

## Program Approval

### I. General Information

**A. Institution** Pittsburg State University

### B. Program Identification

Degree Level: Master's Program  
Program Title: Master of Social Work  
Degree to be Offered: Master of Social Work (MSW)  
Responsible Department or Unit: School of History, Philosophy, and Social Sciences  
CIP Code: 44.0701  
Modality: Hybrid  
Proposed Implementation Date: August 2024

### C. Description of Program

Master of Social Work programs have two courses of study – a one-year program for students who have a bachelor's degree in social work (Advanced Standing) and a two-year program for those who have a degree in something other than social work (Traditional Plan of Study). For students in the two-year traditional program, the first year is considered the “generalist” year, and the second year is the “clinical” year. Advanced Standing students proceed directly to the clinical year.

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours for the Degree:

Advanced Standing: 32

Traditional Plan of Study: 64

### II. Clinical Sites: Does this program require the use of Clinical Sites? **Yes**

Students complete practicum placements during the generalist year and the clinical year. Students complete 900 hours of practicum (students with a BSW come in with at least 400 practicum hours already completed). Practicum placements are generally secured within a two-hour radius of Pittsburg. Recent placements include the following agencies listed below. (This list is an example and is not all-inclusive.) These agencies provide a variety of opportunities for bachelor-level social work students and foundation-level MSW students with a focus on generalist practice skills. Some also provide opportunities for advanced-standing master-level social work students with a focus on clinical skills. The addition of an MSW program would provide opportunities for (and would necessitate) the development of clinical-level practicum placements (a higher level of skill than our current placements).

- Crawford County Mental Health-Pittsburg, KS
- Community Health Clinic of Southeast Kansas-Pittsburg, KS and multiple other locations
- The Department of Children and Families-Pittsburg, KS and multiple other locations
- Johnson County Mental Health-Overland Park, KS
- Labette Health-Parsons, KS
- Guest Home Estates-Pittsburg, KS
- Avalon Hospice-Pittsburg, KS and multiple other locations in MO.
- Rapha House-Joplin, MO
- Refugee and Immigrant Service Education (RAISE) – Joplin, MO
- Four County Mental Health Center-Independence, KS
- Via Christi Hospital-Pittsburg, KS
- Addictions Treatment Center-Pittsburg, KS
- Choices-Pittsburg, KS and multiple other locations

- Miami Public School-Miami, OK
- Mosaic-Pittsburg, KS
- Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Four States-Joplin, MO and multiple other locations
- Child Advocacy Center-Pittsburg, KS
- Head Start-Joplin, MO
- Lake View Village- Lenexa, KS
- Hillsdale Learning Center-Paola, KS

### **III. Justification**

Bringing an MSW program to PSU will bring many benefits to students, the university, the community, and region. Students will benefit from a program that is accessible and affordable, experience with our current cooperative program with the University of Kansas shows that it is possible, and data show a need for more master level social workers. MSW programs are in demand and can attract more students to the university leading to increased enrollment. Prospective MSW students and area agencies have asked the PSU program to start an MSW program for many years. Area mental health agencies will benefit from increased field practicum opportunities and additions to the MSW-level workforce. Adding an MSW program will enhance the university's reputation and increase visibility among professional communities.

There is a demand for social work professionals in southeast Kansas and across the US. Further, there is a growing necessity to address issues in individuals, groups, and the environment, in which social workers are prepared, trained, and educated to provide. This is partially due to an aging population but also an increase in social problems such as poverty, homelessness, mental health, and substance abuse. All of these areas show a high demand for an increase in social work jobs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment of social workers will grow 11% from 2019 to 2029, which is much faster than average for all occupations. This increase will lead to over 81,000 new job opportunities in the field of social work. Three areas in social work practice have a higher expected growth in this ten-year span. These areas include child, family, and school social workers with a 6% increase, healthcare social workers with a 14% increase, and mental health and substance abuse social workers with an 13% increase. In all of the other areas of social work practice there is a combined increase of 6%. Further, in 2023, the rpk GROUP, commissioned by the Kansas Board of Regents in 2023, confirms these specific social work practice areas as “potential program opportunities.” (rpkGroup, 2023).

### **IV. Program Demand & Request for Accreditation**

#### **A. Proof of Concept**

Three years ago, PSU's social work program and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare developed a cooperative program on the PSU campus. Enrollment in this program provides convincing evidence for the demand for an MSW program at PSU. Over the past four years, 75 Advanced Standing students were admitted to the MSW program offered by an outside program on our campus. Additionally, 24 Traditional Program students were admitted to the two-year program, which allows the students to complete their first year through the PSU social work program and then continue on to the second year with the outside program. Ultimately, nearly 100 students will graduate from an outside program through our cooperative agreement based on the currently admitted and matriculated students.

