

UNIVERSITY ACCREDITATIONS, APPROVALS & AUTHORIZATIONS

Accreditation of a program indicates that the degree meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of program quality evaluated through a peer review process. An accredited program has sufficient resources to meet the mission and goals of the accrediting body, and has verified that it demonstrates compliance with established policy and standards. Accreditation applies to all program sites and program delivery methods of an accredited program.

Missouri Western State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). For information about HLC accreditation, contact:

The Higher Learning Commission
30 North La Salle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602-2504
Telephone (800) 621-7440
www.hlcommission.org (<http://www.hlcommission.org>)

In addition, Missouri Western State University's graduate programs have earned the following specialized accreditations:

- The Masters Degree Program in Nursing at Missouri Western State University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccnaccreditation.org>) (<http://www.ccnaccreditation.org/>).
- Steven L. Craig School of Business, Master of Business Administration is an accredited member of AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).
- Social Work, MSW is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education's Commission on Accreditation (CSWE), 333 John Carlyle Street, Suite 400 Alexandria, VA 22314; website: cswe.org/accreditation (<https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/>).

Campus Locations

Higher Learning Commission approved locations include:

- Missouri Western State University main campus located at:
4525 Downs Drive
St. Joseph, MO 64507
(816) 271-4200

State Authorizations

The National Council - State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA) is a voluntary agreement among member states and U.S. territories that adheres to a set of common standards designed to enhance quality and strengthen oversight of distance learning programs. This agreement is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state.

To date, 49 states (excluding California), the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands have membership in NC-SARA.

Missouri Western State University is in compliance with all member states to offer undergraduate online degree completion programs and graduate online programs. For more information, visit nc-sara.org (<https://www.nc-sara.org/>).

Social Work:

As defined by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) a program (policy 1.2.4.) may be either a traditional face to face program or a distance education program. If a program is a traditional face to face program it may have 0-50% of the curriculum delivered online. If it exceeds 51%, then it is considered a distance education program. Both of Missouri Western's social work programs (the BSW, and MSW) are a traditional face to face program. The BSW is an accredited program, and the MSW is in pre-candidacy.

CSWE 1.6 Pre-candidacy status states that; Pre-candidacy for a baccalaureate or master's social work program by the BOA indicates that it submitted an application to be reviewed for candidacy and received approval of its Benchmark 1 from CSWE accreditation staff to move forward for a candidacy review within 1-year. A program that has attained pre-candidacy status has not yet been reviewed by the BOA nor verified to be compliant with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

Students that are admitted to pre-candidate programs in the fall (or later) of the academic year in which the program is granted candidacy status will be retroactively recognized as graduates from a CSWE-BOA accredited program as long as the program attains initial accreditation. Candidacy is typically a 3-year process and attaining pre-candidacy does not guarantee that a program will eventually attain candidacy and initial accreditation.

To be license eligible in Missouri, a student must have graduated from an CSWE accredited program. As previously stated, Missouri Western's BSW is an accredited program. However, the MSW is in pre-candidacy status, and students who graduate with their MSW from Missouri Western must wait for the Missouri Western MSW to become accredited before they are able to sit for licensure.

MSW graduates who graduate before accreditation is awarded to Missouri Western may apply for licensure in the state of Kansas provided the program meets the requirements of K.A.R. 102-2-6 which states the following -

(b) To be recognized and approved by the board, an undergraduate or graduate social work program shall be accredited by the council on social work education or shall be in substantial compliance with all of the following standards:

(1) The program shall have a curriculum plan that has been or will be fully implemented during the current academic year.

(2) The program shall have graduated a class of students or shall graduate a class of students during the current academic year.

(3) The social work program shall meet the following conditions:

(A) Have autonomy with respect to an identified budget and an established governance and administrative structure;

(B) have responsibility for participation in personnel recruitment, retention, promotion, and tenure decisions;

(C) have support staff assigned to the program; and

(D) have other necessary resources and authority required for the achievement of specified program objectives.

This link (<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/social-work/wp-content/uploads/sites/171/2024/07/Missouri-Western-Social-work-NC-SARA.pdf>)

includes a state listing of how Missouri Western's MSW curriculum meets or does not meet educational requirements for MSW licensure.

Complaints/Resolutions for Online Programs

One of NC-SARA membership requirements is for institutions of higher learning to provide a student complaint resolution process for online programs that is in addition to the university process. Below is information about all processes.

Students with a complaint should first exhaust Missouri Western State University's processes (<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/feedback/>). If unsuccessful, students can file a complaint with the Missouri Department of Higher Education. Refer to the policy on complaint resolution (<https://dhewd.mo.gov/media/pdf/complaint-resolution-policy/>).

Additionally, Missouri Western State University's accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission, accepts complaints about institutions. Visit their website (<https://www.hlcommission.org/Student-Resources/complaints.html>) for instructions to file a formal complaint. The commission has established a clear distinction between individual grievances and complaints that appear to involve broad institutional practices. When a complaint raises issues regarding the institution's ongoing ability to meet the HLC's Criteria of Accreditation, the commission forwards the complaint to the institution and requests a formal response.

Students enrolled in an online program may also file a complaint with NC SARA. Although students may choose to work through their own state's SARA office for complaint resolution, the SARA office of the state where the provider is located is responsible for staffing the investigation and complaint resolution as needed.

Please refer to this link (<https://nc-sara.org/sara-student-complaints-0/>) for each state and agency information on how to file an appeal with NC SARA. For more information, visit nc-sara.org/ (<https://www.nc-sara.org/>).