BRIDGE TO BU ONLINE
YOUR RESOURCE GUIDE FOR THE
ONLINE MASTERS OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
CONGRATULATIONS

On behalf of the faculty and administration at Boston University School of Social Work (BUSSW), we welcome you as a member of the BUSSW community. You have exciting and challenging years ahead.

Boston University School of Social Work is a dynamic, urban-based graduate school, offering MSW and PhD degrees, as well as continuing professional education. For nearly a century, BUSSW has educated outstanding professional social workers in an intellectually rigorous environment which fosters integration and application of clinical and macro practice methods in diverse communities. Our graduates become leaders who possess the knowledge, skills, and commitment to address the needs and capacities of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. BUSSW recognizes the ever-changing demands of the profession and strives to meet them through the highest quality of teaching, scholarship, research, practice, and political action.

Our Online MSW program offers a comprehensive, multidisciplinary curriculum for clinical and macro social work professionals. Our faculty is internationally recognized and our programs are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

The information provided in this guide will assist you through your transition to graduate education and will prepare you for success in the program. Please do not hesitate to contact us at sswolp@bu.edu.

Best wishes,

Mena daSilva-Clark, MSW, LICSW
Assistant Dean
ADMITTED STUDENT PROCESS

Once you have confirmed enrollment in the program, please complete the following steps:

1. Review the program’s technology requirements
   - Ensure your computer meets the system requirements and that you have access to high speed internet
   - Ensure that you have a webcam and headset with a microphone

2. Complete the pre-entrance reading requirement
   - Purchase: The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander

3. Review financial information
   - If you would like to be considered for a Federal Direct Unsubsidized loan, you must complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.gov. Our school code is 002130.
   - It is not too early to also complete a Master Promissory Note and Entrance Counseling for your Direct Unsubsidized Loan. This can be completed here: www.studentloans.gov.
   - Organize your current Federal Income Tax Documents including your W2s and 1099s and have them available for verification. Please do not send these documents unless we request them.

GETTING STARTED

Most communication from BUSSW will be done by email. Please be sure to review your email account frequently and plan accordingly. If your email address has changed since you have started the application process, please be sure to notify us at sswolp@bu.edu.

BU LOGIN AND KERBEROS PASSWORD SETUP INSTRUCTIONS

This notification provides instructions for setting up your student account. You will need a BU login and password to access the online campus and university resources. These resources include the StudentLink, an online portal which offers web-based class registration, access to personal, academic, and financial information.

BUSSW WELCOME GUIDE

The Welcome Guide provides an overview of the Online MSW Program including the registration process, program policies and procedures, and important deadlines.

REGISTRATION AND COURSE MATERIAL NOTIFICATION

This communication provides important information regarding course registration and course materials for your upcoming class.

FINANCIAL AID MEMO

In addition to your FAFSA, you will be required to complete a direct loan request form in order to receive a federal loan. The Financial Aid Office will send information on how to request a loan. Should you need additional information please email sswfa@bu.edu or visit http://www.bu.edu/ssw/students/incoming/newolp/.

ORIENTATION MEMO

We require students to attend two virtual Orientation sessions:
   - BUSSW Online MSW Program Orientation
   - BU Online Campus Orientation

These sessions provide information about the school, the Online MSW Program, and offer hands on training on how to use the Online Campus. Attendance is required for both sessions. Students have an opportunity to meet each other virtually and engage in Q & A with the BU Administration team. Orientation is held a few weeks before the beginning of the semester. Please be sure to RSVP for both sessions as soon as you receive the Orientation Memo.
PLANNING AHEAD

It is important to be organized and plan ahead throughout the program. Please review the following information to familiarize yourself with the process:

PURCHASING TEXTBOOKS

Prior to the beginning of each course you will receive information on the required and recommended textbook(s) for the course. Course textbooks are usually available one month prior to the start of each course and can be purchased online through the Barnes and Noble at BU. Please be sure to purchase your books in a timely manner to ensure that you have them prior to the beginning of the course.

