



Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

June 6, 2023

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.
Acting Secretary of Higher Education
Maryland Higher Education Commission

Dear Dr. Rai,

Please find attached Morgan State University's objection to Coppin State University's proposed offering of the Master of Social Work/Doctorate of Social Work (#23228). Morgan State University objects to this proposal because the offering at Coppin State University would be a substantial duplication of our recently approved DSW program (#22283) and would cause demonstrable harm by impacting our initial opening of the DSW program this fall. We contend that the MSW also presents duplication of and harm to our existing MSW program. Thank you for your consideration of our objection. If you need additional information, please contact me at Hongtao.Yu@morgan.edu or (443)885-3350.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hongtao Yu, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Morgan State University

cc: Dr. Emily Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, MHEC
Dr. David Wilson, President, Morgan State University (MSU)
Dr. Phyllis Keys, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, MSU
Dr. Anna McPhatter, Dean, School of Social Work, MSU



Formal Objection to New Academic Programs Proposed by Coppin State University: MSW and DSW Programs

The Morgan State University School of Social Work objects to the addition of the MSW and the DSW Programs proposed by the Social Work Department at Coppin State University for the reasons below. Based on the parameters provided by the Maryland Higher Education Commission, we object based on the following areas:

- 1) Inconsistency of the proposed program with the institution's approved mission for a public institution of higher education and the mission statement published in the official catalog of a nonpublic institution of higher education;
- 2) Not meeting a regional or statewide need consistent with the State Plan for Postsecondary Education; and
- 3) Unreasonable program duplication which would cause demonstrable harm to another institution.

Inconsistency of the proposed program with the institution's approved mission for a public institution of higher education and the mission statement published in the official catalog of a nonpublic institution of higher education

Coppin State University's proposed MSW/DSW program's mission is inconsistent with the University's mission. The proposed program's mission is to train MSW and DSW social workers to become macro practitioners for "global leadership." The University's mission states that "Coppin State University, a Historically Black Institution in a dynamic urban setting, espouses a mission to serve a multi-generational student population and provide education opportunities while promoting lifelong learning. The university fosters leadership, social responsibility, civic and community engagement, cultural diversity and inclusion, and economic development." Nowhere in this mission statement is there mention of or an emphasis on global engagement or leadership. The focus on cultural diversity and inclusion found in the mission statement can occur independent of any focus on global engagement or leadership.

Not meeting a regional or statewide need consistent with the State Plan for Postsecondary Education

The focus on global leadership in Coppin's MSW/DSW proposal is also problematic in that it does not address the regional and statewide educational and workforce needs of

Maryland and the region. Coppin's proposal identifies their targeted student population and their service focus specifically within the West Baltimore location. MHEC's State Plan for Postsecondary Education focuses on regional and statewide educational and workforce needs, not global needs. The State Plan for Postsecondary Education identifies 11 strategic goals that are bifurcated into three conceptual areas: Access, Success, and Innovation. There is no specific mention of expanding global leadership in these goals. Although it may be implied that these goals could include global engagement and leadership, Coppin's MSW/DSW proposal does not speak specifically to how the program would expand access, success, and innovation regionally and statewide.

Unreasonable program duplication which would cause demonstrable harm to another institution

The Coppin State University proposal seems to be mission-driven, although it reflects a target population very similar to the Morgan State University student population, which is also multi-generational, and exists in a thriving urban setting. In fact, the MSU School of Social Work mission strives specifically "to prepare urban social work leaders who are committed to the alleviation of human suffering, social justice, and the improvement of the quality of life for diverse urban populations". Because of our urban emphasis, a substantial amount of research focuses on urban life and phenomena, emphasizing education, community service and public policy development and advocacy. The MSW Department prepares beginning generalist and advanced social work practitioners to practice with commitment, competence and relevance for urban individuals, families, organizations and communities. Our program focus incorporates not only preparation to address issues of socioeconomic disadvantage and oppressive and discriminatory policies at the systemic level but also specialized clinical practice related to chemical dependency, mental health, and interpersonal and community violence.

Critical and Compelling Regional or Statewide Need:

The proposal submitted by Coppin states that social workers will be prepared as leaders to positively impact systems through service, activism and technological innovation. These are existing hallmarks in the MSU School of Social Work programs. The MSU School of Social Work has spearheaded a Social Justice Initiative, where our BSW and MSW students are actively involved in research, advocacy, and policy development in partnership with Baltimore City elected representatives and community leaders. We have successfully received research grants, which provide a learning experience for our BSW, MSW, PhD and will soon involve DSW students in our new DSW Program which begins in the upcoming fall, 2023 semester. We have advanced the use of new technology, both in our online course offerings and course design, and also through the embracing of innovative tools to enhance our access to the wealth of data available, while educating students on the ethical use of these tools in academic and professional social work settings.

Reasonableness of Program Duplication:

Under Reasonableness of Program Duplication, Coppin's proposal incorrectly lists Towson University and University of Maryland College Park as offering the MSW degree. The assertion that no other schools service the West Baltimore corridor is also inaccurate, as Morgan State University serves all of Baltimore City, the State of Maryland, and the region. The statement that no other program specializes in macro subject areas is also misguided. This is because we have determined that all urban social workers must be aware of policy implications on families and communities; thus, we require that all of our MSW students take courses in social welfare policy and urban economics, agency and neighborhood development, and organizational policy and leadership. These are in addition to their chosen area of specialized practice (Urban Children, Youth & Families, School Social Work, Public Health, Gerontology, Addictions), and the advanced clinical practice courses.

Coppin's proposed curriculum is reflective of most accredited graduate social work programs. It is difficult to see, based on what is proposed, how this program will attract a specialized population of students, different from those who currently attend the MSU School of Social Work. It is clear that this program targets the same population, to achieve similar goals, which will most certainly work to the disadvantage of Morgan State University. Our social work programs have consistently grown, and we have been able to accommodate larger groups of students in our on-campus and online MSW Programs, as well as Morgan's new DSW program.

Additionally, Coppin's proposal erroneously states that there are no other DSW programs in Maryland, especially at an HBCU. Morgan State University was approved by MHEC in 2022 to initiate an online DSW program, which will begin in the fall of 2023. Coppin's proposal lists the courses for their proposed DSW program, but most of these courses will be offered by Morgan's new DSW program. Based on our knowledge, Morgan's DSW program is not only the first offered at a public School of Social Work in the state of Maryland and the region but is also the first to be located at an HBCU in the nation. Morgan's new DSW Program will begin with a full cohort of students, and we will institute a model for planned growth in this program as well.

Supporting Evidence

A side-by-side comparison of select courses from MSU's approved DSW program, and CSU's proposed DSW program follows below. There are also standard graduate-level courses that are the same or similar (e.g., Statistics and other foundational research courses expected to support student outcomes) to MSU courses.

MSU Select Courses From the DSW	Coppin Similarly Proposed for DSW
ODSW 802: Leadership for Social Change This course is designed to assist a new generation of advanced urban practitioners in developing a professional philosophy and approach to leadership and policy practice skills on a micro, mezzo, and macro level focused on creating a more just society. The course will introduce current theories on leadership, reflect on various contexts in which leadership skills are exercised, and consider leadership practices in diverse environments. Conceptual frameworks including social justice, intersectionality, and anti-racism are placed within an ecological perspective to understand the relevance of interactions, dynamics, and consequences of structural bias and discrimination in decision-making.	Human Rights, Social Justice, and Social Welfare Policies in Special Populations This course considers diversity, anti-racism, equity, and inclusion from a framework of human rights, social justice, and social welfare policies as they relate to special populations. Using historical and theoretical lenses, scholars will analyze and evaluate the complex relationship between power, privilege, practice, and policy for specific populations.
ODSW 803: Social Work Pedagogy and Education This course examines the role and structure of urban social work education at the BSW, MSW, and Ph.D./DSW levels. Students will be introduced to a variety of philosophies for teaching adult education, and strategies for effective learning in the classroom with an emphasis on diversity, social justice, and conflict resolution in the classroom. Content will focus on students' development of teaching skills, curriculum/syllabus design, lecture preparation, assignments and evaluation, and content delivery for effective and competent teaching and the transmission of knowledge and skills in academic and agency settings. Students will learn diverse instructional modalities including remote, asynchronous, hybrid, and Morgan flex. Students will develop a teaching philosophy to include in their professional portfolios.	Teaching and Learning This course will present information regarding teaching and learning in higher education. Students will consider the information in the course to design aspects of a technologically influenced, competency-based curriculum/educational program that can be implemented with a specific population in a chosen setting.
ODSW 807: Community Advocacy and Participatory Research for Applied Practice This course is offered to aid advanced clinical practitioners with the skills needed to lead community-based participatory research (CBPR). Students will develop skills required for macro-level practice with urban communities. Students will identify and describe theories and relevant models of effective community practice and theoretical models for urban community organization and program evaluation.	Community Organizing and Engagement with Special Populations This course examines community organizing, development and engagement with special populations from a social justice perspective throughout world. Informed by case studies, students will produce a sustainable community development project that exudes from significant community engagement initiatives.
ODSW 808: Nonprofit Management, Fundraising, Board & Workforce This course will introduce students to different leadership roles in nonprofit organizations. Students will learn evidence-based, theoretical, and practical strategies for board membership, strategic planning, and ethical fundraising. Students explore financial documents and	Executive Leadership This course presents theories and principles of executive leadership in non-profit international non-profit, for-profit and educational settings. Students will develop a cadre of professional and personal skills required for successful

