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# School of Social Work

■ Faculty of Community Services

Creating of New Diploma to Degree  
Pathway for Social Services Worker  
(SSW) College Diploma Graduates

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ONCAT Project 2014-01

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RYERSON  
UNIVERSITY

## Executive Summary

The School of Social Work at Ryerson University aimed to create a new program that provides a direct entry into the second year of its Bachelor of Social Work (“BSW”) program for college graduates with a Social Services Worker (“SSW”) Diploma, who have less than two years of cumulative paid experience in the Social Work field.

SSW graduates have strongly advocated for new pathways into university level social work education. In response, Ryerson University has modified its Bachelor of Social Work curriculum to make it more appropriate for such student group. The demand for this new pathway is evident in the number of applications Ryerson University has received for the 2014-15 academic year: 320 applications for 30 spaces.

In the past, due to systematic barriers, SSW Diploma graduates were unable to access BSW education, immediately upon graduation. Their only point of entry was to start the BSW program from year one, at the same level as students with a high school diploma. Following extensive meetings with external stakeholders, Ryerson University was able to determine the synergies between the SSW College Diploma program and the Bachelor of Social Work program, which were used to begin internal dialogues regarding college graduates holding an SSW Diploma.

Through the process of determining and implementing the Direct Entry to 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the BSW program admissions criteria, all key departments were consulted, including the Faculty of Community Services, Curriculum Advising Office, University’s Planning Office, and the Office of the Registrar and the Admissions Office.

In an effort to ensure a seamless integration of students into the new BSW program stream, Ryerson University has implemented numerous operational adjustments that are in direct correlation with several internal units, such as the Recruitment Office, Scheduling and Timetabling, Student Affairs Coordinator Office and Field Education Office.

In its inaugural year, the Direct Entry to 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the BSW program has met its target and has an excellent development potential. At present, Ryerson University has increased its enrollment numbers for this BSW program stream from 30 to 90 for the 2015-16 academic year.