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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



Child Welfare Education for Leadership

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2014-2015

Child Welfare Education and Research Programs

School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh

The Child Welfare Education and Research Programs are a collaborative effort of the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work and its partner schools, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators

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***The CWEL Handbook is updated each academic year.
We recommend that you read it carefully,
even if you are familiar with previous versions.***

As usual, changes for the current year are highlighted in yellow.

***All information on how to request expense reimbursement is now in a
separate document, the 'CWEL Expense Reimbursement Guide'***

IMPORTANT NOTICE

***During this academic year, ALL expense reimbursements
will be moving online – Look out for email notices of what you
will need to do as these changes take effect.***

CWEL STUDENT HANDBOOK

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the CWEL program!!

This handbook clarifies some frequently asked questions and includes requirements that you must take into consideration in planning your academic, field, and work schedules.

CWEL is a graduate-level, child welfare education program governed by the federal Title IV-E regulations contained in 45 CFR, Ch. II, Part 235 and Ch. XIII, Part 1356. The academic and work requirements described in this handbook are necessary in order to maintain compliance with both state and federal regulations and for effective program management. We take a special interest in our students and are committed to supporting your professional growth and development.

Always review this Handbook before you contact us to save time.

- The Principal Investigator of the CWEL program is Dr. Helen Cahalane.
- Academic and other school issues, including tuition, are handled by the Academic Coordinator, Dr. Liz Winter.
- County agency issues are handled by the Agency Coordinator, Dr. Yodit Betru.
- Ms. Yvonne Hamm handles many CWEL program issues and can help direct you to someone else if need be.

Contact CWEL

TOLL-FREE NUMBER: 1-866-ASK-CWEL

Fax: 412-624-1159

<http://www.socialwork.pitt.edu/research/child-welfare/cwel.php>

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II. COMMUNICATION WITH CWEL

Please Be Considerate When Contacting CWEL!

1. Before you contact us, read the Handbook – many of the answers to your questions are here!
2. Only contact ONE person at CWEL – it is a waste of time for more than one person to be answering the same question! If you contact the wrong person, we will make sure to get your question to the person who can help you.
3. Keep your Child Welfare Education Programs (CWEP) ID number where you can find it easily (for example, in your phone). Your CWEP ID will be used throughout your participation in CWEL and following your graduation.

(i) There are several requirements that you will need to attend to upon admission to CWEL.

<i>Requirements Immediately Following CWEL Admission</i>		
When you receive your CWEL admission letter	Submit enclosed FERPA Release	Required before CWEL funds are released Remember to get a witness signature!
	Submit enclosed Agreement	Required before CWEL funds are released Remember to get a witness signature!
	Submit W9	Required before CWEL funds are released
Before your first semester starts	Submit MapQuest	If you qualify for travel reimbursement
As soon as possible	Sign Contract with CWEL and your County	Required for participation in CWEL

(ii) Email and the web are the primary modes of communication between CWEL and students. Students must provide current, valid county, school and personal email addresses to CWEL. Students are responsible for monitoring their email regularly. Most emails from the CWEL program are time sensitive and students are responsible for meeting deadlines.

TIPS!

- Adjust filter settings to allow email from CWEL faculty and staff
- Regularly check “junk” or “spam” email folders for CWEL messages
- Add CWEL program staff email addresses to your “safe sender” list when enrolling in the CWEL program or when adding a new email address

- (iii) CWEL faculty travel to school campuses annually to meet with students. **Attendance at your campus meeting is a requirement.** If you are unable to attend your scheduled meeting, contact CWEL to make arrangements to attend at another campus in your area **or at the University of Pittsburgh.**
- (iv) **CWEL STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM: Every semester, students are required to submit their Student Information including courses and field to CWEL at www.cwerp.pitt.edu, whether taking classes that semester, or not.** If you are not taking classes, you will enter “No Courses”.

Your Student Information serves several functions, and is necessary for academic tracking and auditing purposes. This information includes data such as:

- ✓ Current, valid work, school, and home email addresses
- ✓ Current valid home address
- ✓ Current valid work, home, and cell phone numbers
- ✓ Classes and field being taken **EVERY SEMESTER**, including credit hours
- ✓ Days of the week attending school
- ✓ Internship site, type, and days of the week you are in field
- ✓ Your anticipated graduation date

TIP!! Updating Your Student Information Every Semester

Log in: Go to www.cwerp.pitt.edu

Your Username: Your CWEP ID

Your Password: Is the first letter of your first name, followed by the last 4 digits of your Social Security #, and followed by the first letter of your last name

Example: Name, *John Doe*; the last 4 digits of SS#, *1234*; the password is: *J1234D*

For technical assistance, contact Ms. Yvonne Hamm at 412-624-7273 or yvh4@pitt.edu.

Tuition and expenses are not released unless your information is current.

- (v) If your name changes, complete and send in a new W9 (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>) AND contact Ms. Yvonne Hamm to let her know your new name.

- (vi) If your address changes, complete and send in a new W9 (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>) AND update your online Student Information.
- (vii) If your email address changes, update your online Student Information.
- (viii) There are several other required periodic contacts with the CWEL program. For your convenience, these requirements are shown in the following tables. Page references to the relevant locations in the Handbook are shown in the tables below.

Remember to Check the Rest of the Handbook for Details
(This is just a quick overview for your convenience)

When	Action	Notes	Page/s
Every Month	Submit Expense Reimbursement Request (at end of each month)	Delayed expense requests may be refused	See Expense Guide
Every Semester Whether or not you have classes!	Enter Courses in CWEL Student Information System (when you receive email notification)	Required before CWEL funds released	5
Annually	Request funding for summer courses and/or field (when you receive email notification in early Spring)	Required to ensure availability of funding	11-12
	Complete Program Evaluation Survey (when you receive email notification)	Required CWEL program evaluation	8
During Course of Study	Complete CWEL Academic requirements	Confirmation from your school is required to ensure program compliance	11-17

Remember to See the Rest of the Handbook for Details

When	Action	Reason	Page/s
As needed	Contact Dr. Winter	Withdrawal from class	12
		If Add/Drop class after Student Info in	17
		Incomplete grade	12
		Failed class / need to retake	12
		Academic Review or Probation	12
		You may need a leave from school	12
		Your GPA falls below 3.0	12
		Your field placement changes	12
		Your expected graduation date changes	12
		You want to take an online course	11
	Your school credits your student account	18	
	Contact Dr. Betru	You have performance problems or work-related concerns at your agency	8
	Submit new MapQuest to Ms. Yvonne Hamm	You travel to a different campus, or move, and qualify for mileage	See Expense Guide
	Update CWEL Online Student Information	You have a new mailing / email address	6
Contact Ms. Yvonne Hamm AND Submit a new W9	Your name changes	6	
Contact Ms. Yvonne Hamm AND Submit a new W9	You have a new address	6	

III. PROGRAM EVALUATION

- (i) CWEL conducts an annual program evaluation with participating county agencies, school partners, graduates, and students, which is reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and other stakeholders. The evaluation includes student, agency, and school satisfaction, along with data on recruitment, completion, and retention.

- (ii) **Please complete your online survey, when you receive the request. Your input is needed and your feedback has a positive impact upon the program.** A high return rate is needed for effective evaluation and to offer important information to state and federal regulators.

IV. AGENCY-RELATED ISSUES

- (i) All full-time students are required to return to their agency for work assignments during the summer and whenever there is a break from school greater than 15 working days.
- (ii) CWEL reimburses salaries and benefits to agencies for full-time students. Reimbursement continues uninterrupted throughout the summer months and during school breaks.
- (iii) Students remain agency employees during their time in school and are governed by agency personnel policies and procedures.
- (iv) Contact Dr. Betru or Dr. Winter immediately concerning any potential change from part time to full time study, or vice versa. This requires approval from your agency, school, and CWEL.
- (v) Contact Dr. Betru immediately regarding **any** work performance-related issues at your agency, including disciplinary meetings, warnings, suspensions, and potential/actual termination.

V. COMMITMENT AND RECOUPMENT OF FUNDS

- (i) All students are subject to the legally binding commitment to work for their agency upon program completion. For full-time students, this is for a period of time equal in number of full months to the number of full and partial months for which they received CWEL financial support. For part-time students, commitments are computed based on the percentage of the degree funded by CWEL and the amount of time needed to complete the degree by a full-time regular admission student. Before any time may be counted toward fulfillment of agency commitment, **all** graduation requirements **and** all CWEL academic requirements must be completed. Following return to the agency, graduates must be providing Title IV-E services.
- (ii) On completion of the CWEL program students will receive a letter containing details of their commitment, once relevant information has been received from schools and processed.

TIP!

