

APPENDIX B

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

There are several sources of information regarding students' rights and responsibilities at the University, Graduate College, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and School of Social Work levels. Primary sources of information are listed below, as well as offices that offer information and support. In the School of Social Work, you can obtain further information from the Program Director or your faculty advisor.

University Policies

Division of Student Life, Policies and Regulations Affecting Students

Policies Related to Student Rights and Responsibilities

<https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/>

Office of the Graduate College Office of Academic Affairs

The Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College, Academic Grievance Procedures, Thesis policies and manual, the Graduate Student Senate

<https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual>

Graduate College Academic Grievance Procedure

The grievance procedure will depend upon the area involved (e.g., student life, academic difficulties, employment). The graduate student should first explore how to pursue grievance with their advisor or with an appropriate departmental administrator. However, should the student determine whether the matter is unresolved, the Associate Dean of the Graduate College will counsel them on the options available. In addition, the Office of the Ombudsperson may assist graduate students on a confidential basis in selecting an appropriate grievance procedure.

Refer to the Graduate College's Academic Grievance Procedure for specific language and details:

<https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual/academic-grievance-procedure>

Student Complaints Concerning Faculty Classroom Procedures and Related Actions

The CLAS Handbook also includes "Student Complaints Concerning Faculty Actions" and "Student Academic Misconduct":

<https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/>

Student complaints concerning the actions of faculty members with respect to academic matters such as grading and assignments are pursued first through the informal mechanisms established in each college. Although some variation among colleges exists, these mechanisms include:

1. The student should first attempt to resolve the issue with the faculty member involved.
2. Lacking a satisfactory outcome, the student should turn to the School's Problem Resolution Process.
3. If a satisfactory outcome still is not obtained, the student may take the matter to the Director of the School and then the collegiate dean.

Complaints about faculty conduct addressed under the University's Community Policies (such as those pertaining to harassment or sexual misconduct) should be directed to the mechanisms identified in those policies.

Employment-related grievances are resolved in one of two ways.

1. Graduate students who are not members of the UE-COGS bargaining unit should refer to the general University student-employee grievance protocol outlined in published student employee grievance procedure: <https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/student-employee-grievance-procedure/>
2. For graduate student assistants, the procedure contained within the collective bargaining agreement between the State Board of Regents and the United Electrical & Machine Workers Union, Local 896-COGS, is the exclusive remedy for resolving employment-related grievances. Details can be reviewed at the official COGS website: <https://cogs.org/>

A student dissatisfied with the outcome at the collegiate level of an academic complaint against a faculty member may file a formal complaint with the Office of the Provost. In addition, a student dismissed from a college or the University for academic reasons may appeal the dismissal to the Office of the Provost. A student who wishes more specific information about appeal to the Office of the Provost should inquire at the office of their respective dean. For graduate students, the Dean of the Graduate College is the appropriate office for this inquiry. Alternatively, the Office of the Ombudsperson can be contacted. Appeal to the Office of the Provost is the final institutional remedy, and the decision by the Provost/Provost's designee constitutes final University action subject to appeal to the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, pursuant to the policies and procedures of that Board.

School of Social Work. The School has several policies concerning admitted MSW students, described below. Policy questions may be directed to the MSW Program Director.

POLICY ON STUDENT ADVANCEMENT IN THE MSW PROGRAM

Advancing students each semester

Graduate social work students are advanced from one semester to the next, based on their academic progress and professional behavior each semester. The MSW Program Director consults with faculty members each semester to review students' progress in classroom courses and practicum. If a faculty member shares a concern, the MSW Program Director reviews the shared concern. Should the concern be determined valid, the procedures for student advancement are followed, in accordance with the Graduate College.

Refer to the Graduate College Manual for details:

<https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual/academic-program/section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal#1.4.F>

Academic Standards

Graduate social work students are expected to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies described by the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) in courses, which includes practicum education. Graduate social work students must maintain a 3.00 cumulative graduate GPA, a grade of C- or higher for letter-graded courses, and a grade of Satisfactory for non-letter graded courses in the Course Plan. The Graduate College policy on a satisfactory GPA is 2.75.

