work for the Christian and provides direction for a grander vision of God. The Mission of the Department of Social Work at Messiah College integrates principles of this Christian faith with social work values, knowledge and skill through "evidenced informed practice, service learning...a commitment to community, respect for diversity and human rights and support for the enhancement of social and economic justice for all people." (Messiah College Department of Social Work Handbook)

The Department of Social Work at Messiah College is uniquely positioned to promote the mission of the College, "to develop students mature of intellect, character and Christian faith in preparation for

lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society". The development of social work competencies alongside spiritual competencies is infused into every aspect of the social work curriculum. Spiritual competencies related to social work practice stem from the mandate of the NASW code of ethics for cultural competency. Spiritual competency is also an aspect of developing spiritual disciplines, the ultimate result of ongoing spiritual formation. This approach allows for students to simultaneously hold as truth the tenants of scripture and the values of social work. This is the distinctive of the Department of Social Work at Messiah College and it is what makes our students prepared to be ethical, competent and professional social workers who are grounded in their Christian faith and prepared to impact a world that is very much in need.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

Interview with Dr. Lane

What was your first impression of Messiah College?

Coming from New York and moving to Central Pennsylvania has been a true learning experience. Transitioning from the city where one can get "lost in the crowd" to a small town where everyone knows your name takes a little getting used to. Although I knew a few people at Messiah prior to working here, I was impressed by the level of "family connectedness." As you know there is no utopic anything, but I see many people at Messiah making a gallant attempt to value and un-

derstand others whose cultures may differ from their own
How was your first day of class?

I was super nervous my first day of class. I was wondering what life would be like for the "new kid on the block." The Department went from a couple to a trio. Well, to my surprise, students in many of my classes, many of whom were upper classmen, welcomed me with open arms. The faculty was equally supportive and afforded me the opportunity to debrief the events of my first day, first month, first six months..... get the picture.?

What is one thing you would like your students to take away from your courses?

I would like all my students to know "they are destined for greatness."

Have you experienced a memorable/impactful moment this year? This past week was stressful for my family and I, coping with the recent illness of my son. The overwhelming outpouring of genuine love and support by both students, faculty and staff will ALWAYS be remembered. I made one call to Dr. Seitz and there were three prayer warriors at my door (Dr. Seitz, Professor George & Donna Zack. This is

Ethical

Professional

Competent!

WELCOME

“And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’ Matthew 25:40

more than a job or a place of employment – it’s family).
Was there a moment where you learned something from your students? (Role reversed)

Students have taught me that it is ok to be imperfect. They acknowledge my shortcomings as it pertains to teaching courses at this institution for the first time, and many gave constructive criticism as it pertains to improvement. WOW, as professors, I must admit sometimes we (I) miss the

“This is more than a job or a place of employment— it’s family” - Dr. Lane

obvious.

How has your faith been impacted or deepened while working at Messiah College?

My faith in God and his divine order has been deepened. One of my favorite gospel songs is “Order My Steps” sung by GMMWA Women of Worship (check it out sometime). It is so clear to me how my steps and path to Messiah was ordered by the divine and I am grateful that I was obedient.

SOPHOMORE PLACEMENT

Lindsay Terry



My sophomore field experience at Jewish Family Services of Greater Harrisburg was easily the highlight of my sophomore year. Going into the placement, I was nervous about my lack of experience in the adoption field and how I would manage a 100 hour internship on top of all my classes. Looking back now, I can tangibly see how much I have grown professionally, and spiritually, because of this placement. During the academic year, I was able to work 1:1 with a number of different supervisors at JFS to observe support groups, attend

home visits with children in foster care, attend an adoption finalization hearing at the court house, participate in trainings and monthly quarterly meetings, and even spend three days with my placement attending the Statewide Adoption Conference at Penn State. Towards the end of my time at JFS, I was given a family to advocate on behalf of and find a matching child that they could foster, as well as advocate for a child who wanted a loving family. Being able to call other professionals and speak with them on behalf of both the family

and the child was an awesome experience because it really boosted my confidence and showed me that my supervisor trusted me to handle the case-load. In terms of spirituality, I grew immensely during the academic year at JFS because I had to wrestle with what I believed in my heart was right and what was actually best for the family or the child I was working with. Coming out of placement, I feel ready to tackle senior field placement and I have a new respect for professionals in the field of social work.