Commitment letters are issued approximately three months after program completion.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Program Completion and Recoupment

Students who fail to graduate, leave the CWEL program prior to graduation, are dismissed from the CWEL program during their course of study, or fail to fulfill their entire commitment by maintaining their agency employment upon graduation, are obligated to repay the full amount of any tuition, fees, salary, benefits, travel, and book/educational supply expenses paid to them or on their behalf during their enrollment in CWEL.

Please note that the commitment period must be completed in full or the full amount paid on the student's behalf becomes repayable; repayment amounts are not prorated.

VI. ADMISSIONS and ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- (i) Students are admitted to CWEL with either regular or provisional status. If, for any reason, CWEL is concerned about a student’s ability to be successful in the CWEL program, that student may be admitted with provisional status. Admission with provisional CWEL status is at the sole discretion of the CWEL Admissions Committee.

Note: This is a CWEL program status and is separate from your school admission status.

A student admitted with provisional status must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 by the end of the first semester of study within the CWEL program. Provisional status for students who achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the end of the first semester of study will be changed from provisional to regular status at that time.

Any provisional student who does not achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the end of the first semester of study described above will be dismissed from the CWEL program at that time. Provisional students who are dismissed from CWEL will be subject to the recoupment provision in Section V (page 9) in relation to all funds paid to them or on their behalf during their participation in the CWEL program.

- (ii) Students are accepted by CWEL for either full-time study or part-time study. Students who remain in full-time work must follow the part-time course of study at by their school **and may take up to 9 credits (or three courses) in Fall and Spring semesters.** **Part-time students may not stay in their agencies for full-time work AND follow a full-time course of study.** Students may not pay for additional classes themselves to avoid compliance with this or any other requirement.

Admitted by CWEL	Student study and work requirements
As a Full Time (FT) Student	Is granted educational leave by agency
	Returns to agency for work during academic breaks of 15 days or more and during the summer
	Follows FT course of study only
As a Part Time (PT) Student	Remains at agency for full time work
	Follows PT course of study only (limited to 9 credits in Fall and Spring semesters)

- (iii) All incoming CWEL students must complete and return the following documents (properly completed and witnessed where indicated).

These documents are included with the CWEL admission letter:

- a. Initial CWEL agreement
- b. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) release of information form, and
- c. A W9

Until these documents are received, no CWEL funds can be released.

- (iv) Students enrolled in graduate school prior to CWEL funding must provide a transcript of their grades to date as part of their CWEL application. **Students already enrolled must submit and receive CWEL approval for their proposed remaining course of study.**
- (v) **All CWEL students must enroll in a direct practice (clinical) concentration or specialization** unless the position held prior to school enrollment was an administrative or supervisory one. An exception to this may occur where an agency confirms in writing to CWEL that the position which the student will hold following CWEL program completion will be administrative or supervisory in nature.
- (vi) **Certificate programs outside of those in child welfare studies are not permitted for CWEL students.** For example, Home and School Visitor and Play Therapy are not allowed. Deviating from these guidelines places the CWEL program in jeopardy and represents a violation of Title IV-E educational standards.
- (vii) **You are required to take a minimum of two child welfare-related courses during your academic program.** Courses have been pre-approved for each partnering school. Students at some schools may have additional academic requirements. **Please see the list of approved courses and specific school requirements** at the end of this section.
- (viii) Graduate social work programs require two field placements, one during the first year and the other in year two. One placement is typically required for students with advanced standing from an accredited baccalaureate social work program. **At least one placement must be a child and family focused placement in a public or private program serving Title IV-E eligible clientele.** In collaboration with your school, we will work with you in determining whether a potential placement meets this requirement. **For students with two placements, the child and family focused placement should be the second placement.**

Note: CWEL students may not accept paid field placements

- (ix) **CWEL students may not register for any classes with a foreign travel component,** even if they are able to pay for the class using non-CWEL funds.
- (x) CWEL students may take a **maximum of two courses online** as part of their degree studies. Policy, research, or theory (Human Behavior in the Social Environment) courses may be taken online. **CWEL students may not take online practice courses, such as Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents or Family Focused Social Work Practice.**
- (xi) Under the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) guidelines, both full-time and part-time students must complete graduate social work degrees within four years. For full-time CWEL students, completion is expected within two years.
- (xii) Students may wish to take course or fieldwork in the summer. For full-time students, summer enrollment is in addition to the requirement of returning to their agency for full-time employment. **All summer courses must be approved in advance by the CWEL program and preference is given to part-time students whose course of study includes summer courses.**

(xiii) Sometimes students encounter academic difficulty during their graduate studies. We will collaborate with you and your school to help resolve any academic difficulties which may occur.