A student shall be placed on academic probation if, after completing nine semester hours of graded (A, B, C, D, F) graduate work at The University of Iowa, the student's UI Cumulative GPA falls below 3.00. A student is in good academic standing when their UI Cumulative GPA returns to 3.00 or higher. If, after completing nine more semester hours of graded (A, B, C, D, F) graduate work at the University of Iowa, the student's UI Cumulative GPA remains below 3.00, the student will be denied permission to re-register in the SSW. If the student has fewer than nine semester hours of graded (A, B, C, D, F) work left in their Course Plan, they may be dismissed from the MSW program.

Professional Behavior Standards

The [NASW Code of Ethics](#) describes ethical behavioral expectations for social workers. To advance in the social work program and graduate, students must consistently demonstrate the attributes of reliability, receptivity, and self-awareness in class and practicum, which are consistent with the Code of Ethics. UI students must also adhere to the [University of Iowa Code of Student Life](#), the [UI Policy on Sexual Harassment](#), and all other applicable Graduate College and University policies governing student behavior.

Reliability

Attendance. Students are expected to follow class and practicum attendance policies and practices and provide prompt notification of absences. Students attend all required meetings, including program and practicum orientations, meetings requested by classroom or practicum instructors, and meetings related to class group projects. In practicum, students establish and maintain a regular schedule and follow the agency's (not the University's) operational schedule.

- Examples of a *minor violation* include not attending a class, meeting or practicum day that is inconsistent with policy or practice or not providing notification, an instance of late arrival, intermittent engagement, or early departure inconsistent with course or practicum expectations.
- Examples of a *moderate to serious violation* include a pattern of not attending a class, meeting or practicum day that is inconsistent with course or practicum expectations.

Punctuality. Students are expected to arrive on time to class, practicum, and other meetings and provide prompt notification of lateness.

- Examples of a *minor violation* include arriving late to class or not providing prompt notification; arriving late to a scheduled student meeting.
- Examples of a *moderate to serious violation* include: pattern of arriving late or not providing prompt notification.

Dependability and integrity. Students complete all assignments and tasks for classes, group projects, practicum, and other departmental and University requirements; only request extensions when an event beyond their control affects their ability to complete assignments and tasks; and give credit to others for their work. In practicum, students collaborate with their practicum instructor to identify and complete tasks as planned and accurately represent the placement hours and tasks completed.

- An example of a *minor violation* includes completing assignments or tasks late, in class or in practicum.
- Examples of a *moderate to serious violation* include a pattern of completing assignments or tasks late, not providing ample notice when requesting to turn assignments in late or not completing a task on time; or any instance of dishonesty, including plagiarism.

Engagement and Receptivity

Engagement, initiative, and effort. Students are expected to participate in class, practicum, and other professional activities, and complete all assignments and practicum tasks. In practicum, students spend placement hours in professionally meaningful activity; show genuine interest and engagement in the daily life of the practicum environment; take requisite initiative; and demonstrate intellectual and professional curiosity and insightfulness.

- Examples of a *minor violation* include not being prepared, actively engaged, or showing initiative.
- Examples of a *moderate to serious violation* include a pattern of not being prepared, actively engaged, or showing initiative.

Openness and responsiveness to feedback. Students demonstrate receptivity to feedback and suggestions, show a willingness to be self-reflective and self-corrective, demonstrate a willingness to resolve difficult relationships, and modify their behavior accordingly. Students respond to feedback from classroom instructors, practicum instructors and others by taking steps to integrate the feedback into their professional behavior and use the feedback as a tool to help strengthen their practice and awareness of self.

- Examples of a *minor violation* include: defensiveness, anger, denial, or a lack of accountability when receiving feedback and suggestions from others.
- Examples of a *moderate to serious violation* include: pattern of defensiveness, anger, denial, or a lack of accountability when receiving feedback and suggestions from others or not integrating feedback into their professional behavior.

