

## Course Waiving Policy

MSW students in the Department of Social Work may be able to waive prerequisite courses and some required courses, based on previously completed academic coursework or measures of attainment on standardized tests such as CLEP (see below). *No credit can be given for non-academic “life experience.”*

Prerequisite courses for admission to the MSW program may be waived by attaining a specific level of achievement on the CLEP (College Level Examination Program) test or UMD’s Examination for Credit Program.

Waiving required courses will not reduce the number of credits required for graduation. Specific required courses may be waived by following the suggested procedures outlined below.

One faculty member will be the “course specialist” for each course which may be waived (see attached list). The specialist will:

- Use the existing course proposal, including educational goals topics covered, as a basis for examining requests to waive courses.
- Review the completed “Request to Waive” forms and seek additional information as necessary.
- Make the initial determination on whether to waive a course or not.
- Consult with the DGS as necessary.

### Suggested Procedure

Students should be informed of the waiving policy early in the admitting process. They should contact their advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) if they have any questions regarding this policy.

Students will complete a “Request to Waive” form, which they will forward to their faculty advisor. The student may include course descriptions, syllabi, bibliographies, and other materials to document the similarity of previous coursework to the course they are seeking to waive.

The faculty advisor will forward the request to the specialist for the course. If the specialist decides the course should be waived based on the information on the form, they will sign the form in the appropriate space and forward it to the DGS.

If the specialist needs additional information from the student in order to make an informed judgment on the request to waive a course, she or he may request that the student provide additional documentation regarding the achievement of course competencies. Some specialists may require an interview with the student, a written exam, or completion of a final course exam as part of the documentation necessary to waive a course.

If the specialist decides not to approve the request, he or she should write a brief rationale for this decision, sign the form in the appropriate space, and forward all materials to the DGS.

The DGS will review the request and decision, notify the student of the decision, and place the form in the student's file.

If the DGS disagrees with the specialist's decision, the two should develop a mutually agreeable plan to resolve the disagreement.

The student has a right to appeal a decision regarding waiving.

In the event that one or more students waive out of a beginning level course and desire a more advanced course relating to the course content, the subject area specialist should attempt to develop an independent study or special topics course to meet this need.

After a student has waived one or more courses, the subject area specialist(s) and the advisor should explore with the student which MSW elective courses (especially courses in priority areas) may supplement and complement the courses, which they have waived.

The waiver of required courses will be noted on the Graduate School program papers with this notation: [waived courses not included in credit count:...list courses...]

**Course requirements which may be waived by subject area specialist by 51-credit students**

SW 5201	Social Welfare Policy	Melanie Shepard
SW 5101	Human Behavior in the Social Environment	Denny Falk
SW 8100	Social Work with Diverse Populations	Kathy Heltzer
SW 8101	Introduction to Research	Denny Falk

**Course requirements which may be waived by 34-credit students**

Courses will be examined on a course-by-course basis.