



8-29-2011

## Closing of the MSW course offerings in Memphis, Tennessee (Follow-up SACSCOC Response)

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August 29, 2011

Dr. Katherine N. High  
Vice President for Academic  
Affairs and Student Success  
The University of Tennessee  
825 C. Andy Holt Tower  
Knoxville, TN 37996

Dear Dr. High:

Thank you for your letter of August 11, 2011, providing the information we requested concerning the closing of the M.S.S.W. program at the Memphis campus.

The program was closed, effective May 31, 2011, due to shifting enrollments and the availability of several other M.S.W. programs at area universities. The University continues to offer the M.S.W. at its Nashville and Knoxville campuses and online. Students were notified of the impending closure in fall 2009, via letters mailed to their residences, e-mail, posting on the website of the College of Social Work, and meetings with College officials.

Courses in the program were offered such that all currently enrolled students would be able to complete the program by May 2011, and were counseled on completion by the Dean and faculty. The two students who did not complete their coursework by the closure date are enrolled in the distance education M.S.S.W. program.

Faculty were notified of the impending closure in fall 2009, by letter and by meetings with the Dean of the College of Social Work. No faculty were terminated; all were assured in writing of the continuation of their positions with the College and with UT-Knoxville and that the University would cover relocation costs. Faculty were reassigned to teach in the M.S.S.W. program at either Nashville or Knoxville. In actuality, three faculty members resigned to accept positions at University of Memphis, two retired before the date of closure and another is retiring as of September 2011. Thus none of the faculty from the closed program chose to transfer to another campus.

We accept the information on closure of the M.S.S.W. program at UT-Memphis and require no additional information.



Page 2  
Dr. High  
August 29, 2011

Please be aware that, because of recent changes in USDOE regulations, effective July 1, 2001, closure of a program requires notification and submission of a teach-out plan for approval (rather than only notification). In the future, notification and the teach-out plan should be submitted at least three months prior to the closure. The date of closure is that date on which no new students will be admitted to the program. The teach-out plan must include:

- Date of closure.
- An explanation of how affected parties (students, faculty, staff) will be informed of the impending closure.
- An explanation of how students will be helped to complete their programs of study with minimal disruption or additional expense.
- Signed copies of teach-out agreements with other institutions, if any.
- How faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.  
President

BSW/SLA:efk

cc: Dr. Joseph A. DiPietro, President  
Dr. Steven M. Sheeley