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS

Often instructors select additional readings to supplement the textbook readings. Supplemental readings are available electronically via the Boston University Mugar Library e-reserves. In order to access these readings students need their login name and Kerberos password. Directions on accessing supplemental readings are available in all course syllabi.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

Information Central connects students to a variety of resources including program plans, calendars, policies and procedures, and library and writing resources, as well as discussion boards to interact with classmates. We recommend reviewing the different sections of Information Central to become familiar with the available resources and supports. Information Central is located on the BU School of Social Work Online Program webpage.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, STYLE AND REFERENCES:

Papers written for graduate courses are expected to include references to relevant literature. The School expects reference use to comport with the standards set out in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association(2010). Please review the additional supports:

Boston University Research Guide
For Rules on APA Referencing
Basics of APA Style Tutorial
THE ONLINE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

ONLINE CAMPUS
The Online Campus allows students to fully engage with faculty and peers through virtual lectures, interactive animations, “live classroom” sessions, and discussion boards. Students access the online campus through a user-friendly web-based learning portal and attend weekly required Live Classroom sessions via Zoom web conferencing. All courses are taught through the Online Campus.

LIVE CLASSROOM
Each week, students are required to attend a 1-1.5 hour live classroom session. These sessions are held on either Sunday or Monday between 6-10 pm EST. To fully participate in the sessions, students must be logged into online campus, have high-speed internet access and participate in the Live Classroom sessions using a webcam and a headset with a microphone.

TIME MANAGEMENT
Students can expect to spend an average of 15-25 hours a week on each course. In order to be successful in the program, students need to designate time to review course content, complete readings and assignments, and participate in discussion boards and live classroom sessions. During the second and third years in the program, in addition to coursework, students also enroll in field internships which are held during weekday hours.

Please note that although this is a part time program by university credit hour standards, it is an intensive and rigorous program.

STUDENT SERVICES
We are committed to helping you succeed by offering a variety of resources and supports:

BUSSW OLP Student Services Team
Our Online Program Student Services Team serves as the primary contact at the School of Social Work for newly admitted students and provides resources for academic advising, program planning, academic policies, procedures, and graduation requirements.

Phone: (617) 353-1746
Email: sswolp@bu.edu

Shelby Harvey, Sr. Faculty & Student Support Administrator
Boston University Office of Distance Education
The Senior Faculty and Student Support Administrator will assist you with setting up your BU login account and navigating the online campus. Support regarding technical issues within your courses, connecting to BU resources, registration and course material information is also provided.

Phone: (617) 358-1979
Email: shelbylh@bu.edu
OLP FIELD EDUCATION

Field education is a dynamic and integral part of the curriculum at Boston University School of Social Work. It provides students with opportunities to apply what they learn in the classroom to actual practice in social work and other human service settings. Field placements are done concurrently with courses to foster the integration of classroom and practical learning.

The goal of field education is to prepare students for competence in social work practice. Through field education, students translate theoretical concepts and principles and research evidence into practice, applying these to work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.

It is important for students to consider how they will accommodate the hours required for field education internships (16 hours/week minimum), which must be completed during normal agency working hours.

Students in the traditional track are required to complete two internships.

- The foundation internship consists of 16 hours per week, over 2 semesters, for a total of 480 hours in the field. Students in this track enter the foundation Field placement in the 4th semester in the program.
- The advanced internship requires a total of 720 hours in the field and can be completed at 16 hours a week for 3 semesters, 24 hours a week for 2 semesters or as a block placement. Students in this track enter the advanced field placement in the 6th semester of the program.

Advanced Standing and Human Service Experience (HSE):

- Enroll in a single, extended internship consisting of 1,000 hours in the field which is completed in a consistent schedule, ranging from 16 – 36 hours a week.