SENIOR PLACEMENT

Alexis Conkle

This semester, my field placement is with Homeland Hospice. I have had the opportunity to meet many patients, families, and caregivers through this experience. Although this field placement can be emotional or stressful, it is a wonderful experience. Many of the patients I have had the pleasure of meeting have been diagnosed with dementia. Throughout the semester, I have learned skills and techniques to work with hospice patients, but specifically adults dealing with

dementia. One skill that I have found the most helpful is validation theory. Many patients can be scared because they do not know where they are and many times are looking for their parents. Speaking to them about their parents gives us great insight into the person’s life to better assist them in the future. This also gives the patient a time to think back on the lives they have had while calming down. In the nursing homes, it can be difficult for the staff to assist all the patients due

to the uneven numbers. Giving time to the patients diagnosed with dementia can be a fulfilling time to get to know patients that are often closed off. I have had four months at Homeland Hospice and the experience has been amazing. Due to this field placement, I have learned how much I care for patients dealing with these diagnoses and the families going through a grief process.



“And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” Mark 9:35

SOCIAL WORK STUDENT RA!

Will Sloyer



My future role as an RA speaks to the work God has done in my life. I have found my identity through Christ and the formation of loving relationships with others. Those relationships have allowed me to overcome the issues associated with transitioning to college. My current RA has had a tremendous impact on me, and I would like to do the same for residents next year.

My first goal as an RA is to make residents feel

welcomed and develop a fun atmosphere. My next goal is to build community. I want to encourage residents to seek deep and vulnerable relationships with others and God. I want to create a space where residents can share their deepest burdens. Through it all, I remember that God is the

one who changes hearts.

In relation to social work, my new RA position provides the opportunity to care for the wellbeing of other people and offer professional development. Self-care will be crucial so that I am able to care for myself in order to help and serve others deal with the stress of academics and other commitments.

-Will Sloyer

“I made sure that I prayed and asked God to equip me and give me confidence, knowledge, and creativity”

- Maddy

Maddy Schaeffer



As a first-year student, the idea of being a resident assistant always seemed appealing to me.

When the applications went out, I was encouraged by my friends, family, and the current residence life staff to apply. When filling out the application, I had doubt that I would be offered a position considering I was only a first-year student. After going through a group interview and team building activities, along with a one-on-one interview, I was offered a

I was offered a resident assistant position in a first-year residence hall. Although this position was something I desired to have, I made sure that I prayed and asked God to equip me and give me confidence, knowledge, and creativity to accept this position. My current RA has done a tremendous job helping all the first-year girls on my floor adjust to

the college life and fully experience all that Messiah offers and I desire to help my residents next year do the same. Being that I was a scared first-year less than a year ago, I believe that God has equipped me with the tools to create a healthy and safe living environment for my residents, which will ultimately lead to their academic and athletic success here at Messiah.

- Madalynne Schaeffer

Flashback to this year’s first Cookies & Questions!



The Social Work club’s purpose is to provide safe spaces for students to come together and experience fellowship. Our goal is always to create connections between students in the major. The Social Work club holds monthly events that are open to any and all students within the major. Some events we’ve held this

SOCIAL WORK CLUB

Emma Dougherty



past school year included the “Welcome Back Pizza Party and Prayer Night”, a “Christmas Party”, and a “Fellowship Night”. In addition to our fun monthly events, three programs are facilitated through the Social Work Club including the Peer Mentorship Program, the Prayer Chaplains, and the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” - Pslam 56:3

STUDY ABROAD

Ally Bishop

I am currently studying abroad in Lithuania at LCC, Lithuanian Christian College University. The study abroad office really pushed me to apply to this program. I did not understand what was so special about LCC until actually arriving here in Lithuania. I not only get to complete many of my general education classes while studying abroad but all of my classes are also taught in English. Additionally, I get to live on a floor with students from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Georgia (the country, not state), and Albania. I even have classes with students from Iraq and Nigeria. LCC has not only allowed me the opportunity to travel to nine countries within four months but I have been able to learn about multiple cultures through my classmates and roommates or attending weekly Independence Day dinners that celebrate the countries of students that attend LCC.