You need to contact Dr. Liz Winter concerning any academic progress issues.

Contact Dr. Winter if:

- **You plan to withdraw from a course**
- **You have an Incomplete grade**
- **You fail or have to retake a course (or expect to)**
- **You have an Academic Review or Probation**
- **You may need a leave from school for any reason**
- **Your Grade Point Average falls below 3.0**
- **Your field placement changes**
- **Your expected graduation date changes**

APPROVED CHILD WELFARE COURSES BY SCHOOL

Please note:

- Course offerings may change and not all elective courses may be available in any one academic year or at your primary campus
- Required, general social work courses (e.g., first-level human behavior, cultural diversity, administration) do not meet the child welfare course requirement.

Bryn Mawr College

REQUIRED for all CWEL Students:

SOWK 566 A,B,C,D - Child and Family Integrative Seminar (non-credit - 4 semesters)

Plus two of the following:

SOWK 574 Child Welfare Policy, Practice and Research
SOWK 567 Clinical Social Work and Substance Abuse
SOWK 572 Clinical Social Work and Trauma
SOWK 565 Clinical Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents
SOWK 559 Family Therapy: Theory and Practice

California University of Pennsylvania

Two of the following:

SWK 816 Practice with Children & Youth In Rural & Small Town Environments
SWK 821 Practice in Substance Abuse/Addictions In Rural & Small Town Environments
SWK 840 Advanced Practice in Child Welfare

Edinboro University

REQUIRED for all CWEL Students:

SOWK 741 Child Welfare
SOWK 743 Addictions

APPROVED CHILD WELFARE COURSES BY SCHOOL

Kutztown University

REQUIRED for all CWEL Students:

- SWK 538, 538, & 540 Practice of Family Group Decision Making (3 cr.)
- SWK 559 Interventions with Substance Abusing Populations (1 cr.)
- SWK 508 Maltreatment in the Family (1 cr.)
- SWK 545 Child Permanence and the Family-In-Environment (1 cr.)

Marywood University

- SW 535 Child Welfare Services (was Child Welfare Practice and Services)
- SW 561 Family Focused Social Work Practice
- SW 536 Social Work Practice with Children
- SW 625 Critical Issues in Chemical Dependence
- SW 900 Social Work Perspectives on Trauma

ONLY students who started school before Fall 2013 may count SW 621, Social Work Perspectives on Psychopathology, as one of their CWEL-approved courses.

Millersville / Shippensburg Universities

- SOWK 605 Child Welfare
- SOWK 611 Children and Youth at Risk
- SOWK 602 Advanced Behavioral Healthcare
- SOWK 640 Addictions

APPROVED CHILD WELFARE COURSES BY SCHOOL

University of Pennsylvania

SWRK 706	Policies for Children and Their Families
SWRK 722	Practice with Children and Adolescents
SWRK 719	Prenatal and Early Childhood Development
SWRK 720	Middle Childhood and Adolescence
SWRK 727	Practice with Families
SWRK 742	Practice with At-Risk Youth
SWRK 759	Substance Abuse Interventions
SWRK 799	Violence in Relationships Through the Lifespan
SWRK 796	Poverty, Welfare and Work

ONLY students who started school before Fall 2014 may count SW 760, Mental Health Diagnostics, as one of their CWEL-approved courses.

The following courses are under review – contact Dr. Winter for details.

SWRK 733	Mental Health Challenges in Childhood and Adolescence
SWRK 798	Clinical and Macro Child Welfare Practice
SWRK 798	Integrative Seminar in Child Welfare

University of Pittsburgh

REQUIRED for all CWEL Students:

SWBEH 2062	Children and Families at Risk
SWWEL 2059	Child and Family Policy

Plus two of the following:

SWINT 2047	Child Permanency
SWINT 2063	Child Maltreatment
SWINT 2049	Direct Practice with Children and Adolescents
SWINT 2087	Family Group Decision Making
SWINT 2035	Intimate Partner Violence
SWINT 2096	Social Work Practice with African American Families
SWINT 2042	Social Work Practice with Drug and Alcohol Dependent Persons
SWINT 2011	Social Work Practice with Families
SWINT 2087	Social Work Practice and Traumatic Stress

APPROVED CHILD WELFARE COURSES BY SCHOOL

Temple University

REQUIRED for all CWEL Students starting school in or after Fall 2011:

- SW 8403 Child and Family Human Behavior in the Social Environment
- SW 8407 Child and Family Policy

Plus two of the following:

- SW 8803 Emotional Disorders of Children and Adolescents
- SW 8811 Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- SW 8824 Assessment and the DSM-IV

Students in the Management and Planning concentration should contact Dr. Winter to discuss their CWEL academic requirements.