Respectful and responsive communication. Students engage in constructive, respectful dialogue with others when their values and beliefs are challenged, and treat classmates, classroom and practicum instructors, staff, clients, and others in a respectful and nonjudgmental manner. Students respond promptly to all forms of correspondence including emails from classroom instructors, practicum instructors, staff, clients, others, and when working on projects, classmates. Students use electronic devices in the classroom, practicum, and other activities in a manner that is consistent with the course, practicum agency, and any university policies. Students demonstrate professional and respectful oral and written communication skills in coursework and practica, including when they are using social media for UI coursework or practica that are part of their UI curriculum.

- All forms of disrespectful communication are considered *moderate to serious violations*, provided that disrespectfulness is not determined based on the viewpoint expressed. An example of disrespectful communication includes: a pattern of interrupting students or faculty in the classroom despite repeated guidance.

Self-Awareness

Emotional self-regulation. Students strive to be personally and professionally centered when engaging with classmates, classroom instructors, practicum instructors, staff, clients, and others in the instructional context; use appropriate professional language (spoken and written) to filter emotional content; and take responsibility for and avoid blaming others for their feelings or behavior.

- An example of a *minor violation*: not attending to their emotional behavior.
- An example of a *moderate to serious violation*: a pattern of not attending to their emotional behavior.

Boundary maintenance. Students maintain strict personal-professional boundaries in the real and virtual worlds, and, when in doubt, seek appropriate consultation regarding professional boundaries. Students speak on behalf of their practicum agency only as authorized. Students follow class and practicum policies regarding appropriate hours of communication with classroom instructors, practicum instructors, staff, clients, and others regarding coursework or practicum work outside of regular work hours (e.g., weekends, evenings).

- An example of a minor violation: violating boundaries. A single boundary violation may be considered a moderate to serious violation.
- An example of a *moderate to serious violation*: a pattern of violating boundaries.

Professional attire. In professional situations, including practicum, interviews for practicum placements, meetings, and interactions with colleagues, students dress in a manner that is appropriate for the context or setting.

- Example of a *minor violation*: dressing in an unprofessional manner for the context or setting.
- Example of a *moderate to serious violation*: a pattern of dressing in an unprofessional manner for a particular context or setting.

Impairment

The NASW [Code of Ethics, Section 4.05](#), addresses social worker impairment that may interfere with professional judgment and performance or jeopardize the best interests of people for whom the social worker has a professional responsibility. Impairment may be related to psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance use disorders, mental health difficulties, or other factors. Social work students should address their impairment by considering whether to seek professional help, adjust their workload, withdraw from the program, or take any other necessary steps. Students are encouraged to contact the University Counseling Service for assistance:

<https://counseling.uiowa.edu/>

Procedures for Student Advancement

The MSW Program Director is contacted whenever a person (including a faculty member, academic advisor, staff member, or practicum instructor) identifies a concern related to a student's academic performance, professional behavior, or impairment. The person who identifies the behavior is "the person with the concern." The MSW Program Director reviews the concern to determine if the concern requires further action or intervention.

Student advancement concerns are addressed through an informal or formal concern process depending on the seriousness of the concern.

Informal Concern Processes

The informal process is the most appropriate course of action for most concerns. Formal documentation does not occur.

Informal Concern Process, Phase 1 - Faculty/student only

Faculty are expected to respond to minor concerns by providing feedback directly to the student. Feedback related to the minor concern and whether the student may remediate the concern is documented in an email to the student. For example: In reviewing mid-term grades the instructor determines a student is at risk of receiving a low grade in the class unless performance is enhanced.

Informal Concern Process, Phase 2 – Faculty (with MSW director consultation)/ Student

If the student does not respond to feedback or is likely to fail the course, the faculty member must consult with the MSW Program Director who will determine the level of concern and course of action. If the informal concern is deemed resolvable, the concern is not escalated. Should informal concern rise to the level of formal concern, the Formal Concern Process is followed.