#### **B. Survey of Student Interest**

PSU Social Work Program faculty administered two surveys in April 2023: a survey for current students and a survey for professionals working in area agencies who already have a bachelor's degree in social work or a related field. These surveys were a repeat of surveys that were administered to these same populations in April 2018, with additional questions related to preferences for course-delivery options added. A summary of the results follows, and the complete results are attached.

## Survey of Students

Forty-three students responded to a survey regarding MSW programs. Twenty (47%) were seniors; 17 (40%) were juniors; five (12%) were sophomores; and one (2%) was a freshman. Forty (95%) of the respondents reported plans to obtain their MSW upon graduation. As with the previous surveys, cost and distance were the most important considerations influencing students' decisions regarding selection of an MSW program. Thirty-three students responded when asked if they would stay at PSU if an MSW program was available: 17 (72%) reported they would definitely attend; seven (21%) were very likely to attend; six (18%) were somewhat likely, and three (9%) said they were not very likely to. Of the three who initially said they did not plan to pursue an MSW, one said they would definitely pursue an MSW program if offered; one was very likely; and one did not respond.

The survey asked an open-ended question inviting participants to share their "personal thoughts on PSU adding an MSW program." All but one of the narrative responses (29) were positive. Some of the responses follow:

I think it is something that has been needed for a while as Pitt State already has advanced degree programs in other helping fields and it forces social work students to seek programs from other locations.

I believe this would be a great opportunity for students wanting to obtain their MSW. I hope PSU is able to create its own MSW program!!

I think that it is a very good idea. The BSW Program at Pitt is looked upon very highly. I do not see that changing with an MSW program.

It would be amazing if PSU developed a MSW program. This would be a "closer to home" University for many students and a better option for surrounding areas.

This is needed in our area and I believe it is a great opportunity for PSU to have their own MSW program!

Personally, I would be in full support. It would be nice to already know the professors and to save traveling time.

I think an MSW program is very needed. If the opportunity would have been presented, I would have loved to stay with the same professors and earn my MSW closer to where I live.

To me, the appeal of PSU implementing an MSW program is the potential of cost being lower than KU's tuition and fees. If PSU were to offer the same courses and opportunity as KU, I would attend PSU based off cost alone. An MSW program would have an even greater appeal if it offered several specialty areas (criminology, behavioral analyst training, LCAC, etc).

I am really hoping for it! This would relieve so much of my stress relating to pursuing an MSW, and I would feel much more comfortable obtaining an MSW from a school and program that I already trust and have the resources for.

The one detractor stated seemed to indicate more interest in an online option:

I am not sure of the interest/sustainability, I am not a Joplin nor a Missouri/Kansas native. I think online/affordable programs would be in highest demand. My junior cohort contains 17 students, most of which have expressed interest in a masters. Those who I've discussed it with have showed high interest in online programs.

### **Survey of Professionals**

Forty-six social workers and other professionals who are working in the field responded to the survey. Despite the fact that the survey was intended for people who do not yet have an MSW, nine indicated already having an MSW; their responses were filtered out for the questions related to pursuing an MSW. Of the remaining 37 respondents, 18 reported wanting to pursue their MSW; four were uncertain. Distance to a program was the major impediment to pursuing the degree, followed by cost. None of the respondents said that they planned to move to pursue their MSW. Of the 18 who reported wanting to pursue the MSW, 12 students responded regarding their preference regarding attending an MSW program, six (50%) reported they would definitely attend; six (50%) were very likely to attend. Of the 19 who initially said they did not plan to pursue an MSW or were uncertain, nine responded regarding their preference regarding attending an MSW program; two said they would definitely pursue an MSW program if offered; two were very likely; five were somewhat likely; three were not very likely, and two were definitely not likely.

Survey participants were asked a question regarding course delivery preferences with choices between in-person or hybrid, one or two days per week, and weekday or Saturday. Responses indicated a preference for one day a week; the professionals favored hybrid (seven out of 19) and the students favored in-person (12 out of 34), followed by hybrid (ten out of 34).

The survey asked an open-ended question inviting participants to share their “personal thoughts on PSU adding an MSW program.” All of the narrative responses (18) were positive. Some of the responses follow:

With workforce shortages in counseling/therapy type positions, I think people with a BS in a helping field would be more likely to get their Master degree if they could do so locally and at a lower cost than at KU. I am all for it!

I think it has been needed for a very long time.

I think it's a great idea. It would have been very helpful if there was a local program when I needed it. Supervising MSW students, it seems to create a lot of confusion with expectations and even knowledge base having the program split between KU/PSU.

I attended a program through another school for my MSW but my time at PSU for my BSW was amazing and would have stayed with PSU had the program been available.

It would be nice for the four-state area to have another option.

Do it please. We need master-level social workers in this area.

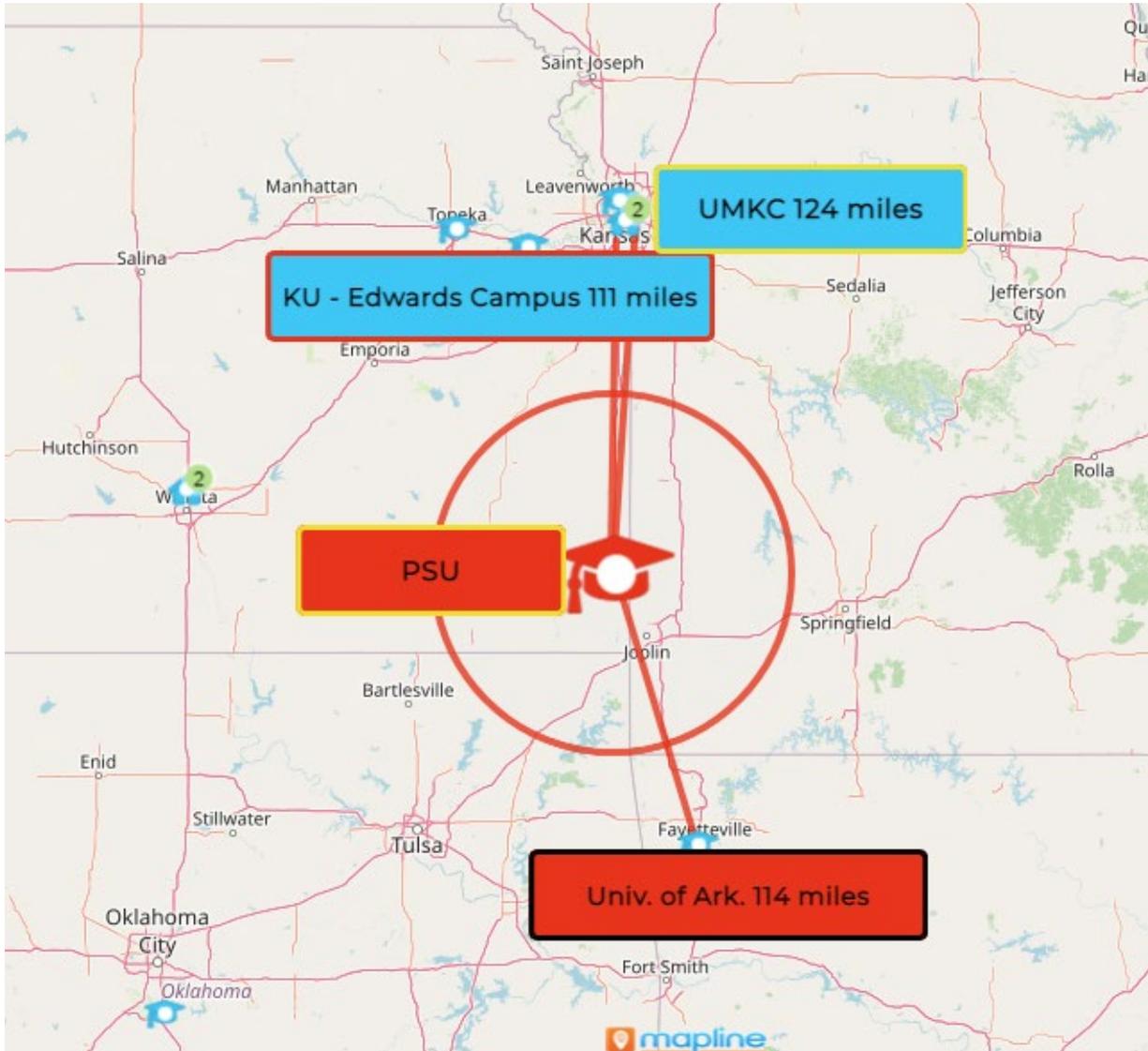
A huge plus as the distance to PSU is more feasible than to Lawrence. I've only heard great things from previous graduates on how well the program went for them while at PSU.

### **C. Market Analysis**

Southeast Kansas is particularly underserved in providing graduate social work education. The need for a local graduate social work program has already been demonstrated through the cooperative master's in social work program with PSU and the University of Kansas. Eighty-five percent of undergraduate social work students from PSU plan to pursue graduate social work degrees. This would likely increase if the degree was offered at Pittsburg State and has the potential of keeping more of these professionals in Pittsburg and the Southeast Kansas region. PSU Social Work Program surveys found that the two greatest hurdles to seeking an MSW were distance and cost. Both of these issues are addressed here.

