Social Work Program Accreditation Schedule Under Review

Since 2008, Arkansas State University’s master of social work (MSW) program has been a candidate for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).  Thus far, the program has met all benchmarks successfully in the four-step accreditation process and is on track to achieve accreditation.

The decision on the accreditation initially was expected in the summer of 2011.  However, while looking more closely at the accreditation guidelines and through additional consultation with CSWE, the university has discovered that the accreditation is actually on schedule to be granted in summer 2012.

Officials in the ASU social work program understand fully that this change in schedule is very problematic for the students who had expected to graduate from an accredited program in May 2011, which would make them eligible for the state Licensed Master Social Worker examination.  State law provides that only graduates of an accredited master of social work program may sit for the exam, which is administered by the Arkansas Social Work Licensing Board.

The university has set a very high priority on exploring every feasible option through which it may assist students who are nearing completion of the program, such as determining if the final steps for accreditation can be achieved on an accelerated schedule, or if alternative licensure methods might be available to the students.

 The university is committed to minimizing the impact this change in the accreditation schedule will have on students by working tirelessly to develop an array of options through consultation with CSWE, employers of licensed social workers, the Arkansas Social Work Licensing Board, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and other institutions of higher education.

 As these alternatives are considered, the dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions will keep affected students in the MSW program fully informed of any new developments as information becomes available.

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