Formal Concern Process

The purpose of the formal concern process is to address academic standards, professional behavior standards, or impairment before the concern results in dismissal.

Immediate Dismissal

If a person has a concern about a student's professional behavior or impairment that they believe is so egregious as to be grounds for immediate dismissal, they will notify the MSW Program Director and the Director of the School. The Director of the School will direct the person with the concern to the appropriate University office if the concern falls within the scope of a University Community Policy. Otherwise, the MSW Program Director and the Director of the School will ask the person with the concern to write a summary of the concern. If the MSW Program and School Director concur that the concern meets grounds for immediate dismissal, the MSW Program Director will write a Letter of Dismissal. The letter will describe how the student has not met the School's standards and it will be emailed to the student's UI email address. The student has a right to grieve the dismissal as described below.

Letter of Concern, Advancement Meeting and Probation

The MSW Program Director notifies the student that they are not meeting a standard for advancement by sending them the Letter of Concern.

Letter of Concern. If a full-time faculty of the School has the concern, they write the Letter of Concern. If someone else or more than one person has a concern, the MSW Program Director writes the Letter of Concern. The letter will describe how the student has not met the School's standards. The MSW Program Director will send the student and their advisor, the Letter of Concern by University of Iowa email, request a meeting with the student, and instruct the student to contact the MSW Program Director to schedule the advancement meeting within one week of receiving the Letter of Concern. If the student does not contact the MSW Program Director within two weeks of the date it was sent, the MSW Program Director may initiate the dismissal process.

Advancement Meeting and Remediation Contract. The MSW Program Director, the student, the student's advisor, and the person(s) with the concern will meet to develop a plan to help the student address the concern. The MSW Program Director will write the remediation contract, obtain signatures, and place the Contract in the student's file. The Contract will state:

- the nature of the concern in an appropriate level of detail
- the actions to be taken by the student and, if applicable, others
- the date(s) when each action must be completed
- the date(s) when the MSW Program Director and the person(s) with the concern will review the Contract to determine whether all actions were completed satisfactorily
- the sentence, the student is "on probation until the terms of the contract are met."

The Contract must be signed by the student, the MSW Program Director, and the person(s) with the concern.

Refusal to Meet or to Sign the Contract. By signing the remediation contract, all signatories agree to the terms of the Contract. If the student is unwilling to meet to develop a Contract or is unwilling to accept the remediation conditions in the Contract, the student may be dismissed, pending review with the Graduate College.

Probation and Letter of Advancement with Probation. Students who have a remediation contract are on probation. When the student has an approved remediation contract that extends past the current semester, the MSW Program Director will write a letter of advancement, stating the student is advanced to the next semester on a probationary basis. A student on probation may be restricted from entering practicum until the concern is sufficiently resolved.

Remediation Contract Evaluation. The person who wrote the Letter of Concern will meet with the MSW Program Director to review the student's progress toward completing all actions of the remediation contract by the date specified in the Contract. If the student satisfactorily completes all actions by the agreed-upon dates, the MSW Program Director will notify the student using the student's official University of Iowa email address, informing

them that they have met all conditions of the Contract and are advanced to the subsequent semester. The remediation contract may be altered:

If the student can document an emergency that prevented them from renegotiating the remediation contract before the deadlines stated in the Contract or that prevented them from completing an action in the Contract before its deadline. An emergency may, but need not, involve the student's physical or mental health; family, such as caring for a parent or child with a health condition; maternity; finances; and military or religious service. The student must speak with the MSW Program Director and their advisor to discuss how to document the emergency. Renegotiation may include meeting with the advancement committee, rewriting the remediation contract, and obtaining signatures.

If the student believes someone violated, misinterpreted, or improperly applied a University, College, or School procedure, rule, regulation, or policy during the advancement process that prevented them from meeting all conditions of the remediation contract or from renegotiating a new contract before the deadlines stated in the Contract.

Failure to Meet Conditions of the Remediation Contract. If the student has not satisfactorily completed all actions in the Contract by the agreed-upon dates, the MSW Program Director writes the Letter of Dismissal (see below, "Letter of Dismissal or Alternative Action," for an exception).

Letter of Dismissal or Alternative Action

If the MSW Program Director concludes the student has not met all conditions of the remediation contract, the MSW Program Director will email the student of the dismissal decision and invite the student to meet with the MSW Program Director. If the student does not contact the MSW Program Director to schedule a meeting within one week of the email, the MSW Program Director will send the Letter of Dismissal.

At the meeting with the student, the MSW Program Director and the person who wrote the Letter of Concern will discuss unmet conditions in the remediation contract and hear any evidence that the student may offer relating to why they believe they should be permitted to remain in the program. Following this meeting, the MSW Program Director will take one of two actions: dismiss or an alternative action.

Dismiss. If the MSW Program Director determines the student did not meet all conditions in the remediation contract and the MSW Program Director does not believe that the evidence proffered by the student at the meeting warrants the student's continuation in the program, the MSW Program Director will email the Letter of Dismissal to the student, and the student will not be permitted to re-register in the School of Social Work. The dismissal letter is sent to the student, the Director of the School, the person who wrote the Letter of Concern, the student's advisor, and the Graduate College. The letter is also placed in the student's file. The letter will be sent to the student by email (UI account) and by mail. The letter will state that the student has two weeks to initiate the grievance process by notifying the Director of the School in accordance with the grievance policy described below.

Alternative Action. If the student did not satisfactorily complete all conditions of the Contract, but the MSW Program Director concludes that good cause exists for the student to remain in the program, the MSW Program Director may add conditions to the Contract for the student to remain in the program, may add dates by which conditions must be met, and state whether the student remains on probation. The MSW Program Director will notify the student of their decision by email and by mail, with a copy to the person who wrote the concern and the student's advisor.

This dismissal process pertains only to the School of Social Work. A student dismissed from the School without other process is not dismissed from the University.

Dismissal, Confidentiality, and Letters of Recommendation

All faculty, staff, and other school representatives will abide by all applicable privacy laws and rules, including FERPA regulations regarding the disclosure of the fact that a student was dismissed from the social work program. When students ask for letters of recommendation, staff or faculty members will:

- ask for the request in writing
- ask the student to state whether the student waives the right to read the letter before the staff or faculty member submitting the letter, and
- inform the student that a faculty or staff member may decline to provide a letter of reference for the student.

Problem Resolution Process

The problem resolution process in the School of Social Work is used to address problems, including dismissal. Information on students' rights and responsibilities in the Graduate College is outlined in the *Graduate College Manual, Section IV: Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal*:

<https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual/academic-program/section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal>

Notwithstanding the grievance procedure set forth below, students and faculty are encouraged to resolve problems on an informal basis.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

Issues that may be appropriate for a grievance at the School level include a violation, misinterpretation, or improper application of University, Graduate College, or School procedures, rules, regulations, or policies governing the MSW program, including dismissal from the program when there may have been a procedural error in the advancement process or a violation of University policy. To initiate a grievance, the student must first notify the Director of the School in writing within two weeks of the action that is the subject of the student's complaint. The student's written notification to the Director of the School must describe:

- the facts and circumstances of the alleged violation,
- the University, College, or School procedure, rule, regulation, or policy allegedly violated,
- the person or persons alleged to be in violation,
- the date(s) of the alleged violation, and
- the preferred remedy sought by the student.

Upon receipt of the student's written notification, the Director of the School will schedule a meeting with the student, at which time the student will present evidence in support of the student's claims. The Director of the School may request the submission of documents in advance of the meeting. The Director of the School also has the discretion to approve or deny the presence of student representatives at this meeting.

