MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Smith College School for Social Work is to advance the aims of the profession through education for excellence in clinical social work practice and through the development and dissemination of knowledge.

The School for Social Work views clinical social work practice as concerned with the interdependence between individuals and their environments and the use of relationships to promote healing, growth and empowerment. Clinical social work appreciates and responds to the complexities of the human condition in its global context: its strengths, possibilities, resiliency, vulnerabilities, limitations and tragedies. Clinical social work expresses the core values of the profession, including recognition of client self-determination, the importance of relationship, the inherent dignity of client systems and growth and change in the client system. In addition, clinical social work includes a commitment to the pursuit of social justice, anti-racism work, and culturally responsive practice. It rests upon a liberal arts base and integrates evolving theories and research-informed knowledge about individuals, families, groups, communities and the larger social systems in which they are embedded.

In its educational practices, the School promotes critical thinking and self-reflection to help students expand their knowledge in the substantive areas of human behavior and the social environment, social work practice, research, social policy and field practice to prepare competent and effective practitioners and leaders in clinical social work. The School prepares students to apply the professional code of ethics.

The School prepares students for the evaluation and dissemination of evolving theories, research and practice models.

The School shares with the social work profession its historic commitment to serve oppressed, disadvantaged and at risk members of our society and to struggle against inequality and oppression related to: race, ethnicity, immigration status, class, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age and ability. It is committed to implementing a curriculum that addresses the concerns, issues and interests of these populations. Through all of its programs, the School joins Smith College in its commitment to promote social justice, service to society and greater appreciation of individual and cultural diversity in a multicultural community. In recognition of the pernicious consequences of racism, the School works to identify and challenge the overt and covert aspects of racism.

The School implements its educational mission through its master’s and doctoral degree programs both of which include intensive block field internships, required individual research projects and its Program of Continuing Education, including its certificate programs. Through its publications, including Smith Studies in Social Work, the Clinical Research Institute, faculty and student publications and conference presentations, the School also contributes to the development and dissemination of knowledge relevant for social work. In its affiliation with a liberal arts college, the School places a priority on the process of teaching and learning. The School maintains relationships of mutual respect and influence with its affiliated agencies, major professional organizations and other representatives of the social work practice community to aid in curriculum renewal and to contribute to the development of the profession as a whole.

- voted and affirmed November 2018

Statement on Philosophy of Inclusion

The social work profession serves diverse communities and individuals that include a wide spectrum of identities, backgrounds and experiences. The assumption of the faculty of Smith College School for Social Work is that social work is most effective when engaged in by a diverse and inclusive workforce.

We thus believe that our learning community must also be enriched by the same diversity our profession serves.

In keeping with our mission, we comply with all applicable federal non-discrimination statutes. We welcome all students regardless of identities, backgrounds and experiences, who are able to meet the educational standards of the School and the profession. We believe that the responsibility for respecting difference and the active inclusion of all members of our learning community is shared by each of us at the School, individually and collectively.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Smith College is committed to maintaining a diverse community in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation of differences.

Smith College does not discriminate in its educational and employment policies on the bases of race, color, creed, religion, national/ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, age, disability, or service in the military or other uniformed services.

Smith’s admission policies and practices are guided by the same principle, concerning applicants to the undergraduate program who identify as women, and all applicants to the graduate programs.

The following office has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

The Office for Equity and Inclusion
College Hall 302
Northampton, MA 01063

Floyd Cheung
Vice President for Equity and Inclusion
Phone: 413-585-2121
Email: fcheung@smith.edu

Religious Accommodation

Students in an educational institution who, because of their religious beliefs, are unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study or work requirement which they may have missed because of that absence, provided that the make-up examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon the School. The institution shall not charge a fee of any kind for making this opportunity available to students. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to students availing themselves of the provision of this section.

Council on Social Work Education Professional Competencies

The Smith College School for Social Work its curriculum and policies are guided by the Council on Social Work Education’s nine professional competencies:
Mission Statement

- Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
- Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice
- Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
- Engage in Policy Practice
- Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
- Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
- Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
- Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities