

**Addis Ababa University**  
**Graduate School of Social Work**

**Rationale and Process for MSW Curriculum Revision**

The Graduate School of Social (GSSW) Work is producing students who will work with disenfranchised populations within the Ethiopian society. As individuals, families, communities, government policies and procedures change and develop; stakeholders require different skills from those whom they choose to employ. In addition, students have indicated that there were certain overlaps of content among courses offered by the school. It was also identified that there was a mismatch between the allocated credit hours for some courses and thesis, and the expected contact hours of teaching the class. Therefore, as a guiding principle the GSSW decided to revise its curricula every three years to accommodate those changes within the environment.

Feedback from alumni, students, staff and visiting professors was obtained through a distributed questionnaire. Furthermore, there were a series of discussions with different stakeholders in the preparation of the school's strategic plan, and the data from the discussions has been incorporated. The process of revising the MSW curriculum involved the following set of activities. The Curricula Development and Revision Coordinating Unit of the School reviewed curricula from departments of different universities. In addition, the international standard for Schools of Social Work was reviewed and incorporated. Once the draft document was produced by the unit, a one day workshop was convened to collect additional feedbacks from stakeholders.

During the past two and half years, issues have become apparent while implementing the initial MSW curriculum. These issues included in the curriculum revision are:

1. The work load for students and faculty was not reflected in the credit hours assigned to courses and the content of the courses. Professors were expected to teach 32 contact hours for a two credit hour course. However, in practice the professors at the GSSW taught more than 48 contact hours for a two credit hour course. The students' transcript did not reflect the actual hours spent in the classroom. A need to amend the overload of hours existed and has been a focus of the revision.
2. The credit hour of each course had to be increased from two to three in order for the work load to match with the credit hours assigned per course. This was important to retain essential content in our professional education.

In light of the identified issues the following changes have been made. Two courses namely, Criminal Justice and Social Mobilization: Food Security & Refugee Resettlement, have been eliminated. The contents of these courses have been reintegrated within other courses. The remaining courses in the initial curriculum have been modified and expanded to a three credit hour course(s) to accommodate feedbacks made by the stakeholders. Additionally a new course (Research Methods II) has been added to the revised curriculum to enhance the research capacity of our students. The credit hours of the Field Placement courses and the MSW Thesis Project have been changed. Accordingly the Field Placement courses have become a pass and fail grade without a credit hour requirement, while the thesis work has become a four credit hour project.