Following the meeting, the Director of the School may solicit information from any other person who may have information pertinent to the grievance. The Director of the School may also schedule a follow-up meeting with the student. After this evidence-gathering process and depending on the nature of the issue, the Director of the School will:

- act within their authority to resolve the issue and provide to the student a written response explaining the rationale for such action,
- refer the student to the Graduate College or another office (e.g., Office of the Ombudsperson), or
- determine that the issue can be grieved at the School level and proceed as described below.

If the Director of the School determines, in their sole discretion, that the issue can be grieved at the School level, the Director of the School will appoint a grievance committee of three faculty members, one of whom will be appointed by the Director of the School to serve as the committee moderator. The Director of the School will attempt to appoint members who were not directly involved in the student's allegation. The Director of the School will send an email to the student's University of Iowa email account informing the student of the committee's membership.

The Director of the School will provide the committee with the grievance materials. The committee will meet to review the materials and may seek additional information from the Director of the School, the student, or others who may have pertinent information. The committee will make a recommendation to the Director of the School in writing and provide a rationale.

The Director of the School will either accept or reject the committee's recommendation or direct the committee to clarify their decision within one week of receiving the initial recommendation.

The Director of the School will provide a copy of the committee's written recommendation and rationale, along with the Director's final decision to the student by email (UI account) and by mail. If the allegation is rejected, the letter will describe additional actions the student may take to address the problem. For instance, a student may next bring the issue to the associate dean of the Graduate College or contact the Office of the University Ombudsperson.

If the grievance was based on the student's dismissal, the letter will state whether the student is advanced, dismissed or on probation. If the student is placed on probation, then an advancement meeting will be scheduled with the student.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and may result in grade reduction for the assignment, an F for the course, or more serious penalties depending upon the severity of the transgression. Plagiarism and cheating include, but are not limited to, the following:

- presentation of the ideas of others without credit to the source
- use of direct quotations without quotation marks and without credit to source
- paraphrasing without credit to the source
- participation in group project which presents plagiarized material
- failure to provide citations for material obtained through electronic research
- downloading and submitting work from electronic data bases' without citation
- submitting material created/written by someone else as one's own
- copying from someone else's exam, homework, or laboratory work
- allowing someone else to copy or submit one's work as his/her own
- accepting credit for a group project without doing one's share
- submitting the same paper in more than one course
- using notes or other materials during test without authorization
- not following the guidelines specified by instructor for "take home" exams
- the fabrication of research data

Graduate students' misconduct will be reported to the MSW or PhD program director, at which point further disciplinary action may be taken. Details are outlined in the *Graduate College Manual, Section IV: Academic*

Standing, Probation, and Dismissal (available at <https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual/academic-program/section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal>).

PRACTICA STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

Structure and Sequence

Practicum at the University of Iowa School of Social Work is composed of two levels of courses.

Generalist Practica Course. Students admitted to the MSW program without a bachelor's degree in social work from a Council in Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program are required to take Generalist Practicum: 300 contact hours during the spring semester of the first year for full-time students; and during the spring semester of the second year for 3-year and 4-year program students. Three (3) semester hours of credit will be earned for successful completion of the Generalist Practicum.

Specialized Practica Course. All students admitted to the M.S.W. program are required to take the Practicum with Clinical or Leadership Specialization during the fall and spring of the final year. The minimum required 600 contact hours of Practicum with Clinical or Leadership Specialization will earn 6 semester hours of credit.

Co-Requisite Courses. Generalist Practicum Seminar for Generalist Practicum and the Clinical or Leadership Practicum Seminar I and II for the Practicum with Clinical or Leadership Specialization.

Placement Assignment Process

Most established practicum sites for UI SSW are located within a 50-mile radius of Des Moines, Iowa City, and Sioux City. The sites provide learning opportunities for the two specializations and many fields of practice. Placements outside these practicum centers are permitted in some circumstances and are contingent upon the ability of the practicum instructor and student to travel to the School of Social Work center for meetings with Practicum Coordinators.