## Distance

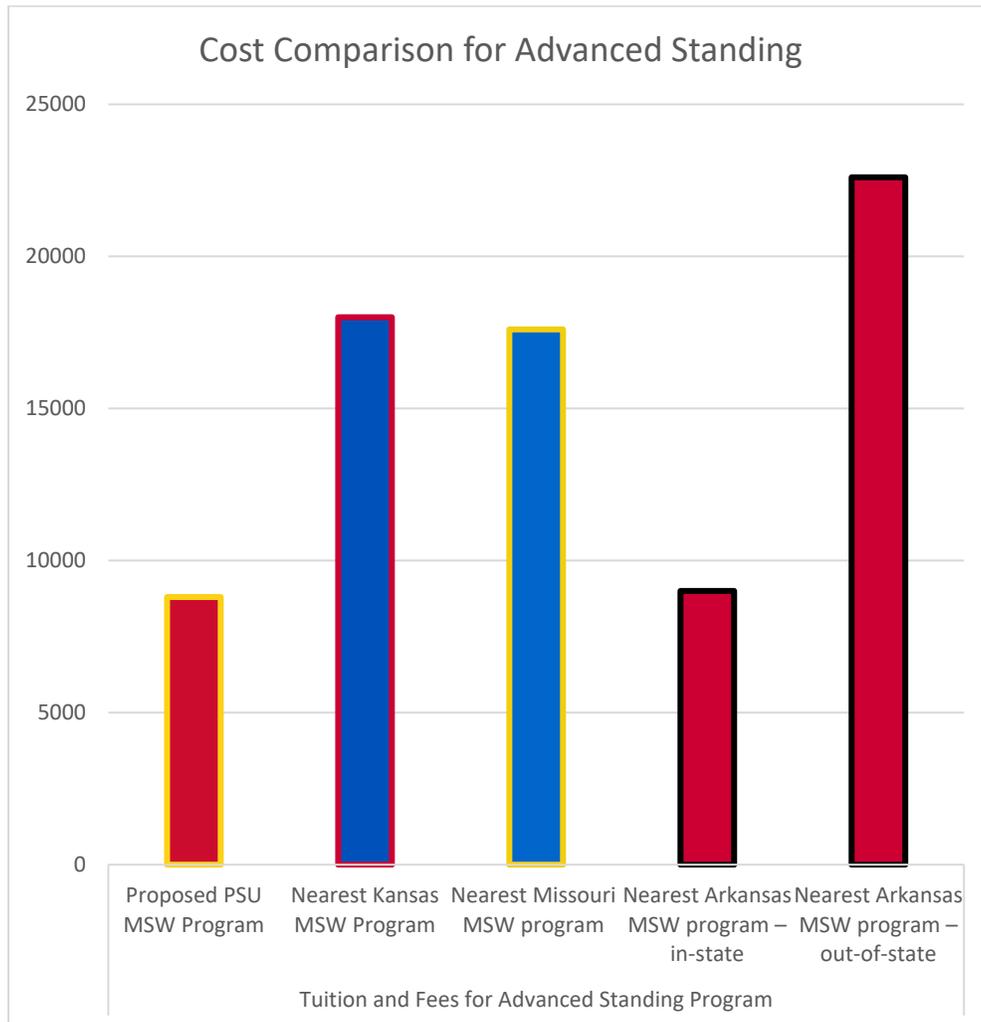
Five universities in Kansas offer graduate social work programs. (Four in the Regents system.) Excluding online programs, the closest university offering a Masters in Social Work is over 110 miles away and almost two hours of driving from Pittsburg. The next closest programs are in Arkansas (University of Arkansas, 114 miles away) and in Missouri (UMKC, 124 miles away). While there is some noted duplication of social work programs existing in Kansas, the report from the rpk GROUP, states “this degree has a strong labor outlook...” and “above median employment.” Students with a lower socio-economic status, first-generation students, and local professional social workers with undergraduate degrees would benefit from a program provided nearby.



