



**College of  
Social Work**

## 2022-2023 MSW Student Policies and Procedures Manual

This manual covers the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms of the 2022-2023 academic year. This manual is intended only to provide information for the guidance of the University of South Carolina College of Social Work students. The information is subject to change and the College of Social Work reserves the right to depart without notice from any policy or procedures referred to in this manual. This manual is not intended to be and should not be regarded as a contract between the University of South Carolina College of Social Work and any student or other person.

### PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### MSW Program Mission

The College of Social Work MSW Program prepares MSW students to become advanced generalist practitioners who serve diverse communities in South Carolina and beyond. The MSW Program provides students opportunities to develop essential and culturally relevant knowledge, skills, and values to practice effectively, ethically, and collaboratively with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. MSW students are trained to respond to dynamic and diverse needs to alleviate oppression and inequities to advance cultural and human rights and social, economic, racial, and environmental justice.

#### MSW Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

The program views its goals as supporting both practice competencies that are essential and unique to social work, as well as other key professional competencies (e.g., critical thinking, communication).

**Goal 1:** The program prepares graduates for competent and ethical practice that focuses on the dignity and worth of the person and respect for diversity, differences, equity, and inclusion.

- Learning Outcome 1: Graduates will engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (CSWE Competency 6)
- Learning Outcome 2: Graduates will assess with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (CSWE Competency 7)
- Learning Outcome 3: Graduates will intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (CSWE Competency 8)
- Learning Outcome 4: Graduates will evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (CSWE Competency 9)

**Goal 2:** The program prepares graduates to develop a strong professional ethical identity and mastery of competencies to advance cultural and human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

- Learning Outcome 5: Graduates will demonstrate ethical and professional behavior. (CSWE Competency 1)
- Learning Outcome 6: Graduates will engage diversity and difference in practice. (CSWE Competency 2)
- Learning Outcome 7: Graduates will advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice. (CSWE Competency 3)

**Goal 3:** The program prepares graduates to demonstrate professional judgement and understanding that the person-in-environment perspective requires a critical analysis of practice contexts and research findings.

- Learning Outcome 8: Graduates will engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice. (CSWE Competency 4)
- Learning Outcome 9: Graduates will engage in policy practice. (CSWE Competency 5)

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## Program Evaluation

The MSW Program routinely collects and evaluates data to monitor progress and achievement of program goals. Students are included in this process through their involvement in surveys for course evaluations, self-assessment of learning outcomes, evaluations of field organizations and field instructors, and other measures. Students are also invited to provide additional feedback through the social work student associations and through student membership on College committees.

## ADMISSIONS

All applicants must fulfill the general admission requirements of both The Graduate School and the College of Social Work. Applicants must be recommended to The Graduate School for acceptance by the MSW Program. Acceptance by The Graduate School and the MSW Program is based on the evaluation of an applicant's total academic profile. The MSW Program is committed to diversity in its student body. Admission is limited and competitive and is contingent upon admission to The Graduate School.

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## Admission Requirements

Minimal requirements for admission include:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
  - Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option must have earned a bachelor's degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)-accredited institution within the last 5 years.
- A cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale).
  - Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option must have also earned a B or better GPA in the last 60 credit hours of an accredited bachelor's degree and a B or better in all required undergraduate social work classes. *\*\*Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option should be aware that meeting the minimal requirements does not guarantee admission to this program option.*
- Official transcripts of all college and university credits earned
- Autobiographical statement stating the applicant's desire to enter the degree program and outlining long-term professional goals, motivation and capacity to work with people.
- At least two letters of recommendation should come from individuals who can address characteristics such as maturity, self-discipline, commitment, cooperativeness and professionalism. The MSW program requires letters be written by individuals who can attest to an applicant's potential for graduate study and social work practice (e.g., professor, supervisor or community leader). Letters from those an applicant has a personal relationship with (e.g., relative, friend or neighbor) will not be adequate.

- Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option are required to submit three letters of recommendation. Of the three letters of recommendation, one must be from the BSW program director or faculty advisor recommending readiness for Advanced Standing and one must be from the undergraduate field supervisor or current social work supervisor if employed.
- A current CV or resume that demonstrates evidence of service and/or work experiences congruent with social work values, skills, and knowledge.

Note: An interview may also be required.

International applicants are required to meet additional requirements such as language and English proficiency. Please see the [International Applicants](#) webpage for more information.

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for the MSW degree include the completion of 60 hours for all Full-time and Part-time students and 42 hours for Advanced Standing students, with an GPA of 3.00.

All work for the Master of Social Work degree must be completed within a six-year period. Other general requirements for the Master of Social Work degree are the same as those established by The Graduate School and in accordance with accreditation standards established by the [Council on Social Work Education](#).

At the time of graduation, the student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be at least 3.00. Additionally, the student's average on all grades recorded on the program of study for courses numbered 700 or above must be at least 3.00 and all courses listed on the program of study must be at least 3.00.

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## Comprehensive Assessment

All candidates for a Master's degree must complete a comprehensive assessment in the major field of study that is distinct from program course requirements. A comprehensive assessment is one that requires a student to synthesize and integrate knowledge acquired in coursework and other learning experiences and to apply theory and principles in a situation that approximates some aspect of professional practice or research in the discipline.

Completion of course requirements or satisfaction of a specified GPA does not satisfy the comprehensive assessment requirement. The Graduate School must be notified by the MSW Program of the student's academic program of successful completion of the comprehensive assessment. Completion remains valid for two years after which the assessment must be repeated.

The comprehensive assessment is administered to students in the spring semester of the advanced/specialized year and all students must submit their assessments through their Blackboard account. Options for the comprehensive assessment may include an essay assessment, an exam assessment, or an alternative assessment determined by the college. The CoSW MSW Comprehensive Assessment Subcommittee oversees the review and evaluates all assessments as Pass or Fail. If the student does not pass the assessment, the MSW Program Coordinator notifies the student and develops a corrective plan. When a student passes the assessment, the MSW Program Coordinator notifies the graduate school and verifies assessment completion for graduation clearance. All students must complete and pass the assessment to graduate from the MSW Program.

## Application for Degree

All students enrolled in a Master’s degree program must file the [application for degree/graduation](#) available on the website of the [Office of the University Registrar](#) with The Graduate School within the first 15 class days of the fall or spring semester in which the degree is to be awarded, or within the first 10 class days of Summer Session if the degree is to be awarded at the end of the summer.

## CURRICULUM

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### Credit for Life Experience

In accordance with the mandates of the Council on Social Work Education, no credit is given for life experiences. Students will not receive academic credit for life experience or previous volunteer, service-learning activities or assignments, or work experience in social work. Academic credit will not be granted for life experience or previous work experience, and such experience will not be substituted for any of the courses in the professional foundation areas or the field practicum.

### State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) is a national initiative to provide more access to online courses while maintaining compliance standards with state regulatory agencies. SARA allows institutions to provide online courses outside of their own state borders by seeking and maintaining state approvals via a streamlined process. The University of South Carolina Columbia pursues authorization to offer distance education programs and experiential learning opportunities (internships, practica, clinicals, and fieldwork) in other states.