other tools used in the nonprofit sector for budgeting, funding allocation, capital planning, and operations. Students identify a nonprofit organization and develop a plan to join the organization as a board member.	executive coaching, supervision, management, and evaluation of programs which will be represented in the capstone portfolio.
ODSW 706: Social Work with Urban Organizations, Communities, and Policy This course examines urban organizations and communities with a focus on community-based organizations that serve urban and historically oppressed populations. This course also focuses on administrative roles, organizational management, resource acquisition, community organizing and planning, and the impact of local, state, and federal policy decisions on urban organizations and communities.	Contemporary Theories of Culture & Community Practice This course evaluates a variety of theoretical frameworks in relation to cultural and community practices. Scholars will compare and contrast aspects of numerous theories to detect appropriateness of use within specific cultures and communities to predict. Contemporary Issues in Special Populations This course considers philosophies, theories, social justice policy and practice, ethics and research related to contemporary issues and connected to diversity, anti-racism, equity, and inclusion. Students will use knowledge, technology, and current research in the aforementioned areas to devise and implement a community-focused platform to address contemporary issues within special populations.

Morgan's more general DSW courses	Coppin's Similarly Proposed for MSW
ODSW 705: Applied Statistics	Statistics & Data Analysis, p. 14
ODSW 704: Research Methods for Clinical Practice	Advanced Research Methods, p. 14
Descriptions for ODSW 701, 804, 805, and 808 indicate that discussions of ethical issues are worked through the curriculum at Morgan	Ethical Issues, p. 14

Coppin is proposing an MSW/DSW and while Morgan's DSW is recently approved, the MSW at Morgan has been in place for 15 years. Several of the courses proposed for the MSW also seem quite duplicative of the courses in Morgan's DSW curriculum.

Morgan's DSW course	Coppin's Comparable MSW/DSW Offering
ODSW 806: Entrepreneurship-Advanced Practice Project Development Seminar – Grant-Writing	Grant Writing, p. 12
ODSW 805: Technology, Human Behavior, and Clinical Social Work Practice	Social Work & Technology, p. 11

The following side-by-side comparison focuses on the MSW Program at Morgan State University and the proposed MSW courses at Coppin State University:

Morgan's MSW Course	Coppin's Comparable MSW/DSW Offering
SOWK 501: Generalist Social Work Practice 3 Credits This course is the first course in the methods sequence and introduces students to the profession of social work and the methods of social work practice. The course explores historical developments that shaped the profession and techniques of generalist practice. The course introduces theories that provide the basis for social work interventions and values and ethics that undergird professional social work practice	Social Welfare & Social Work History (3 credits) This social welfare and social work history course provides knowledge and promotes the understanding of the historical development and contemporary forces that have shaped the social welfare system and the profession of social work. Students will be able to explain the social welfare system in relationship to the problems and issues addressed by the social work profession in the development of services to diverse populations at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Special Emphasis will be given to the service delivery role of the professional social worker in working with special populations
SOWK 502: Agency and Neighborhood Development in Poor Urban Communities 3 Credits This course is the second in the methods sequence and builds on the generalist practice framework. Social work practice with urban communities and organizations is the major focus. Community organizing and social planning provide the frame of reference for skills development. Prerequisites: SOWK 501, SOWK 503. Co-requisite: SOWK 504.	
SOWK 506: Urban Organizations, Neighborhoods & Communities. 3 Credits This course emphasizes several aspects of macro practice within an ecological perspective. Students learn how to assess characteristics, dynamics, strengths, and problems of human service and community-based organizations, service delivery systems, and urban communities. An ecological systems framework together with a developmental approach is used	Theories (3 credits) This course presents major theoretical systems used in advanced micro, mezzo, and macro practice. Students will be able to analyze, evaluate and demonstrate theoretical competence specifically related to human behaviors, social and environmental justice, and practice. Research I (3 credits)

