Submitted by: Margaret E. Winters, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

ESTABLISHMENT OF A GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK THEORY AND PRACTICE

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the Graduate Certificate in Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice effective January 2015.

Background

The primary goal of the proposed certificate program in *Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice* is to provide post-masters social workers with advanced preparation in clinical social work theory and applied clinical practice. The purpose of the proposed program addition is to offer a course of postgraduate education for those who are considering careers in clinical social work teaching, scholarship, and research, as well as for leadership positions in the greater clinical social work community. Multiple surveys of alumni, local agencies, and community professionals conducted by the School of Social Work over the last twenty-five years reveal a strong interest in advanced (post-masters) clinical education. Furthermore, no such certificate program with an emphasis on clinical scholarship exists in the region.

Although the School currently offers a *Clinical Scholarship Track* within its existing doctoral program, it is possible that certain students may either be undecided about pursuing a full course of doctoral study or may be interested in pursuing an advanced course of study without the research requirements associated with doctoral study. A certificate program such as the one proposed would offer both groups of students the opportunity to study clinical theory and applied clinical practice at an advanced, post-masters level, but without the additional requirements of our doctoral program. For the first group, participation in the certificate program may ultimately lead them to apply for admission to the regular doctoral program, while for the second group, they will have had an opportunity to complete a short course of study specifically designed for postgraduates with such clinical interests.

Program Description

The primary goal of the proposed certificate program in *Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice* is to provide post-masters social workers with advanced preparation in clinical social work theory and applied clinical practice.

Students completing the certificate program will refine their understanding and skills in the following areas:

- Development of a capacity to articulate, compare, and contrast two or more theoretical systems associated with contemporary clinical social work practice, especially psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral theories, thus broadening students'

understanding of the ways in which multiple theories conceptualize development, personality, behavior, and psychopathology.

- Capacity to critique existing empirical literature of various theoretical models associated with clinical practice, paying special attention to whether the research can be generalized to include the unique populations served by clinical social workers.

- Understanding and developing proficiency in the techniques, approaches, and common treatment issues surrounding clinical social work practice.

- Critically examining clinical issues associated with specific diagnostic classifications such as mood disorders, anxiety disorders, trauma, personality disorders, and substance abuse, with special attention to their origins, how the symptoms are manifested in the bio-psychosocial context.

- Identifying the role of oppression, socio-political context, and environmental considerations in therapeutic and/or supervisory relationships and ways in which these issues shape the development of clinical social work treatment relationships.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet the Admission standards of the Graduate School and the School of Social Work. Applicants must hold a master's degree in social work, must have two or more years of post-master's supervised professional experience in clinical social work.

Curriculum Requirements

Eighteen (18) semester credits will be required for the *Certificate in Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice*. All of these courses are existing courses in the School of Social Work Ph.D. program. These include:
- 6 credit hours of theory for practice with individuals, groups, and families
- 3 credit hours in advanced clinical social work theory
- 6 credit hours in applied clinical social work practice
- 3 credit hours of an advanced social work elective.

Graduation Requirements

All coursework must be completed in accordance with Graduate School and the regulations governing graduate scholarship and degrees.

Both full-time and part-time students will be permitted to enroll in the certificate program. All students must have a plan of work that is developed upon admission. Progress toward certificate completion will be chronicled in the student's annual review. Students must complete requirements for the certificate within three years. All credit hours of B or above earned under the Certificate will be accepted in the Ph.D. Program.

Program Administration

The Ph.D. Program Faculty committee oversees the establishment of goals and policies for the Ph.D. program and associated certificates. This committee oversees admission processes, day-to-day operations of doctoral classes and certificates and program evaluation.

The doctoral director handles advising of certificate students. For the clinical certificate, advising responsibilities will be shared between the doctoral director and the coordinator of the Clinical Scholarship Track.

Budget and Resource Requirements

No additional funding is requested. All expenses will be covered by existing funding for the School of Social Work's Ph.D. program.

Accreditation

The Council on Social Work Education accredits Bachelors and Masters Programs only; no accreditation is possible.

Approvals

The proposal for the Certificate Program in Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice was approved by the Faculty and Dean Waites of the School of Social Work, Graduate School Dean Mathur, and the Graduate Council.