Social Work licensure and certification vary by state. Each state has its own licensing board with its own social work licensure requirements. As a program fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Master of Social Work degree graduates from the University of South Carolina **may** be eligible to sit for professional licensure in the state of South Carolina. The program cannot confirm that it meets the specific requirements for professional licensure in another state. Students planning to seek licensure should visit the South Carolina [Board of Social Work Examiners](#) website and/or the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) [Licensing Board or College Websites, Statutes and Administrative Rules](#) webpage.

### Programs of Study

The following are options for completing the MSW Program:

- Full-time program in Columbia
- Advanced Standing program in Columbia
- Part-time program in Columbia, Charleston, and Greenville

The following plans of study outline the expected progression through the MSW Program. All policies, course listings, and program information are subject to change as approved by The Graduate School and the University of South Carolina, consistent with accreditation requirements set by the Council on Social Work Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

## Plans of Study

### Plan of Study: FULL-TIME

#### Foundation/General Year

<b>FALL</b>	SOWK 712	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
	SOWK 714	Diversity and Social Justice Issues for Social Work Practice
	SOWK 716	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
	SOWK 781	Field Instruction I: Generalist Social Work Practice
	SOWK 791	Social Work Research Methodologies
<b>SPRING</b>	SOWK 722	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups
	SOWK 732	Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities
	SOWK 742	Social Welfare Policy Analysis
	SOWK 777	Advanced Theory for Social Work Practice
	SOWK 782	Field Instruction II: Generalist Social Work Practice

#### Advanced/Specialized Year

<b>FALL</b>	SOWK 779	Advanced Social Work Interventions
	SOWK 783	Field Instruction III: Advanced Social Work Practice
	SOWK 792	Evaluation of Social Work Practice
	OR	OR
	SOWK 793	Evaluation of Social Work Programs
	Electives	6 Credit Hours
<b>SPRING</b>	SOWK 718	Systems Analysis of Social Work Practice
	SOWK 778	Advanced Analysis of Social Policy, Programs, and Services
	SOWK 784	Field Instruction IV: Advanced Social Work Practice
	Elective	Practice <sup>1</sup> – 3 credit hours
	Elective	3 credit hours

### Plan of Study: ADVANCED STANDING

<b>SUMMER</b>	SOWK 701	Professional Development Bridge
	SOWK 702	Professional Writing for Social Work (Required <i>if</i> students are not granted exemption through successful completion of writing assessment)
	OR	OR
	Elective	Elective

<sup>1 3</sup> Students must complete a minimum of one (1) practice elective in all plans of study. Students may take additional practice elective courses.

	SOWK 777	Advanced Theory for Social Work Practice
	Elective	3 credit hours
<b>FALL</b>	SOWK 779	Advanced Social Work Interventions
	SOWK 783	Field Instruction III: Advanced Social Work Practice
	SOWK 792	Evaluation of Social Work Practice
	OR	OR
	SOWK 793	Evaluation of Social Work Programs
	Electives	6 Credit Hours
<b>SPRING</b>	SOWK 718	Systems Analysis of Social Work Practice
	SOWK 778	Advanced Analysis of Social Policy, Programs, and Services
	SOWK 784	Field Instruction IV: Advanced Social Work Practice
	Elective	Practice <sup>2</sup> – 3 Credit Hours
	Elective	3 Credit Hours

**Plan of Study: PART-TIME****1<sup>st</sup> Year Foundation/General Year**

<b>FALL</b>	SOWK 712	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
	SOWK 714	Diversity and Social Justice Issues for Social Work Practice
<b>SPRING</b>	SOWK 716	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
	SOWK 791	Social Work Research Methodologies
<b>SUMMER</b>	Elective	3 Credit Hours
	Elective	3 Credit Hours

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year Foundation/General Year**

<b>FALL</b>	SOWK 722	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups
	SOWK 742	Social Welfare Policy Analysis
	SOWK 781	Field Instruction I: Generalist Social Work Practice
<b>SPRING</b>	SOWK 732	Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities
	SOWK 777	Advanced Theory for Social Work Practice
	SOWK 782	Field Instruction II: Generalist Social Work Practice
<b>SUMMER</b>	Elective	Practice <sup>3</sup> – 3 Credit Hours
	Elective	3 Credit Hours

**Advanced/Specialized Year**

<sup>3</sup> Students must complete a minimum of one (1) practice elective in all plans of study. Students may take additional practice courses.

<b>FALL</b>	SOWK 779	Advanced Social Work Interventions
	SOWK 783	Field Instruction III: Advanced Social Work Practice
	SOWK 792	Evaluation of Social Work Practice
<b>SPRING</b>	SOWK 718	Systems Analysis of Social Work Practice
	SOWK 778	Advanced Analysis of Social Policy, Programs, and Services
	SOWK 784	Field Instruction IV: Advanced Social Work Practice

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## Part-time Program Option Regional Classes

The MSW Program offers classes to students enrolled in the part-time program option in Charleston and in Greenville. The part-time program option is the *only* option offered in Charleston and Greenville; only the classes that satisfy the plan of study for the part-time program option will be offered in these regional locations. The MSW Program will not offer exceptions to students who choose to pursue a full-time plan of study while enrolled as a part-time student in Charleston or Greenville.

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## Specialization Tracks

All students must commit to one of three specialization tracks. Students must complete SOWK 777, 778, and 779 within the same specialization track.

- All full-time and part-time students must complete SOWK 777 during the Spring term.
- All Advanced Standing students must complete SOWK 777 during the Summer term.

Students must complete SOWK 777 before completing SOWK 778 and 779. Students may change their specialization track by re-taking SOWK 777 in a DIFFERENT specialization track. Students should note that changing specialization tracks *may* result in delaying graduation.

- If students change their specialization track after completing SOWK 777, they must retake SOWK 777 in the newly selected specialization track. In this event, the initial course will be counted as an elective.
- If students change their specialization track after taking SOWK 777 and 778, they must retake SOWK 777 and 778 in the newly selected specialization track. In this event, the initial courses will be counted as electives.

The MSW program offers the following three specialization tracks:

- **Children, Youth, and Families:** Prepares MSW graduates to engage in competent practice with children, youth, and their families through direct practice, case management, community advocacy, organizational change, and policy development
- **Health and Mental Health:** Prepares MSW graduates to become leaders in this new era of health, training students to use evidence-based practices to promote health among individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities.
- **Community, Social, and Economic Development:** Prepare students for advanced social work practice in multifaceted development activities in the US and abroad.

**Note:** *Only the Health and Mental Health specialization track is offered in the Part-time program in Columbia, Charleston, and Greenville.*

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## Certificate Programs

The College of Social Work administers the **Drug and Addiction Studies** certificate program. Students may pursue the certificate independently or in conjunction with another graduate course of study. The certificate program provides MSW students with opportunities to develop competencies in preparation for employment in a range of settings addressing alcohol and drug-related problems. For more information, students should send inquiries to [coswdaas@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:coswdaas@mailbox.sc.edu).

The College of Social Work also administers the **Social and Behavioral Health with Military Members, Veterans and Military Families**. Students may pursue the certificate independently or in conjunction with another graduate course of study. The certificate program provides MSW students with specific knowledge and skills necessary to interact in a military setting and in community settings where the needs of veterans and their families are met. For more information, students should send inquiries to [coswmilt@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:coswmilt@mailbox.sc.edu).

MSW students may enroll in other graduate certificate programs:

- **Women's and Gender Studies**, administered by the College of Arts and Sciences. For more information, contact Dr. J. Daniel Jenkins at [jenkinsj3@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:jenkinsj3@mailbox.sc.edu).
- **Agging**, administered by the Arnold School of Public Health. For more information, contact Dr. Ken Watkins at [watkinsk@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:watkinsk@mailbox.sc.edu).
- The **Graduate Certificate in Play Therapy** administered through the College of Education, contact **Jessie Guest** at [jessied@email.sc.edu](mailto:jessied@email.sc.edu) or 803-777-1937.

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## Combination Degree Programs

The College of Social Work participates in the following combination degree programs:

### **Social Work and Public Health (Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior)**

The Social Work and Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior combination degree is offered in conjunction with the Arnold School of Public Health. Graduates are prepared with the skills to assess and improve the physical, psychological, and social health and well-being of individuals and the communities in which they live by furthering their empowerment, autonomy and self-determination, as well as health-related, economic and social justice, through teaching, research, and service. For more information, please refer to the [Social Work / Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior](#) bulletin.

### **Social Work and Public Health (Health Service Policy and Management)**

The Social Work and Health Service Policy and Management combination degree is offered in conjunction with the Arnold School of Public Health. Graduates are prepared for positions in health services management, policy, public health programs, research and education. For more information, please refer to the [Social Work / Health Service Policy and Management](#) bulletin.

### **Social Work and Public Administration**

The Social Work and Public Administration combination degree is offered in conjunction with the Department of Political Science in the College of Arts and Sciences. Graduates are prepared to promote the health and well-being of increasingly diverse and often vulnerable populations across communities, the state, region, and nation by furthering enhanced and effective performance of government agencies, not-for-profit groups and

other public affairs organization through teaching and research. For more information, please refer to the [Public Health / Social Work](#) bulletin.

### **Social Work and Law**

The Social Work and Law combination degree is offered in conjunction with the School of Law. Graduates are prepared to promote a better understanding of and advocacy for the special needs of vulnerable populations within the legal system, across communities, the state, region, and nation, by advancing economic and social justice, fighting oppression and discrimination, and furthering the protection and development of all people through teaching, research, and service. For more information, please refer to the [Social Work / Law](#) bulletin.

Students should contact Michael Ottone at [ottone@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:ottone@mailbox.sc.edu) to learn more about the dual degree programs.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

[Course Descriptions](#), including credits hours and prerequisites, can be found in Graduate Studies Bulletin.

## **FIELD EDUCATION**

The MSW Field Education Program at the College of Social Work at the University of South Carolina is structured according to the mandates of the Council on Social Work Education. The Program is guided by the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) and the National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics. The tenets of these documents are found throughout the MSW curriculum including the MSW Field Education program.

Field education is the signature pedagogy of social work education. The intent of field instruction is to provide students with an opportunity to apply the knowledge, values, and skills learned in the classroom to actual social work practice situations in the field placement.

All MSW students are accountable to all policies, procedures, and practices that govern the MSW Field Education Program that can be found in the Field Education Manual. All students are required to complete the mandatory field orientation to assist with field placement readiness. Students should refer to the Field Education Manual for additional information.

## **ADVISEMENT**

### **Academic Advisement**

All students are assigned two advisors at the beginning of their academic studies: a faculty advisor and an academic advisor.

- The role of faculty advisors is to be a resource for students to discuss areas of interest, professional development, career options, and identity as a social worker.
- The primary role of academic advisors is to advise students to develop individualized programs of study. Advisors assist with course registration; provide information about program requirements and policies and procedures; assist students in identifying and accessing College and/or University resources; facilitate relationships between students and other individuals who may provide support to students; actively participate in the planning and execution of the program orientation and advisement sessions; monitor academic progress and alert students and program leadership about potential matriculation concerns,

especially those related to academic suspension and/or termination; clear students for graduation; and maintain primary student records in the College.

- Academic performance is evaluated each term. Students experiencing academic difficulty will be advised of College and The Graduate School policies. Students experiencing academic, behavioral, or other difficulties may be referred to the MSW Program Coordinator for assessment and may be required to undergo a committee review and/or develop a plan for addressing identified difficulties.

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## Registration for Courses

Prior to registering for courses, students are advised to consult the master schedule for course listings. The social work course designator is SOWK.

Registering for classes is an online process that students complete through [Self Service Carolina](#). Students are encouraged to use the [Registration Checklists](#) located on the Office of the Registrar's webpage to navigate the registration process.

The basic process for course registration is as follows:

- Login to Self Service Carolina.
- Navigate to the Student section, then click on the Registration tab.
- Choose the Schedule Planner option and build your ideal schedule.
  - The social work course designator is SOWK.
  - Course sections coded with a J prefix are offered online.
  - Course sections coded with prefixes of 0CX or 2CX are offered in Charleston and are only for part-time students enrolled in the Charleston cohort.
  - Course sections coded with prefixes of 0GX or 2GX are offered in Greenville and are only for part-time students enrolled in the Greenville cohort.
  - Course sections coded with prefixes of 0PX or 2PX are offered in Columbia and are only for part-time students enrolled in the Columbia cohort.
- Send your schedule to the Registration Cart and leave it there until your time ticket begins.
- Once your time ticket begins, revisit Schedule Planner, confirm your class selections, and send your final selections to the Registration Cart.
- Choose the Submit option. You will then see a screen that shows which sections you successfully registered in. If you need to select additional classes, revisit Schedule Planner and select the classes you need. Repeat the process above until you finalize your schedule.
- View Student Detail Schedule - As a final step, review your schedule.

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## Course Loads

A student may enroll for a semester load not to exceed 15 hours (including audits and undergraduate courses). Students requesting an overload exception over 15 hours must submit the required [Course Overload Enrollment Authorization \(CEO\) Form](#) to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval prior to the beginning of the term for which the exception is requested. Students should consult their academic advisor for assistance. Additional [Course Enrollment Load](#) information can be found in the bulletin.

Full-time benefits for veterans are determined by the [Office of Veterans Services](#).

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICIES

A student's progress is based on nonacademic as well as academic performance. Nonacademic factors that could result in suspension or termination from the College of Social Work, regardless of their academic performance, include violation(s) of University or College regulations and policies, and/or violation(s) of the NASW Code of Ethics. Students must maintain high standards of moral and ethical behavior that are necessary for professional practice as a social worker.

The following information highlights some of the key academic standards and policies for MSW students. It should be noted that **not** all standards and policies are included here. Students are expected to be familiar with the [UofSC Policies and Procedures Manual](#), the [Graduate Admission Bulletin](#), the [Graduate Academic Regulations Bulletin](#), and the [Master's Degree Requirements Bulletin](#).

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### Conditional Admission

Applicants to the MSW Program may be conditionally admitted when they do not meet all requirements for admission.

- Applicants recommended for conditional admission to the MSW Program will be notified of these conditions at the time of admission. Applicants must sign a contract acknowledging their conditional status, the specific conditions required for continuing in the program, and receipt of the MSW Program's conditional admissions policy.
- Students admitted conditionally with a cumulative undergraduate GPA below 3.0 must meet the following conditions:
  - Students in the Advanced Standing or Full-Time programs must earn a graduate GPA of at least a B (3.0) for the first term.
  - Students in the Part-Time program must earn a cumulative graduate GPA of at least a B (3.0) for the first two terms.
- Students admitted conditionally must meet with their academic advisors two times for academic coaching sessions. Students and academic advisors will meet at the beginning of the semester to identify resources they need to meet their academic goals and again before the Withdraw/Fail deadline to ensure students are meeting the conditions required to remedy the academic deficit. Students must participate in these academic coaching sessions before being eligible to register for courses for the following semester.
- Following completion of the term(s):
  - If conditions have been met, the Academic Advisor will submit a Change of Status form to the Graduate School and the student will be in good academic standing.
  - If conditions have not been met, students will undergo a progression review by the Assistant Dean for Students, the MSW Program Coordinator, and Student Services to determine continued eligibility in the program.

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### Academic Progression in the College of Social Work

#### Minimum GPA

Graduate courses may be passed for degree credit with a grade as low as C, but a degree-seeking student must maintain at least a B (3.00 on a 4.00 scale) cumulative grade point average. Academic standards for grade point average (GPA), progression, and suspension can be found in the [Graduate Academic Regulations Bulletin](#).

At the time of graduation, the student's graduate cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be at least 3.00 (B) on a 4.00 scale. Additionally, the average of all grades recorded on the program of study for 700-level and up courses must be at least 3.00 and all courses listed on the program of study must be at least 3.00.

Students are subject to both College of Social Work and The Graduate School standards and policies.

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## Class Attendance

Students are expected to complete all assigned work, to attend all class meetings, and to participate in class. The MSW Program follows the [Attendance policy](#) in the Graduate Academic Regulations Bulletin.

Students are obligated to complete all assigned work promptly, to attend class regularly, and to participate in whatever class discussion may occur. Class attendance policies are noted in the syllabus for each graduate-level course. The instructor of record determines the policy for each graduate course. Students should review syllabi thoroughly to ensure they are familiar with policies.

Graduate students registered for courses numbered 500-699 are required to satisfy undergraduate attendance regulations and conform to the "10 percent rule." The Undergraduate Attendance Policy states that absence from more than 10 percent of the scheduled class sessions, whether excused or unexcused, is excessive and the instructor may choose to exact a grade penalty for such absences.

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## Grades and Credits

Grades are determined by quality of work, performance on course assignments, examination grades, and class attendance and participation. The MSW Program follows the [Grading Policies](#) in the Graduate Academic Regulations Bulletin. Refer to these policies for additional information.

The credit value for each course is usually equal to the number of hours the class meets each week for one term (e.g., three hours/week for a 3-credit course).

- The letter grades **A, B, C, D,** and **F** are employed to designate excellent, good, fair, poor, and failing work, respectively. The grades **B+, C+,** and **D+** also may be recorded.
  - Courses graded D+ or lower cannot be applied to graduate degree programs.
  - C is the lowest grade permissible for graduate credit in any course.
- **S** and **U** indicate, respectively, satisfactory (passing) and unsatisfactory (failing) performance in courses carried under the Pass-Fail option. Courses completed with an S may be counted in total credits earned. Graduate-level courses completed with the grade of U are calculated as an F in the cumulative graduate grade point average.
- **I** is assigned for Incomplete at the discretion of the instructor when a student is unable to complete some portion of the assigned work in a course because of an extenuating circumstances. Re-enrolling in the course will not make up an Incomplete grade. A grade of incomplete for all MSW social work courses, including field education courses, is assigned by the instructor of record only under the following conditions:
  - Incompletes are not an option until after the Drop/Withdrawal Period.
  - The student is in good academic standing in the course with a passing grade average.
  - The student has approximately no more than 50% of assignments for the total grade unmet in the course.
  - The student must request the Incomplete grade in writing by the last day of class.
  - The student and instructor of record have completed an Assignment of Incomplete Grade Form (AS-5) (submitted to Student Services for tracking due dates).

- The student and instructor of record have an agreed date of submission for all outstanding course requirements. The due date for submitting final assignments should be before the start of the next semester. Only under extenuating circumstances, shall the due date be extended into the next semester. Under no circumstances shall the due date for submission exceed 12 months.
- **NR** is temporary mark on the transcript assigned by the Office of the University Registrar if a grade has not been submitted by the instructor at the designated time.

Students' grades are reported on Self Service Carolina. Students may also access grade reports in person at the Office of the University Registrar. Course syllabi provide the instructor's expectations including attendance, required assignments and exams and the weight to be accorded to each, and the grading scale.

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## Academic Probation

Academic probation is a specified period in which students must improve their academic standing by meeting or making sufficient progress toward graduation requirements.

Students in the MSW Program must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher to remain in good academic standing. Any student whose cumulative GPA falls below these requirements is no longer in good academic standing and will undergo a review by the Program Coordinator, the Assistant Dean for Students, and the student's Academic Advisor. The review will provide conditions for the student to remain in the program. The student will also be placed on academic probation.

On academic probation, students will have one semester to raise their GPA to 3.0 or higher for the MSW Program. Course work used in raising the GPA must be a part of normal degree requirements. When placed on academic probation, students must meet with their academic advisors two times for academic coaching sessions. Students and academic advisors will meet at the beginning of the semester to identify resources they need to meet their academic goals and again before the Withdraw/Fail deadline to ensure students are meeting the conditions required to remedy the academic deficit. Students must participate in these academic coaching sessions before being eligible to register for courses for the following semester. If students do not meet the minimum GPA requirement during the semester on probation, they will be placed on academic probation for a second major semester.

While on probation, students may not seek or hold office in any student organization or student cohort at the College of Social Work or university level. Students holding any such office must temporarily step down while on probation.

MSW Students who remain on academic probation for a second consecutive semester are not eligible to receive Graduate Assistantships, Fellowships or Scholarships.

Students who do not meet the conditions of academic probation within one academic year will be suspended from the program.

Students who meet the conditions of academic probation will be removed from probation and resume good academic standing.

## Academic Suspension

Academic suspension prohibits a student from advancing in the curriculum for one academic year. Students will be suspended if they do not meet the conditions of academic probation by the second semester. A student on suspension is given an opportunity to reorder priorities and reassess his or her situation before returning. Consistent with university policy, a suspended student may not be admitted to, or continue in, any academic program of the University. Credit earned at any other institution while a student is on suspension from the CoSW and University may not be applied toward a degree from the CoSW. Suspended students will not be allowed to seek or hold office in any professional organization or class at the College of Social Work or university level. Suspended students are ineligible for the privileges associated with registration.

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## Auditing a Course

The option of auditing a course is available with prior approval of both the Dean of the College and the faculty member involved. University policy on auditing courses at the graduate level requires that a student be enrolled in at least one course for credit unless permission from the Dean of the Graduate School is given for an audit only. Regularly enrolled students are always given priority over auditors concerning seats in a class. No record of an audit shall appear on a transcript unless the student has attended a minimum of seventy-five percent of all regularly scheduled classes in the course being audited.

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## Dropping Courses and Withdrawal

Students should check for last day to drop a course without a grade of 'W' being recorded and for the last day to drop a course or withdraw without a grade of 'WF' being recorded students should refer to the [Academic Calendar](#). Failure to complete the official course withdrawal process has serious implications for calculation of the final course grade and calculation of grade point averages.

There are multiple ways for students to drop or withdrawal from undergraduate classes. Each option has separately defined rules for grades and tuition/fees. See the Dropping Courses and Withdrawal policies in the [Graduate Academic Regulations Bulletin](#) for additional information.

Students are prevented from dropping or adding courses during the Free Drop/Add Period if they have an active registration hold on their record. Students may drop or withdraw from courses through [Self Service Carolina](#).

Withdrawal from all courses constitutes withdrawal from the University. All students wishing to withdraw from the University, or to discontinue enrollment from all courses for the semester, should first consult with their academic advisor. When requesting to drop the last course and to withdraw from the University, the student should follow the instructions on Self Service Carolina. Additionally, the Student Ombudsman Office can provide information, referral assistance or counseling. Students requesting withdrawal for extenuating circumstances after the penalty date (last day for W grade) should contact their academic advisor or the MSW Program Coordinator.

Students should be aware of the academic and financial consequences incurred by withdrawing from all courses. Financial Aid and Scholarship recipients should contact the [Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships](#).

Students who are experiencing academic difficulty and/or personal or family crises that interfere with their successful completion of course work are strongly encouraged to consult with their instructors, the academic advisor, and/or the MSW Program Coordinator.

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## Transfer of Course Credit

Course work not part of a completed certificate program or graduate degree from UofSC or another institution may be transferred for credit toward a Certificate of Graduate Study, a master's or doctoral degree. Students may request transfer of graduate credits from other CSWE-accredited programs. Transcripts, course descriptions, and syllabi must be submitted to the MSW Program Coordinator for review. Applicants must have earned at least a B in each course for which credit is requested. Transfer credits must be approved by the Graduate School.

The MSW Program follows the [Transfer of Course Credit](#) policy in the Graduate Academic Regulations Bulletin.

- No more than 15 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 37-45 hours
  - This standard applies to the Advanced Standing option of the MSW Program option.
- No more than 18 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 46 or more semester hours.
  - This standard applies to the Full-time and Part-time options of the MSW Program option.

Only credits with grades of B or better may be transferred from another institution into any graduate degree program. Course work transferred for credit toward a graduate degree must be from an accredited institution and must be no more than six years old at the time of graduation.

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## Revalidation of Out-of-Date Courses

Students may request revalidation of UofSC graduate courses over six (6) years old for inclusion on the program of study. All instructions for revalidation must be followed and the [Permit for Revalidation Examination](#) form must be completed and submitted to the dean of The Graduate School for approval prior to revalidation. Proof of payment of revalidation fees must be submitted with the Permit for Revalidation Examination form.

**Note:** Courses completed at other institutions may not be revalidated.

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## Professional Behavior

The CoSW is committed to upholding the ethical standards required of social workers in their relationships with clients, classmates, colleagues, co-workers, and members of the public. Students are expected to engage in ethical conduct and decision-making in accordance with the values, ethics and standards established for the profession of social work, as formalized in the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) and as written in the program manuals.

One of the most important competencies is the demonstration of personal values and ethical principles in all professional and social contexts. Professional behavior policies are presented here and violation of such may result in disciplinary action.

### Professional Conduct

*Students must:*

1. Act ethically in conformity with the law, agency, and university standards, and social work values.

2. Ensure that appearance, dress, and general demeanor are appropriate to the context.
3. Demonstrate suitability for the profession and commitment to the profession's core values of service, social justice, honesty, and competence.
4. Maintain constructive interpersonal relations with faculty and staff, field agency representatives, fellow students, and other professional colleagues.
5. Understand and adhere to all of the academic and field education policies and procedures detailed in the respective program Student Handbook and the Field Education Manual.
6. Deal with conflict and disagreement in a respectful and forthright manner.
7. Follow the UofSC's [Honor Code](#) and [Carolinian Creed](#) and show respect and courtesy to other members of the campus community.

### Essential Performance Expectations

1. **Communication:** Students are expected to communicate effectively and respectfully with others orally and in writing in all communication modes (i.e., including but not limited to written assignments, text messaging, social media, telephone, video conference, email).
2. **Self-Awareness and Reflection:** Students are expected to assess their own suitability for professional practice. This requires the ability to engage in self-evaluation and to modify behaviors that may interfere with academic and/or professional performance.
3. **Judgment:** Students are expected to exercise sound professional and personal judgment and effectively attend to professional roles and boundaries.
4. **Cross-Cultural Skills:** Students are expected to acquire cross-cultural proficiency sufficient to successfully work with a wide variety of diverse groups and communities. Cross-cultural proficiency includes eliminating displays of personal bias and imposition of personal values on others, as well as approaching differences with an attitude of humility and respect, acknowledging the importance of cultural differences in shaping life experiences.
5. **Emotional Management and Coping:** Students are expected to be aware of the manner in which they manage their expression of emotions in the academic and professional environments and all other times. Building self-regulatory and coping skills in a manner that enables students to remain consistently engaged, attentive to duties, and professional in conduct and attitude is expected. This may include seeking and using professional support, if appropriate or as needed.
6. **Physical and Mental Abilities:** Students are expected to have sufficient physical and mental capacities to meet the demands of a professional Social Work degree program. These capacities include the ability to concurrently attend classes and complete field education courses as required by the degree program in which the student is enrolled. If students need accommodations, they must register with the [Student Disability Resource Center](#) (SDRC). The SDRC will formally communicate with faculty members, in advance of assignments or coursework, any necessary accommodations.
7. **Required Student Disclosures:** Students are expected to disclose to the UofSC CoSW Dean, Associate Dean for Curriculum, their Program Coordinator, Field Education Director and their Academic Advisor, any legal involvement that takes place before or during enrollment in the program, including arrest, criminal and civil charges, criminal conviction, plea of guilty, plea of no contest and no contest, plea of nolo contendere, Alfred plea, deferred prosecution, prayer for judgment, or any other acceptance of responsibility for the commission of a crime other than a traffic-related misdemeanor or infraction. Students are also expected to disclose any discipline imposed by a state licensing board, the National Association of Social Workers, or similar organizations.

### Violations of Behavioral Standards

Circumstances that may result in a review of a student’s behavioral performance can include (but are not limited to) any of the following:

1. Failure to meet or maintain any of the professional performance standards stated herein or contained elsewhere in the respective Student Handbook; Certificate Handbook, Student Guide to Field Education; or the [Graduate Division Guide to Graduate Policy](#).
2. Any violation of field placement agency policies, procedures, or regulations.
3. Violations of the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) or the [Campus Code of Student Conduct](#).
4. Any form of scholastic dishonesty or other violation of academic integrity.
5. Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or others.
6. Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior.

For procedures related to the review of professional behavior violations, see **Appendix A**.

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## Probation, Suspension, and Termination Procedures

The MSW Program has a responsibility to ensure that its graduates will be prepared to meet the standards of professional social work practice, including the provision of competent service to client systems at all levels. All students will be provided access to and are expected to understand the criteria and procedures for probation, suspension, and termination. These criteria and procedures are in **Appendix A** of this manual. Students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment form that will be maintained in their files.

Students are also expected to adhere to the [Code of Ethics](#) of the National Association of Social Workers.

See the [Academic Suspension Policy](#) and the [Reinstatement After Suspension Policy](#) in the Graduate Academic Regulation Bulletin for additional information.

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all students to be aware of the University of South Carolina’s and the College of Social Work’s standards regarding both academic and nonacademic expectations of students.

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## Equal Opportunity Statement

The University of South Carolina does not discriminate in educational or employment opportunities on the basis of race, sex, gender, gender identity, transgender status, age, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, genetics, protected veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions.

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## Student Rights and Protections at the University

Below are some key policies that address the rights of protections of students at the University of South Carolina - this is **not** an exhaustive list. The full policies and procedures manual can be found [here](#).

- [Academic Freedom](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#)
- [Non-discrimination Policy](#)

- [Student Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment Policy](#)
- [Handling of Student Records](#) (Student rights under FERPA)
- [Student Grievance Policy—Non-Academic](#)
- [Academic Grievance Policy](#)

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## Professional and Academic Responsibility - Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

The [Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#) empowers students to be responsible citizens and uphold the core values of our academic community.

Students are expected to adhere to the University’s policy on [Student Code of Conduct](#).

*Be aware that arrests by law enforcement agencies outside of UofSC’s Division of Law Enforcement and Safety must be reported by the student to the Office of Student Conduct within 72 hours of arrest. Penalties for non-compliance to this mandate may include suspension or termination from the BSW Program and/or University.*

Students are expected to adhere to the University’s policy on [Academic Responsibility - The Honor Code](#).

*Every student has a role in maintaining the academic reputation of the university. It is imperative that you refrain from engaging in plagiarism, cheating, falsifying your work and/or assisting other students in violating the Honor Code.*

*Two important components of the Honor Code:*

- *Faculty members are required to report potential violations of the Honor Code to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.*
- *When a student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate the Honor Code, it is their responsibility to seek clarification from the appropriate faculty member.*

The [Carolinian Creed](#) is a complement to the University’s conduct code and emphasizes openness and civility.

### ***As a Carolinian...***

*I will practice personal and academic integrity;*

*I will respect the dignity of all persons;*

*I will respect the rights and property of others;*

*I will discourage bigotry, while striving to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions;*

*I will demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their need for conditions which support their work and development.*

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## College of Social Work Grievances, Petitions, and Appeals Procedures

Please see **Appendix B** for information about grievances, petitions, and appeals in the College of Social Work.

## STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### University Leadership and Service Center

The University's [Leadership and Service Center](#) has a wealth of resources and services for the more than 500 student organizations that call the University of South Carolina home. Information about these organizations can be found via [Garnet Gate](#).

### College of Social Work Student Associations

Students are offered the opportunity to participate in student associations within the College of Social Work. The associations are:

- The **Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society** provides an opportunity for MSW students who have excelled in Social Work scholarship to form bonds and promote Social Work values. Membership requirements are a minimum of 15 completed credit hours in the MSW program with a 3.5 or better GPA.
- The **Social Work Student Association (SWSA)** promotes interest in social work and social work issues through association with others who are interested in this field; provides supplemental educational experiences for students; acts as an advocate for students in academic and administrative matters; and enhances social interaction among the membership. Membership is open to any MSW student registered full-time or part-time in the College of Social Work at the University of South Carolina. Four officers of the association – the president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer - are elected annually by the College of Social Work's student body from among the student population.
- The **Black Social Work Student Association (BSWSA)** facilitates open dialogue and retention of MSW students of color, promote academic excellence, scholastic networks, and cultural diversity, foster professional and recreational activities, as well as, provide a nurturing environment and advocate for students.

### Student Participation on College of Social Work Committees

In addition to the opportunity for active participation through the student associations, several standing committees for the College of Social Work include student representation. Students selected by the student association attend these meetings as voting members representing the student body.

- **MSW Program Committee:** Administers the implementation of course, curriculum, and college objectives for the MSW Program.
- **Field Education Advisory Committee:** Advises and supports the Field Programs and includes one MSW student representative who will serve a one-year term.
- **Faculty Recruitment Committee:** Responsible for recruiting, screening, and coordinating campus visits for candidates; convening and facilitating a special faculty meeting to evaluate the candidates; and making recommendations to the Dean. Membership may include one MSW student.

### Professional Development and Organizations

In addition to formal classroom and field experiences, students in the BSW Program are encouraged to work on their professional development in the following ways:

- Attend available College sponsored trainings and events.

- Join the [National Association of Social Workers](#) (NASW).
- Join the [Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors](#) (BPD).
- Join the [Council on Social Work Education](#) (CSWE).
- Join the [Society for Social Work and Research](#) (SSWR).

## STUDENT RESOURCES

### University of South Carolina Resources

[Financial Assistance and Scholarships](#): May be available for those students who qualify. Students are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

[Information Technology](#): Provides information and support to students for common resources such as Blackboard, email, IDs and security.

[Writing Center](#): Offers free consultations to UofSC students, faculty, and staff. Through collaborative consultations, the Center provides feedback to help writers accomplish their own goals.

[Academic Success Resources](#): Resources are available for any student looking to improve performance in the classroom and in life. Faculty serve as teachers, advisers and mentors, while current students serve as peer leaders and tutors.

[Student Disability Resource Center](#): Coordinates efforts to ensure that students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations, and we serve as consultants to faculty, staff and campus partners. To apply for accommodations, students should start the application process as soon as they are admitted to the University.

[Career Center](#): Helps students realize their career goals and locate employment upon graduation. Services include resume writing, job searches, interview preparation, exploration of graduate school, etc.

[Thomas Cooper Library](#): Contains most of the University library collections on the Columbia campus.

[Student Health Services](#): Provides comprehensive physical and mental health care services right on campus to help contribute to students' success and overall well-being.

[Wellness & Prevention](#): Encourages and supports healthy lifestyles for all members of the UofSC community.

[Counseling & Psychiatry Services](#): Provides essential therapy and emotional wellness services for students at the University of South Carolina.

[Stop Sexual Assault](#): Advocates offer support and a variety of services to students, faculty and staff who are survivors of interpersonal violence (sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, intimate partner violence and/or stalking).

[Suicide Prevention](#): Provides support and education to students.

[Carolina Closet - Leadership and Service Center | University of South Carolina \(sc.edu\)](#) Provides business professional clothes to the University of South Carolina students.

[The Gamecock Pantry](#): Campus food pantry created for students, by students.

[Off-Campus Living & Neighborhood Relations](#): Provides information to students about off-campus housing.

[Transfer Student Success - Student Success Center | University of South Carolina](#) Offers support for transfer undergraduate students. The office advocates for the need of transition services on campus, provides support resources for a seamless transition into UofSC, and provides consultation services.

[Office of Multicultural Student Affairs](#): Encourages students to work together to create an inclusive learning community at the University of South Carolina.

[Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#): Supports UofSC's commitment to creating and sustaining an inclusive learning, living and working environment where all members of the university's community feel that they are welcomed, valued and supported. Students have access to diversity data and programs, the Student Access Scholarship application, and the portal to report incidents of bias or hate.

[International Student Services](#): Provides a wide range of services for international students, including pre-arrival information, orientation programs, immigration advising, personal assistance, and student programs and activities.

[Parking and Transportation Services](#): A variety of parking options for students on the Columbia campus is available.

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## College of Social Work Resources

**Computer Lab:** The BSW/MSW Student Computer Lab is located in Hamilton College, Room 201B.

**Mailboxes (Columbia Students):** Student mailboxes are located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Hamilton College.

**MSW Student Listserv** [COSWMSW@listserv.sc.edu](mailto:COSWMSW@listserv.sc.edu): MSW students are automatically subscribed to this listserv. The listserv is closed to the public - only current students, faculty and staff of the College of Social Work are eligible to join the listserv. The listserv is used by College administration to communicate with students about news, events, and activities.

## APPENDIX

### A: Student Behavior Review Procedure

All COSW students are required to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/about/ethics/code-of-ethics>), and the rules for academic and behavioral conduct established by the University of South Carolina (for Undergraduate Academic Regulations: <https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/undergraduate/policies-regulations/undergraduate-academic-regulations/>; for Graduate Academic Regulations: <https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/policies-regulations/graduate-academic-regulations/#text>; for USC's Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf626.pdf> ). Violations of these requirements may result in a review process, leading to possible sanctions including suspension or termination. Procedures for student review are described below.

#### Review Procedures

##### 1. Initial Conversation:

When a faculty member, instructor, or staff member has concern about a student's behavior, they shall first try to address that concern and explore ways to resolve it with the student directly. The goal of this initial conversation is to work toward a mutual understanding and resolution of the concern. Faculty members, instructors, staff members or students may consult with the program coordinator or student services staff, as well as other campus resources, for advice and technical assistance with campus policies and procedures.

##### 2. Informal Behavior Review

If concern about the behavior is not successfully resolved by this direct intervention, the faculty member, instructor, or staff member may request involvement by the student's Program Coordinator (BSW, MSW, or PhD) or the Field Education Director (if the problem occurs in or affects the field placement). This involvement may include meeting with the student individually, facilitating discussion between the referring faculty/staff member and student, engaging the student's advisor, and referring the student to academic support, mental health, or other services on campus. The Program Coordinator or Field Education Director shall report their involvement and the outcome of that involvement to Student Services for inclusion the student's permanent record.

##### 3. Automatic Behavior Reports

Faculty members, instructors, or staff members shall automatically report certain student behaviors to appropriate college officials, university officials, or both:

- Certain behaviors merit an automatic report by faculty members to the student's Program Coordinator and Assistant Dean of Students to initiate possible supportive intervention. These behaviors include excessive absences, nonresponse, and other concerns that undermine academic performance. Report these concerns using the [Absent, Disengaged or Struggling Student Form](#). As appropriate, attach emails or other documentation to substantiate the report.
- Certain behaviors merit an automatic report to the [UofSC Student Care and Outreach Team](#). These behaviors include self-injurious behavior (e.g., suicide attempt or talking about suicide, self-harming, illegal drug use, disordered eating) and other concerning behavior (e.g., substance use, unusual behavior, victimization, grieving, emotional distress). Report these behaviors using the [Student Care and Outreach Team Incident Report](#).
- Certain behaviors merit an automatic report to [UofSC Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#). These include potential academic integrity violations such as plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors report suspected violations using the [Honor Code Violation Report](#).

- Other behaviors also merit an automatic report to [UofSC Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#). These include alcohol and drug misconduct, damage to property, disruptive activity, fraudulent behavior, health and safety concerns, theft and burglary, violent conduct, and weapons. Instructors and others report these behaviors using the [Code of Conduct Violation Report](#).
- Behaviors that merit automatic report to any UofSC offices above, also merit report to the student's Program Coordinator. A behavior report and any response by COSW officials will become part of the student's permanent record.

#### 4. Formal Behavior Review:

When a student's behavior problems do not respond to remediation or efforts at remediation are not adequate, the faculty member, instructor, staff member, program coordinator or student services shall refer the student for review by the student's program coordinator.

##### A. Program Review Committee.

The Program Coordinator assigns a Review Committee from membership of the Program Committee. In the event of a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, members of the Review Committee may recuse themselves. If recusals result in a Review Committee having fewer than three members, the Program Coordinator will appoint additional ad hoc members from the faculty. Review Committee members shall designate one member to serve as chair of the committee.

Program Coordinator will send written documentation about the behavior concern to the Review Committee. The Program Coordinator will also send written notification of the review committee to the student, the student's faculty advisor, the student's academic advisor, the Associate Dean for Curriculum, and other relevant parties within one week.

The Review Committee may meet to determine how to proceed with the review process and to schedule a meeting with the student. The Review Committee will hold a meeting with the student, the student's advisors, and other relevant parties. The student may invite the Student Ombudsperson to be present at this meeting. If the student chooses to invite others who are not UofSC personnel, the student must sign a [FERPA Release Form](#). Signed forms will be maintained in the student's permanent file.

At their meeting with the student, Review Committee members consider any evidence provided by the referring faculty member, instructor, staff member, or student. They will ask questions and allow the student to share information and offer perspective.

Following the meeting, the Review Committee will deliberate based on the information presented and recommend a course of action. The committee may recommend one or more of the following actions:

- **Continuation.** Allow the student to continue in the program with no conditions. In these situations, the concern has either been determined to be unfounded or not to require further action by the student or program. If determined unfounded, no record will be kept.
- **Continuation with conditions.** Establish formal conditions for the student to continue in the program. In these situations, specific conditions must be met for the student to remain enrolled in the program. The disposition must include specific actions requested of the student and a timeline for completing these actions. Actions may include participating in mentoring; writing an essay or otherwise demonstrating increased awareness of the consequences of their actions; referring the student to counseling and/or advising services. A student's failure to meet requirements for continuation may result in termination from the program.

- **Probation.** In consultation with the Associate Dean for Curriculum, the student's Program Coordinator may recommend to the CoSW Dean that the student be placed on probation. Like continuation with conditions, probation establishes formal conditions for the student to continue in the program. These specific conditions must be met for the student to remain enrolled in the program. The disposition must include specific actions requested of the student and a timeline for completing these actions. Unlike continuation with conditions, probation generally involves more stringent conditions and requires Dean approval.
- **Consult with and/or refer to UofSC officials.** For some behaviors, the UofSC Vice President for Student Affairs, Office of General Counsel, or the Division of Law Enforcement and Safety may be consulted or notified. Behaviors that may result in consultation or referral include scholastic dishonesty; racial or sexual harassment; possession or use of firearms or other weapons on UofSC property; damage, destruction, or misuse of UofSC property; and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, or campus visitor.
- **Suspension.** When the student is suspended from the program, the student will be provided with documentation regarding the specific reasons for suspension and the conditions under which the student may be reinstated. Suspension requires Dean approval.
- **Termination.** When a student is terminated from the program, the student will be provided with documentation regarding the specific reasons for his/her dismissal. Termination requires Dean approval.

Within one week of meeting with the student, a Review Committee shall submit a written report and recommendation to the student's Program Coordinator and Associate Dean for Curriculum.

Within one week of receiving the Review Committee report, the Program Coordinator shall inform the student in writing of the final disposition. The Program Coordinator may simply endorse the Review Committee's recommendation or reach another conclusion. If the decision requires Dean approval, the Program Coordinator must obtain it before informing the student of a final decision. The final disposition shall be documented in the student's permanent file.

