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University of Missouri-Kansas City
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Program Director and Chair
Monica Nandan, PhD
5030 Cherry Street
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Professor Nandan,

This letter is to inform you and others, whom this may concern, on the significant impact of my development into a generalist practitioner from two elective summer courses I took. Both were five week courses and complimented each other in educating me on the implications of systemic oppression and discrimination in our country.

The first five week course, SW 5575 Advanced Generalist Community Practice provided me with information and hands on skills to collaborate with individuals who live in a marginalized community. The course explained, in detail, the types of steps to take to initiate change for the community and build relationships with those who have power and control. This information can be applied at both the micro and macro level of social work initiatives. As a social worker gaining an understanding of the day to day life style of our clients it will help us to empathize and work towards making changes for those individuals who want change. Not only on a daily basis but also long term by providing them with skills so they can prevent the cycle of marginalization and make changes for their community.

The second five week course, SW 5565 Systemic Oppression and the Role of Social Workers, has left an impact on me that I never would have encountered had I not taken this course. The experiential exercises and multi-racial, multi-gender, multi-sexual preference, multi-religious open aired discussions were life changing. The text books for this course are a must read for all social workers who truly want to eradicate oppression and discrimination in our
society. A video from National Institute on Health, February 2011 conference, addressed discrimination in health care and I feel it is something every social worker should view.

During these past two years, all of the course work I have taken made me aware of my prejudices, biases and stereotypes and how society perpetuates these feelings into actions. However, these are the only two courses which offered suggestions and taught me skills on what to do with these feelings and how to go about making changes.

I feel confident with these added skills to work towards policy changes in our institutions and be mindful of the systemic oppression our clients face. I will do my best in working towards fulfilling our NASW code of ethics, “to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion or mental or physical disability” (NASW Code of Ethics, 2008).

I would suggest these two courses be considered for implementation into the foundation year of the graduate social work program at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. In my opinion, if the goal of the university is to design a program which forms generalist practitioners who will create substantial change in society as a whole; these courses would support that goal.

Respectfully submitted,

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