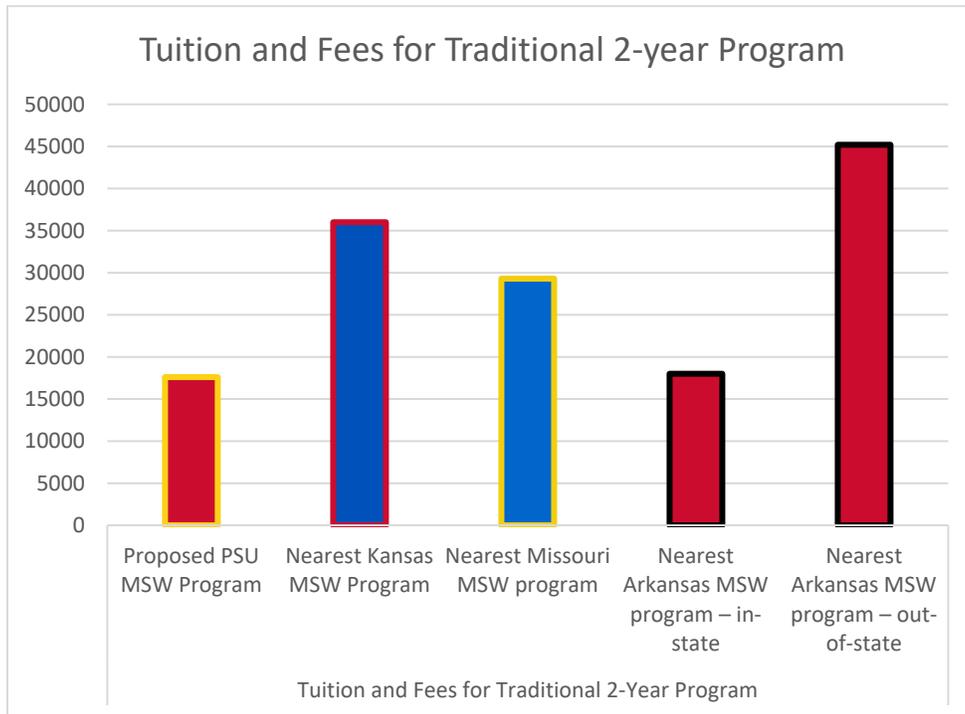
## Cost

Pittsburg State University offers a high-quality education at a lower cost than any of the in-person alternatives in the region. Students would benefit from a lower per-course-hour graduate cost which is magnified by the flat rate tuition at Pittsburg State. Students would realize a substantial cost-savings by attending an MSW program at PSU. This holds true when comparing a PSU MSW program to the current cooperative program as well.

Tuition and Fees for Advanced Standing Program				
Proposed PSU MSW Program	Nearest Kansas MSW Program	Nearest Missouri MSW program	Nearest Arkansas MSW program – in-state	Nearest Arkansas MSW program – out-of-state
\$9,190	\$18,000	\$17,600	\$9,000	\$22,600

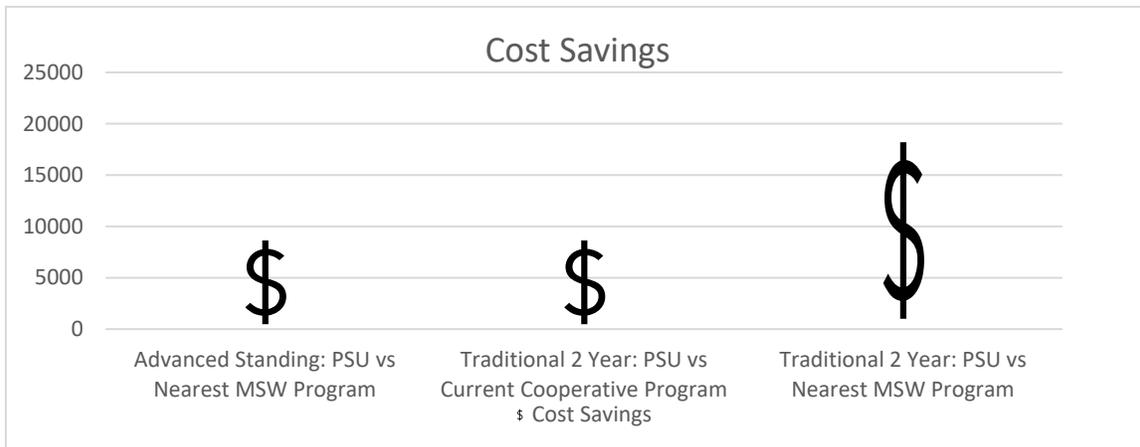


Tuition and Fees for Traditional 2-Year Program				
Proposed PSU MSW Program	Nearest Kansas MSW Program	Nearest Missouri MSW program	Nearest Arkansas MSW program – in-state	Nearest Arkansas MSW program – out-of-state
\$18,380	\$36,000	\$29,300	\$18,000	\$45,200



The potential cost savings for students is illustrated below:

Advanced Standing: PSU vs Nearest MSW program –\$8,810  
 Traditional Two-Year: PSU vs Current Cooperative Program – \$8,420  
 Traditional Two-Year: PSU vs Nearest MSW program – \$17,620



