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### **GOAL Program Human Services Degree Realigned to Meet Needs of Profession**

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# GOAL Program Human Services Degree Realigned to Meet Needs of Profession

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Office of University  
Communications

May 23, 2019

## *Fully Online Program Offers Concentration Options*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University’s GOAL—The Degree Completion Program has realigned the Bachelor of Science in Human Services to better equip students who want to serve their communities. Offered fully online, the program’s core curriculum will prepare students to take the Human Services Board Certified Practitioner exam if they choose, and it includes concentration options where students can explore their own areas of interest.

Dr. Erin Cook, program coordinator and assistant professor in Human Services, spent a year refining the program and writing new courses. She consulted with alumni, current students, national boards and employers to determine the skills that students need to address the problems of today’s clients.



“Many of our students want to make a difference and serve their community,” Cook explained. “Seven new classes have been built as a piece of this realignment. Some of those are how to lead within a helping profession or how to understand non-profits better, from understanding the board and fundraising to serving the mission of the organization.”

Concentrations are offered in non-profit leadership, family dynamics, clinical/pre-counseling, substance abuse and generalist. “You hear the term, ‘generalist practice,’ a lot in human services, because you have to be knowledgeable in a variety of areas in order to be able to serve a variety of populations,” Cook noted.

Although the program is online, it is designed to be engaging and interactive. Courses are asynchronous, which allows students to complete assignments within a certain time frame. Instructors offer extra discussion sessions at different times to accommodate work

schedules. Additionally, projects in each course require students to interact with professionals in their own communities. For example, in the case studies they do, students are asked to identify resources in their area that would serve the need.

“At the end of the program, students have a strong foundation of professional resources,” Cook noted. “Their classwork includes an interview with a human services professional and attending a group meeting in their community, amongst other projects. They are going to leave the program with a toolkit of community resources they have developed, networking opportunities, and a professional portfolio, strong resume and cover letter. They will feel confident that they are ready to make a difference.”

For more information about the Human Services Degree in GOAL—The Degree Completion Program, email Cook at [ecook2@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:ecook2@gardner-webb.edu) or visit [gardner-webb.edu/human-services-degree](http://gardner-webb.edu/human-services-degree).

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university. Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*