West Chester University

- SWG 576 Child Welfare: A Resilience and Trauma-Informed Approach
- SWG 562 Advanced Social Work Practice with Families
- SWG 570 Substance Use Disorders

Widener University

- SW 648 Child Welfare: Practice and Policy
- SW 642 Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents
- SW 660 Advanced Social Work Practice with Families
- SW 663 Social Work Practice with Addicted Persons and Their Families
- SW 664 Treating Trauma
- SW 626 Biographical Timeline
- SW Social Work with Urban Youth

VII. TUITION BILLING AND PAYMENTS

- (i) Unless you are a student at the University of Pittsburgh, your school fiscal office has been advised that you are a CWEL student; we work closely with schools regarding billing issues.
- (ii) **Your tuition bill is never paid until several weeks into the semester. Schools invoice CWEL every semester for all CWEL students after the Add/Drop period. It takes an average of one month to process payments and credit accounts after schools generate final invoices.** CWEL reviews your school's invoice against the course information that you have entered into your online Student Information, resolves any questions, and then requests payment through the University of Pittsburgh's payment system. The check is processed and sent to CWEL and we forward it to your school, which then credits every student's individual account. You will still receive a bill each semester from your school even though you are obtaining Title IV-E educational funds through CWEL.

TIPS!

- **Confirm directly to your school's fiscal/Bursar's office that you are a CWEL student. Depending on your school, you may need to do this every semester.**
- **If you receive notices that you are being dropped from classes, then:**
 - ✓ **Reconfirm with your school that you are a CWEL student, and**
 - ✓ **Contact Dr. Winter, who will also contact your school**
- **If you have an outstanding balance on your account after tuition has been paid, find out from your school what it is for, before contacting CWEL, so you can let us know exactly what has not been paid or make payment yourself. For example, if you have a library fine, it is not covered by CWEL.**

- (iii) **University of Pittsburgh Students:** Every semester, email a PDF of your bill **at least one week prior to the due date** to Dr. Winter, so that payment can be approved and credited. CWEL does not send tuition bill reminders and students are responsible for late fees incurred if bills are not received at least one week prior to the due date.
- (iv) **Adding and Dropping courses:** You need to notify Dr. Winter if you add or drop courses **after** you have entered your courses into the CWEL Student Information System each semester. If, for example, we have paid your bill prior to the addition of another class, your account will carry an unpaid balance. This can stop you registering for the next semester and may result in late fees that will be your responsibility. In your final semester, unpaid balances may prevent you from officially graduating, receiving your diploma or your final transcript. Also, if you add, drop or withdraw from a course after a university deadline which results in a late charge OR only a partial refund of payment, you will be responsible for that charge or tuition balance.

- (v) **Please note that the department crediting your account at school may not be the same department that sends the bill to CWEL.** This means that you might receive a notice stating that your tuition is unpaid, that a late charge has been added, or that your registration is on hold. Despite the reasons for these administrative matters, we know that it does cause concern when you receive notices from student financial services. Please contact Dr. Winter with any questions regarding payment of your tuition.
- (vi) CWEL students are not entitled to tuition/fee refunds from their respective school. These funds belong to the CWEL program. Notify Dr. Winter if any monies are credited to your account.
- (vii) Restrictions on the use of CWEL funds

CWEL Funds Cannot Be Used For:

- a. **Dual degree programs or certificate programs (other than child welfare).** This includes programs such as the MSW/MPA, MSS/MLSP, MSW/MPH, MSW/JD, etc. Funds also cannot be used for partial payment of dual degree programs.
- b. Tuition or other costs related to the completion of courses which are **prerequisites** for the student's graduate Social Work education.
- c. **Costs related to courses with an overseas travel component.** If you are uncertain about whether a course falls into this category, please contact Dr. Winter **before** registering for the course.
- d. **Pre-existing tuition or fee charges** for those students who started school prior to CWEL participation.
- e. **Accident or health insurance.** Some schools require that you submit a waiver for health insurance, otherwise students are charged a health insurance premium for the year. Other schools require that each student have individual accident insurance. **The CWEL program cannot pay these charges and it is the student's responsibility to monitor correspondence and bills from your school.**