#### D. Request for Accreditation

The Commission on Accreditation (COA) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredits baccalaureate and master’s degree programs in social work education in the United States. The accreditation process is a multistep, peer-reviewed process that includes self-studies and benchmarks, site visits, and reviews. Accreditation decisions are based on the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards developed by the COA and the Commission on Educational Policy (COEP). These standards ensure that programs provide quality professional social work education and promote the development of competent social work practitioners by utilizing a competency based educational framework, which assesses students’ “...ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes to practice situations in a culturally responsive, purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being.” (Council on Social Work Education, 2022, p.5)

The Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board (BSRB) oversees licensure and regulation of professionals in the behavioral sciences, including social workers. The BSRB requires that applicants for social work licensure at any level (baccalaureate, master, or specialist) hold a degree from an accredited college or university. **Therefore, Pittsburg State University requests approval to seek CSWE accreditation for the Master of Social Work Program.** (Please see costs for accreditation in Section X.)

#### V. Projected Enrollment for the Initial Three Years of the Program

Year	Total Headcount per year		Total Sem Credit Hrs Per year	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Implementation	10	2	320	12
Year 2	15	2	480	12
Year 3	20	2	640	12

#### VI. Employment

Social workers help individuals, groups, and families prevent and cope with life’s challenges. Graduates are employed in many settings including:

- Mental health and counseling centers
- Hospitals, Hospice, and Home Health
- K-12 Schools
- Colleges and Universities
- Child welfare
- Corrections
- Probation and parole
- Assisted living centers for older adults or people with disabilities
- Addiction treatment
- Crisis centers
- Governmental agencies
- Non-profit social service agencies

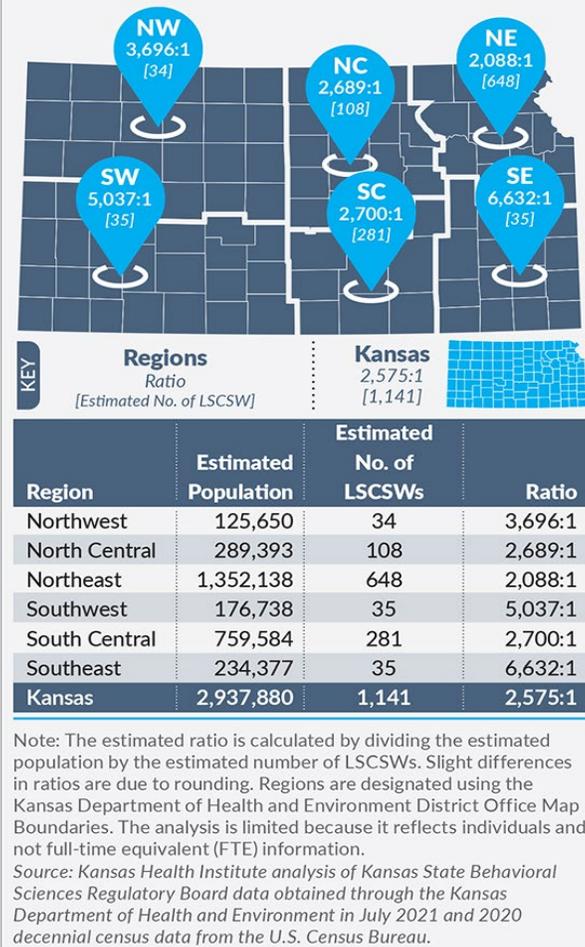
The number of social work positions is expected to continue to grow, especially in the areas of health, mental health, and substance abuse. Healthcare settings generally require an MSW for their positions, and clinical social workers are in demand in mental health centers, regionally, and across the country.

Occupational Title	Employment, 2021	Projected Employment, 2031	Change, 2021-31	
			Percent	Numeric
<b>Social workers</b>	708,100	772,100	9	64,000
<b>Child, family, and school social workers</b>	349,800	378,900	8	29,100
<b>Healthcare social workers</b>	179,500	199,300	11	19,900
<b>Mental health and substance abuse social workers</b>	119,800	133,200	11	13,300
<b>Social workers, all other</b>	59,000	60,700	3	1,700

(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023).

The Kansas Health Institute examined the behavioral health workforce shortage in Kansas and identified clinical (LSCSW) social workers as an area that needs to be addressed. Behavioral health professionals include psychiatrists and other medical professionals who can prescribe medication and other professionals who can practice independently. Of the behavioral health professionals who can practice independently, social workers comprise the largest segment of the non-prescribing workforce. Southeast Kansas has the lowest ratio of clinical social workers per resident in the state with just 35 LSCSW credentialed social workers in a 16-county area. Increasing the number of master’s level social workers in our region can begin to address this gap.