I love LCC because although it is a small community, students represent more than twenty different countries. One story President Marlene of LCC told students was that one day a student hung a Russian flag out their window. They intended it to be harmless but a Lithuanian citizen took it as LCC supporting Russian forces. The citizen reported it to the news and it made the front page of the newspaper. The President tried to resolve the problem and called the news station to meet with them. When a journalist arrived, there were flags of all different

countries hanging outside the students' windows. The president did not organize it but the students came together to support one another. No matter what is going on at each student's home countries, students can still come together and support one another. Within my four months here, I can attest that the community here is like none other and my classmates here have become like family.

As for placement, I had the opportunity to serve for CMAP, which stands for Community Multicultural Awareness Program. I worked with students from LCC to plan activities for local high school students. The students come to the program interested in learning more about multiculturalism while improving their English. I was very nervous at first but I not only learned about their culture, I knew the students by their first names and they were sharing ice cream places with me in the local area by the end of the semester. The program ended at a certain time each week but my group would typically stay ten to fifteen minutes after just to talk to me.

As for deepening my faith, through LCC I have learned more about Orthodox Christianity, something I was not familiar with at all. I have seen many different types of churches throughout Europe. I have watched different cultures come together to worship our one God. I even went to a Christian church in Sweden and it was amazing to see how there

were more similarities than differences than my home church. I also attended a Bible study here on campus as well as chapel. There are so many opportunities here for students to connect with other students with different backgrounds but share the same God.

This experience has helped me to relate to people whom I do not share a common background with. I stepped out of my comfort zone and made sure to talk to people and break stereotypes (Russians are not mean!). I can say I was not aware of what was going on in the world but I have more of an interest to research and keep up to date with world news. I can confidently say that I have a greater capacity to accept differences in others and to tolerate other people's actions or ideas different from my own. I can communicate with people whose first language is not English. I have greater sympathy for the struggles of international students and immigrants because of my experience. The list is never ending! In summary, I have grown more culturally competent and I will forever be thankful for this experience. I highly recommend people to be a risk taker and step out of their comfort zone whether that is at LCC or another study abroad program. You learn so much about yourself and others through traveling.



'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." - Mark 12:31

USING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Andrea Timbone

Spiritual disciplines are components of the Christian faith that believers practice to ensure a closer relationship with God, and can also be used in cultivating ethical, professional, and competent social work practice. There are many different facets of disciplines, which are categorized into three groups by Foster (1978). The inward group consists of meditation, prayer, fasting and study and the outward disciplines practice simplicity, solitude, submission, and service. Corporate disciplines are observed with groups of people and include confession, worship, guidance, and celebration. These inward, outward, and corporate disciplines can be applied to Chris-

tian social work practice, allowing workers to become versatile and valuable to the field. For instance, in an effort to become a more ethical social worker, one can practice inward disciplines, such

"...studying God's word... is essential to have a foundation of morality when dealing with ethically ambiguous situations" - Andrea

as studying God's word, because it is essential to have a foundation of morality when dealing with ethically ambiguous situations (Achen, 2013). Professionalism, a

component of the NASW Code of Ethics, can be derived by utilizing the outward disciplines. Social work is heavily other-oriented, and having outward disciplines help Christian social workers to focus on others in need. For instance, submission and simplicity help to ensure that people are well cared for and not haphazardly treated (Gerdes, Segal, & Steiner, 2016). Competence in Christian social work can also be enhanced when corporate disciplines are utilized, because they improve ability of groups of social workers to learn together and retain experiences from one another.

Utilizing spiritual disciplines is so important because they let one's daily fellowship with the Lord blend into all aspects of life- including the field of social work.

SELF HEALTH IN HOSPICE CARE

Fatimah Jan

It is vital to exhibit competency 1, which calls Social Workers to demonstrate ethical and professional behavior in conjunction with the dimensions of knowledge and cognitive processes when addressing self health methods in end-of-life care. In an environment where relationships are formed between patients and the Social Workers, emotional strain can arise from watching a client near the end of their life. Therefore, in order to competently meet a client's needs, self health strategies are essential when coping with personal and often subjective emotions (Chan, Fong, Wong, Tse, Lau, & Chan, 2016). To bring about ethical