#### B. Formal Behavior Review Appeal Process.

A student may appeal the Program Coordinator's decision to the CoSW Associate Dean for Curriculum within one week of receiving the final disposition. The Associate Dean for Curriculum shall issue a written decision within one week of receiving the student's appeal. The Associate Dean's decision may be appealed to the CoSW Dean within one week of receiving the decision. The Dean shall issue a written decision within one week of receiving the student's appeal. Right to any further appeal, if any, shall be determined by applicable UofSC policies and procedures. To the extent consistent with university policies and legal requirements, if a student is suspended or terminated from the program and appeals that decision, the student is allowed to continue in the program until the appeal is concluded.

All information disclosed during any of these stages of remediation will be kept confidential unless other relevant parties need to be notified based on their role within the educational context, or there is a legal requirement to report. Review processes with the CoSW do not supersede any UofSC policies and procedures related to both academic and behavioral issues.

#### Termination from the Program

A student may be subject to termination from a CoSW program for:

1. Failure to meet the necessary professional behavior standards in a professional program.

2. Violations of the Code of Student Conduct as determined by the Vice Chancellor, Division of Student Affairs at the recommendation of the Office of Student Conduct and with the concurrence of the Dean.

## B. Grievances, Petitions, and Appeals

There are times when a student may believe that a decision regarding his or her status as a student needs to be reconsidered. Students have a right to seek reconsideration. The procedures for the request vary depending on the nature of the concern.

**Grade in a course or assessment of performance.** If a student disagrees with the mark, grade, or assessment placed on his/her work, the student should discuss the matter with the instructor who assigned the grade. Final authority regarding assignment of the grade shall remain with the instructor. If a committee assigns the mark, grade, or assessment, the student should meet first with the chair of the committee. Final authority regarding assignment of the grade shall remain with the committee.

**Unfair treatment.** If a student is concerned that he or she has been treated unfairly, the student should seek the advice of the **College of Social Work Ombudsperson**, who can advise about the course of action to take.

Options include the following:

- Concern about discrimination or harassment (when academic or nonacademic in the university context): If the student believes that he or she has been treated unfairly in the basis of age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability status, veteran status, or sexual orientation, or has been sexually harassed, then the student shall seek assistance from the **USC Office of Equal Opportunity Programs** (<http://www.sc.edu/eop/>). Equal opportunity complaint processing policy is at: [https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/equal\\_opportunities\\_programs/documents/eop\\_complaint\\_processing\\_procedures.pdf](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/equal_opportunities_programs/documents/eop_complaint_processing_procedures.pdf)
- Concern about responsible teaching: If the student believes the instructor has violated Teaching Responsibilities (contained in the *USC Columbia Faculty Manual*) or USC policies on Freedom of Expression or Protection Against Improper Disclosure, then the student may file a grievance with the **COSW Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee**. Steps in the Grievance Procedure are below.
- Concern about unjust or inequitable treatment that is not based in discrimination or treatment that creates unnecessary hardship: The student may file a grievance with the **COSW Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee** if the student believes she or he has been treated unjustly or inequitably for reasons other than discrimination or has been required to face unnecessary hardship. Such grievances include, but are not limited to, such problems as: mistreatment by any University employee, wrongful assessment and processing of fees, records and registration errors, or violations of the stated college policies. The concern may be academic or nonacademic. Steps in the Grievance Procedure are below.

**Petition for special exception.** If a student seeks an exception to standard rules and policies, the appeal should be made to the Program Coordinator (BSW/Undergraduate, MSW, PhD, or Certificate). The Program Coordinator may make a decision regarding typical requests or may bring the matter to the Program Committee. All decisions regarding exceptions, whether director or committee makes the decision, will be documented. Final authority regarding exceptions to the rules and policies shall remain with the **Program Committee**. Students should plan ahead and allow adequate time (at least two weeks) for the committee to consider the case and gather essential information before a decision can be made.

**College of Social Work Grievance Procedure.** Students who seek to file a grievance should attend to the following procedures.

**Responsible Parties:**

- The **College of Social Work Ombudsperson** will advise the student about the grievance or petition procedure. The student also may seek assistance from the USC Ombudsman. In cases of alleged discrimination or harassment, the student may seek assistance from the USC Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (<http://www.sc.edu/eop>).
  - The COSW Ombudsperson will notify the COSW Associate Dean for Curriculum when a student has made a request. The COSW Ombudsperson is elected by the faculty to a two-year term.
- The **College of Social Work Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee** will be comprised of a core committee to hear all grievances from students. Additional program representatives serve on the Grievance Committee as members only for cases involving the program they represent. Thus the committee includes three tenure-track, tenured or clinical faculty members. Substitute members may be appointed by the dean on an ad hoc, time-limited basis to participate on the Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee when a regularly elected member cannot participate for reasons of conflict of interest or leave. The substitute must represent the same group (faculty, program, student) as the regular member.
- **Faculty adviser:** The student may have a faculty adviser present during any grievance procedure and one other person of the student's choosing. However, the adviser and the other person are not permitted to participate directly in the grievance process, or to speak for the student.

**Course of Action:**

A student who wishes to bring a grievance within the College of Social Work should take this course of action.

1. The student should discuss the matter and seek resolution with the faculty member or other person alleged to have caused the grievance. This should occur within ten working days of the date when the situation occurred that precipitated the grievance.
2. If no satisfactory resolution is achieved, the student should contact the Program Coordinator of the academic program in which the student is enrolled (BSW-Undergraduate, MSW, Certificate, PhD). This should occur within five working days after discussion with the faculty member or other person alleged to have caused the grievance.
3. If no satisfactory resolution is achieved, the student should contact the COSW Ombudsperson. This should occur within five working days after discussion with the Program Coordinator.
4. If the Ombudsperson advises the student to file a grievance with the COSW Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee, within five days of the Ombudsperson's recommendation, the student should file a written request for a grievance hearing. The request is submitted to the Associate Dean for Curriculum, who notifies the chair of the Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee.
5. The student bringing the grievance will have the opportunity to present to the COSW Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee either in writing or in person any and all evidence pertaining to the grievance.
6. The student should be aware:
  - a. Within ten working days of receiving the request for a hearing, the Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee will have a preliminary discussion of the case and will schedule a hearing. The Committee will notify all persons who may be a party to the grievance.

- b. Those persons who disagree with the claims of the grievance or have additional information will have the opportunity to present to the COSW Student Grievance, Standards, Petitions, and Ethics Committee either in writing or in person and all evidence pertaining to the grievance.
- c. All parties to the grievance have a right to see all evidence pertaining to the grievance.
- d. If evidence is presented in person, the committee will have the opportunity to ask questions for points of clarification.
- e. The Committee will ask all parties to the grievance to leave the room so that committee members only can deliberate the case.
- f. The Committee may make the following determinations:
  - i. There is no cause for grievance, the meeting is over, and the parties are dismissed.
  - ii. There is cause for a grievance and a reasonable and fair solution to all parties will be decided. All parties will be brought back to the meeting to hear the resolution. All parties are bound by the committee's decisions unless any party decides to appeal the grievance further.
  - iii. A student may appeal to the USC Ombudsman.
- g. The committee will make a written record of the findings and resolutions and submit a copy to all concerned parties and the Associate Dean for Curriculum.