Finding a field placement is a collaborative process with the student, advisor and BUSSW Field Ed staff working together to locate an appropriate placement in the student’s geographic area. The process is initiated by the student and advisor using the Field Placement forms as a tool to identify learning goals, population and competencies that the student wants to achieve. Students can be placed in community based agencies, hospitals, schools, assisted living centers and correction facilities. All placements need to meet the School’s criteria and be approved by the Field Education Staff.

The Boston University School of Social Work Guide to Field Education provides a clear set of guidelines and expectations regarding the content and structure of the field placement. Students are responsible for reviewing it prior to the beginning of the field placement process and prior to the beginning of the internship.

THE INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR

The Integrative Seminar is a developmental course that students are enrolled in throughout the program. The seminar content is designed to:

- Expose students to the social work profession and its core values
- Assist students in utilizing specific learning tools in their social work classroom and field education
- Integrate classroom and field experiences; and inform students about licensing and the job search
- Students must register for the Integrative Seminar each semester

OLP ADVISING PROTOCOL

Advisors are the primary BUSSW representatives to students and agencies while serving the dual role of field liaison and academic advisor for curriculum and program planning. Advisors mentor, monitor student performance, consult to agencies, support, and advise BUSSW regarding practice issues. In the first semester, students are assigned a first semester advisor from the BUSSW online program staff. After the first semester students are reassigned to advisors in their geographic region who will stay with them throughout the program. Their responsibilities include the following:

First Semester Advisor

- Provides students with supports and resources to help adjust to the demands of the program
- Advises students on issues regarding personal or life challenges that arise during the first semester
- Facilitates 3 group advising sessions in the first semester

Regional Advisor

- Works with the student in planning for field internship(s)
- Serves as the liaison between school and agency
- Consults with the student and field instructor (agency supervisor) about assignments, learning contract, evaluation etc.
- Serves as the student’s advocate to ensure that the school’s expectations of the agency are being met
- Serves as a problem solver, and mediator in the event that a problem in the first placement is identified
- Performs one agency visit per semester, or more frequently as needed; visits can be in-person or via video conference or phone.
- Recommends a grade for the field education course(s)
- Offers guidance about career options
IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

Students who have questions about the financial aid process, sources of aid and eligibility may contact our Financial Aid Office:

Phone: (617) 353-0489
Email: sswfa@bu.edu
Fax: (617) 353-5612
Website: www.bu.edu/ssw/students/current/financial-aid/

STUDENT ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Students who have questions about billing, payment deadlines, account inquiries, and health insurance should contact the Boston University Student Accounting Office:

Phone: 617-353-2264
Email: studenta@bu.edu
Website: www.bu.edu/studentaccountingservices

TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

For desktop support, including issues with the Online Campus (Blackboard and Zoom), contact BU Information Services & Technology. Please make sure to identify yourself as a distance education student.

Phone: 617-353-HELP (4357)
Email: ithelp@bu.edu
Website: www.bu.edu/tech/

FIELD EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Kristina M. Whiton-O’Brien, MSW, LICSW
Assistant Director, Online Program Advising and Field Education

Kristina oversees the field placement process, approves field internships, supervises Regional Advisors and teaches the Integrative Seminar.

Phone: (617) 872-8995
Email: whitonob@bu.edu
Email: sswolpfe@bu.edu

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT

To request an accommodation, contact the BU Office of Disability Services:

Phone: 617-353-3658
Email: access@bu.edu
Website: www.bu.edu/disability

VETERAN SERVICES

Support for Veterans can be found through the BU Office of the Registrar (OUR). Students should contact OUR for more information regarding educational benefits and programs:

Phone: 617-353-3678
Email: veterans@bu.edu
Website: http://www.bu.edu/finaid/types-of-aid/veterans-services/

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK ONLINE PROGRAM

www.bu.edu/ssw/students/incoming/newolp/

www.bu.edu/ssw/students/current/olp/