to provide an interactional understanding of human behavior. Prerequisite: SOWK 505.	
SOWK 507: Social Welfare and Urban Economics 3 Credits This course explores historical dynamics of class, race, and other oppressions impacting U.S. social welfare policy. It analyzes groups' struggles for empowerment directing community action toward urban injustices. Students become familiar with political strategies, organizational tools and social work values effectuating social change.	Culture, Diversity and Policy I (3 credits) This course critically analyzes issues related to culture, anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion within the context of social work policy. Students will compare and contract cross-cultural practices, values, and policies, with an emphasis on race, class, and gender as interrelated biological, social, psychological, and historical constructs for special populations within micro, mezzo, and macro practice.
SOWK 608: Organizational Policy & Leadership in Human Service Programs. 3 Credits This course will focus on the purpose, development, policies and functions of human service organizations within the urban context. Emphasis will be placed on organizational history, theoretical frameworks for human services management, budgeting and fiscal management, cultural competence, and leadership skills. Prerequisite: SOWK 507.	Advanced Policy and Practice (3 credits) This course provides advanced knowledge regarding the evaluation and development of policies and their practice effectiveness with specific target populations. Students will examine alternative models of policy development and their application to current social welfare issues and will include a connection with research-informed practice via a review of relevant primary and secondary data.
	Global Social Work Leadership (3 credits) This course explores social work leadership from a global context. Students will study several theoretical models and leadership frameworks that contextualize social work within an international setting. Special emphasis will be placed on the African diaspora and anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
	Coaching, Supervision and Leadership (3 credits) This course examines the practice of effective coaching and supervision. Students will learn the elements and strategies of effective coaching and supervision and will utilize designated assessment tools to engage in a number of coaching and supervision exercises.
SOWK 509: Chemical Dependency Clinical Assessment & Treatment. 3 Credits This course is focused on learning about alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) and substance use disorders (SUDs)-serious social and behavioral problems that continue to plague the U.S. and many other countries. This will equip students to be aware of, and understand, the variety of prevention, early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation roles available to MSW-level	

practitioners involved in understanding, reducing and ameliorating problems associated with AODA and SUDs. Throughout the course special emphasis will be placed on achieving AODA and SUD competencies as they relate to social work values and ethics, and diversity.	
	Social Work & Technology (3 credits) This course provides an overview of creative ways to employ technology in social work practice. Students will learn how to assess, evaluate, develop and integrate ethically responsible social media and technology-based strategies as an effective vehicle to enhance service delivery, effect client change, create personal and professional brand, expand business development, all while furthering social work's mission and its commitment to social justice
SOWK 601: Psychopathology and Clinical Intervention. 3 Credits This course is designed to acquaint students with the theoretical and clinical practice of diagnosing mental disorders. Students will become acquainted the DSM V (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of mental Disorders, 5th Edition along with the text Strengthening the DSM, by Garcia and Petrovich). As the primary texts a descriptive approach to mental health diagnosis is offered with a focus on work within the urban context. Case studies representing the major mental disorders will serve as the tool for developing treatment planning and clinical intervention. Prerequisites: All SOWK 500 level Courses. Co-requisite: SOWK 603 (FALL).	
SOWK 622: Coping with Losses and Grief. 3 Credits In this course, students will examine the range of losses elders experience during late adulthood such as: death of family members and friends; loss of a role in the family and/or their caregiver, loss of security in their environment, loss of a sense of dignity in their community, loss of mobility and social functioning and interaction, loss of contact with relatives due to separation and/or divorce. Social theories and best practice models to address these types of losses will be explored.	
SOWK 681: Ethics in Social Work Practice with Addictions 3 Credits This course explores the many actual and potential ethical issues inherent in the social work	Ethics (3 credits) This ethics course exams values and ethical standards related to advanced social work practice. Utilizing the NASW Code of Ethics as the

profession. Key areas of inquiry will include ethical issues in the social work practice such as boundaries and multiple relationships, confidentiality, client and practitioner rights and responsibilities, professional relationships and credentialing/regulating agencies. A specific focus will be on ethical issues relevant to working with addicted populations, including the impact of federal confidentiality regulations and working with mandated client populations. This course was designed to meet the requirement of the Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists for applicants seeking licensure or certification. Prerequisites: ALL SOWK 500 level courses or Advanced Standing Status. Advanced Standing students must also complete SOWK 509.	framework, students will be introduced to social work values, ethical theories, principles, standards, decision making processes and application of these values, theories, principles, standards, and processes in advanced social work practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels to resolve ethical dilemmas. Specific emphasis will be given to the engagement of ethical practices with and for special populations.
--	--

The research and field education courses were comparable across both MSW programs. More than 75% of the proposed MSW/DSW curriculum from Coppin State University has some overlap with the recently approved (letter received in September 2022) DSW program that is being launched this fall at Morgan State.

As the State of Maryland continues to focus on narrowing the retention and graduation gaps that exist between the HBCUs and the TWIs, having competing social work programs at the two HBCUs in an urban area will not have a positive effect of increasing workplace competitiveness but instead, fosters competition between two academic institutions who have historically worked collaboratively.