Figure 2. Population Per LSCSW in Kansas, by Region, 2021



(Kansas Health Institute, 2022).

## VII. Admission and Curriculum

### A. Admission Criteria

**Traditional MSW Program Path Admission Criteria:** A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education. An overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in the baccalaureate program. Submission of a professional resume, three references, and a narrative statement addressing motivation for pursuing an MSW degree, what the student hopes to gain from the MSW program, and future plans with the MSW degree. Additional criteria: applicants without completion of a course in addictions and/or diversity must complete these additional courses.

**Advanced Standing MSW Program Path Admission Criteria:** A bachelor's degree from a CSWE-accredited social work program. An overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in the baccalaureate program and a social work GPA of 3.0 or higher. Submission of a professional resume, three references, and a narrative statement addressing motivation for pursuing an MSW degree, what the student hopes to gain from the MSW program, and future plans with the MSW degree. Additional criteria: applicants without completion of a course in addictions and/or diversity must complete these additional courses.

### B. Curriculum

#### Traditional Program Year 1: Fall

SCH = Semester Credit Hours

Course #	Course Name	SCH
SWK 785	Human Behavior in the Social Environment	3
SWK 701	Social Work with Individuals	3
SWK 798	Social Work and the Law	3
SWK 721	Foundation Social Work Practicum I	6
SWK 722	Foundation Practicum Integrated Seminar I	1
		16 hours

#### Traditional Program Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
SWK 783	Fundamentals of Research in Social Work	3
SWK 702	Social Work with Groups	3
SWK 703	Social Work in Communities	3
SWK 723	Foundation Social Work Practicum II	6
SWK 724	Foundation Practicum Integrated Seminar II	1
		16 hours

#### Traditional Program Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH
SWK 801	Assessment and Diagnosis for Social Work Practice	2
SWK 811	Understanding Psychopharmacology	1
SWK 831	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Individuals	3
SWK 865	Mental Health Policy	3
SWK 821	Advanced Social Work Practicum I	6
SWK 822	Advanced Practicum Integrated Seminar I	1
		16 hours

#### Traditional Program Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
SWK 804	Evidence-Based Interventions with Children & Youth	1

SWK 805	Evidence-Based Interventions with Adults	1
SWK 806	Evidence-Based Interventions with Older Adults	1
SWK 802	Family Therapy	3
SWK 883	Program Evaluation	3
SWK 823	Advanced Social Work Practicum II	6
SWK 824	Advanced Practicum Integrated Seminar II	1
		16 hours

**Total Number of Semester Credit Hours ..... 64**

**Advanced MSW Program Path**

**Advanced Program Year 1: Fall**

Course #	Course Name	SCH
SWK 801	Assessment and Diagnosis for Social Work Practice	2
SWK 811	Understanding Psychopharmacology	1
SWK 831	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Individuals	3
SWK 865	Mental Health Policy	3
SWK 821	Advanced Social Work Practicum I	6
SWK 822	Advanced Practicum Integrated Seminar I	1
		16 hours

**Advanced Program Year 1: Spring**

Course #	Course Name	SCH
SWK 804	Evidence-Based Interventions with Children & Youth	1
SWK 805	Evidence-Based Interventions with Adults	1
SWK 806	Evidence-Based Interventions with Older Adults	1
SWK 802	Family Therapy	3
SWK 883	Program Evaluation	3
SWK 823	Advanced Social Work Practicum II	6
SWK 824	Advanced Practicum Integrated Seminar II	1
		16 hours

**Total Number of Semester Credit Hours ..... 32**

**VIII. Core Faculty**

Note: \* Next to Faculty Name Denotes Director of the Program, if applicable

FTE: 1.0 FTE = Full-Time Equivalency Devoted to Program

Faculty Name	Rank	Highest Degree	Tenure Track Y/N	Academic Area of Specialization	FTE to Proposed Program
Kristen Humphrey*	Professor	Ph.D.	Y	Social Work	.49
Carol Meza	Assistant Instructional Professor	Ph.D.	N	Social Work	.75
Dory Quinn	Associate Professor	Ed.D.	Y	Social Work	.51
Jeremy Wolfe	Assistant Professor	Ed.D.	Y	Social Work	.51
Staci Wolfe	Assistant Instructional	Ph.D.	N	Social Work	.20

	Professor				
TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	Social Work	.51
Kalisha Dixon	Adjunct Professor	MSW	N	Social Work	.125