and professional competency, Social Workers must identify what triggers an emotional response and work to alleviate it (Murty, Sanders, & Stensland, 2015). Some methods that aid when facing death anxiety and grief are therapy and self reflection. Social Workers are then given a platform to evaluate emotions that can impact ethical and professional behaviors, and inhibit competent service (Murty, Sanders, & Stensland, 2015). By separating individual sentiment and professional duty, Social Workers evidence ethical behavior and orient their focus toward the objective needs of the client. Significance is also placed in exhibiting the

dimension of knowledge. Knowledge of end-of-life care helps to effectively recall the specific roles and responsibilities Social Workers must assume. Recalling one's obligations promotes the reconciliation of biased viewpoints, and brings about the dimension of cognitive processes. Cognitive processes distinguish personal and professional values in order to sustain ethics and professionalism. Therefore, competency 1 demands performance of ethical and professional behavior, knowledge, and cognitive processes in end-of-life care, and contributes essential methods of self-health in Social Workers.

“Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us” - Psalm 62:8

PHI ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY

Graduating Seniors: Brynn Akins, Angelina Bartorelli, Alexis Conkle, Rebecca Deardorff, Barbara Feathers, Laura Feeser, Lea Fornoff, Deanna Frey, Tiarah Funderburk, Sara Gartner, Catherine Heidenreich, Kara Hoffman, Hannah Keefer, Rosemarie Knibbe, Sarah Krick, Alyssa Narring, Abby Noll, Becca Simon, Julia Van Der Hulst, Allison Wedman, Morgan Winfindale

2018 Inductees: Brooke Aulhouse, Hannah Cherry, Emma Dougherty, Aileen Gummow, Madison Guynes, Erin Herzog, Dakota Kelso, Judith Mahoney, Lauren Mast, Katelyn Pearson, Alexis Spangler

2017-2018 Officers:

President: Julia Van Der Hulst Vice President: Hannah Keefer Secretary: Angelina Bartorelli Treasurer: Sara Gartner Historian: Aileen Gummow (fall) Hannah Cherry (Spring)

2018-2019 Officers:

President: Aileen Gummow Vice President: Hannah Cherry Secretary: Emma Dougherty Treasurer: Lauren Mast Historian: Madison Guynes

PHI ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY

Julia Van Der Hulst

I can remember being a first-year student in the social work department wondering how I would grow and what next-steps I could take to become an ethical, professional, and competent social worker. Since then, I discovered multiple ways to maximize my growth while in the social work program at Messiah. Because of professors, leadership opportunities, and field experiences, I have seen myself grow immensely since my first year. Here's some advice from a graduating senior to first-year/underclass students:

1. Utilize your Professors! Your professors are experts in their fields. They are teaching because they have a passion for seeing growth in their students. They want to help you! My first year, I'll be honest, I was intimidated by the social work professors. After I realized that they were there to help me, I started meeting regularly with them (every other week) to set personal, spiritual, and professional goals for myself. They helped me process, evaluate, and take action on my growth.

This is the first tip because creating professional relationships with professors made all the difference for me in how I grew throughout this program.

2. Take Leadership Opportunities! Don't be afraid of putting yourself in positions you never thought you would be in. You never know what you are capable of until you try it. Throughout my time at Messiah, I have had the ability to be the Social Work Club Secretary, Phi Alpha President, Social Work Department Work Study, and SOWK 099 Student Teacher. These opportunities presented themselves and I took them- not because I knew I could handle it on my own, but because I knew the challenge of leadership would grow me personally and professionally. Leadership positions helped me grow in many of the social work competencies and helped me deal with ambiguity and processes in a more competent and professional manner!

3. Take responsibility for your practice and faith! In field experiences, we are given the won-

derful opportunity to create Learning Contracts. Though it is a long and tedious task, learning contracts can set the foundation for success. Set SMART goals that will challenge you in your practice and in your faith. Don't set these goals just to get a good grade, set them because you want to and because you recognize the need to grow. Keep your goals posted somewhere that you can see them on a daily basis and cross them off when they are completed. Be your own accountability system, and have others who will keep you accountable as well! (Professors and other Social Work students are great support systems).

Take advantage of this time where you have a built in support system at Messiah College. Create relationships with your professors, take initiative in leadership, and set goals. You will only get out of this program what you put into it, so give it your all, put God at the center, and keep working toward being the most ethical, professional, and competent Social Worker you can be.



Phi Alpha Seniors



Julia Van Der Hulst receives Social Worker of the Year Award from Dr. Seitz

Congratulations to our Class of 2018!