Number of graduate assistants assigned to this program ..... **101**

**IX. Expenditure and Funding Sources**

<b>A. EXPENDITURES</b>	First FY	Second FY	Third FY
<b>Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions</b>			
Faculty			
Administrators ( <i>other than instruction time</i> )			
Graduate Assistants			
Support Staff for Administration ( <i>e.g., secretarial</i> )			
Fringe Benefits ( <i>total for all groups</i> )			
Other Personnel Costs			
<b>Total Existing Personnel Costs – Reassigned or Existing</b>			
<b>Personnel – New Positions</b>			
Faculty	53,000		
Administrators ( <i>other than instruction time</i> )			
Graduate Assistants			
Support Staff for Administration ( <i>e.g., secretarial</i> )			
Fringe Benefits ( <i>total for all groups</i> )	18,410		
Other Personnel Costs			
<b>Total Existing Personnel Costs – New Positions</b>	71,410		
<b>Start-up Costs - One-Time Expenses</b>			
Library/learning resources			
Equipment/Technology			
Physical Facilities: Construction or Renovation			
Other (Accreditation Fees)	40,000		
<b>Total Start-up Costs</b>	40,000		
<b>Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses</b>			
Supplies/Expenses			
Library/learning resources			
Equipment/Technology			
Travel			
Other (CSWE Dues)	3,985	3,985	4,698
<b>Total Operating Costs</b>	3,985		

<b>GRAND TOTAL COSTS</b>	115,395	3,985	4,698
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<b>B. FUNDING SOURCES</b> <i>(projected as appropriate)</i>	Current	First FY (New)	Second FY (New)	Third FY (New)
Tuition / State Funds		96,616	142,566	188,516
Student Fees				
Other Sources				
<b>GRAND TOTAL FUNDING</b>		96,616	142,566	188,516
<b>C. Projected Surplus/Deficit (+/-)</b> (Grand Total Funding <i>minus</i> Grand Total Costs)		-18,779	138,581	183,818

## X. Expenditures and Funding Sources Explanations

### A. Expenditures

#### Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions

The Council on Social Work Education requires MSW programs to have a minimum of four full-time faculty whose primary responsibility (at least 51% FTE) is dedicated to the MSW program. BSW programs are required to have a minimum of two full-time faculty whose primary responsibility is dedicated to the BSW program. Therefore, some of the faculty will need to be reassigned at least 51% time to the MSW program. The current faculty administer and teach the generalist classes for the traditional plan of study, and this will continue in the new program.

#### Personnel – New Positions

Because the social work program currently has five full-time faculty members, one more full-time faculty member will need to be hired in order to meet the four (MSW) and two (BSW) faculty minimum requirements.

#### Start-up Costs – One-Time Expenses

Below are the costs associated with the candidacy process for accreditation. Accreditation fees are subject to change by CSWE each fiscal year. The fees below are effective from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

<b>Costs for Accreditation</b>	
<b>Fee</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Letter of Intent/Candidacy Eligibility Fee	\$12,500
Candidacy Visit 1 Fee	\$7,000
Candidacy Visit 2 Fee	\$7,000
Additional Candidacy Visit Fee (if applicable)	\$2,500
Initial Accreditation Fee	\$7,000
Benchmark Document Costs (varies)	-
Candidacy Visit Expenses (Estimated)	\$4,000
<b>Anticipated Total (plus any Benchmark Document Costs, which vary)</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>

### **Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses**

To maintain candidacy or accredited status, programs are expected to be members of CSWE in good standing. Good standing means that programs have paid all [current membership dues](#) and [candidacy](#) and [reaffirmation](#) accreditation fees.

### **B. Revenue: Funding Sources**

Tuition and fee estimates are based on current PSU cost of attendance figures as listed on the university website and then calculated according to enrollment projections for full-time (16 hours per semester) and part-time (six hours per semester) students presented in Section V above. Full-time tuition is based on PSU's flat-rate in-state graduate tuition and fees of \$4,595 per semester. Part-time tuition rate is based on a student taking six credit hours per semester at PSU's part-time graduate rate of \$393 per credit hour.

### **C. Projected Surplus/Deficit**

The program would operate at a modest deficit in its first year due to the addition of a faculty member and the start-up accreditation fees. It is worth noting that if the one-time accreditation fees were removed from the calculation the program would generate a small surplus in its first year even with the additional faculty hire. Beginning in year two the program generates a substantial surplus that will grow as enrollment projections grow. Based on the three-year projections presented here, this program is economically viable.

## **XI. References**

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. (2023, May 10). *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Social Workers*. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm>.

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Snyder, C., Wu, A., Shah, H., & Lin, W-C. (2022). *Addressing behavioral health workforce needs in Kansas*. Kansas Health Institute. <https://www.khi.org/articles/addressing-behavioral-health-workforce-needs-in-kansas/>