Generalist Practica are assigned by either the Practicum Director or, in the Des Moines, Sioux City and Online centers, by the Learning Center Practicum Administrator.

Specialized Practica Course are developed during a process that starts in the first year. Failure to obtain a practicum after five interviews will result in reconsideration of the student's suitability for advancement in the MSW program.

Employment While an MSW Student

The School of Social Work is committed to part-time graduate social work education. The School endeavors to educate as broad a cross section of students as possible, including non-traditional students and students who must work to support families, and who therefore find it difficult to be full-time students.

Students must be available to attend classes when they are scheduled. Thus, employed students need to have made arrangements with their employers to flex their work schedule sufficiently to attend class. In addition, it is often challenging to adjust schedules when fulfilling the requirements for the Generalist Practicum (300 hours) and the Specialized Practicum (300 hours in the fall and spring semesters of the final year). Combining 3-4 days/week in practicum with course work will likely conflict with continuing in full-time employment.

Before registering in the MSW program, employed students must make plans to flex, reduce or eliminate their outside employment while they are in Generalist Practicum and Specialized Practicum. Practica are designed to extend and integrate learning achieved in class with practice in the field. The student has an opportunity to employ social work interventions and ethical decision-making processes with different client populations at multiple levels. A particular focus is the application of research to social work theory and practice,

including the evaluation of interventions and outcomes. Because of the importance of practica to the overall preparation of students for the profession, as dictated by the Council on Social Work Education Accreditation Standards, work experience prior to admission into the M.S.W. program cannot meet the practica requirements.

8/3/20

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS

The marking system used in the Graduate College is detailed in Manual of Rules and Regulations, *Section VI. Marking System* (available at <https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual/academic-program/section-vi-marking-system>)

Letter grades are reported with plus/minus and the numerical value is as follows:

- Grades of A+ will have a value of 4.33 in calculating a student's GPA, but the averages displayed at the bottom of the grade report will be truncated so as not to exceed 4.00.
- Students are required to maintain a 3.0 throughout the MSW program.
- Graduate students do not earn credit for courses graded below C- per Graduate College policy.
- Students wishing to take S/U course for letter grade may do so, following the process outlined by the Graduate College: <https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual/academic-program/section-vi-marking-system>
- Retaking a course in which a grade of D, F, or U is recorded is possible but not guaranteed. Students may be given permission to advance on departmental probation and repeat the course, if agreed to as part of the Contract associated with the formal advancement process (see Student Advancement Policy for details). Second grade option is not possible in the graduate college. Both the original grade and subsequent course and grade entry will appear on the student's transcript and both grades are factored in the GPA.
- Incompletes are not sanctioned by the University except for work that cannot be graded on time for extenuating reasons. Students must petition the instructor and complete a contract for an incomplete which must be made up before the end of the following semester or by an earlier deadline as arranged with the instructor. Students may not advance to courses for which they have not met the prerequisites due to incompletes. The grade of Incomplete is to be used only when a student's work during a session cannot be completed because of illness, accident, or other circumstances beyond the student's control. Instructors may report a mark of Incomplete only if the unfinished part of the student's work, in a course other than thesis or independent study, is small; the work is unfinished for reasons acceptable to the instructor; and the student's standing in the course is satisfactory.
- Earning credit for Individual Study may be an option for MSW students in good standing. The student must identify a supervising faculty member and negotiate an Individual Study Contract before they register for the individual study course.

POLICIES RELATED TO ACADEMIC PLANNING

Advising

Advisors provide academic advising, approve and sign course drop/add requests and approve advisees to register each semester after meeting with them. They are also involved in approving change of status from part to full-time status and change of specialization. Other changes in plans to complete the program may involve a modification of their plan to complete the program, transferring to another learning center, or requesting a leave of absence. All

modifications require completion of a form with appropriate signatures. When a concern is filed regarding a student's advancement in the program, the advisor assists with the development of the remediation plan (see Student Advancement Policy).

Changes in Advisor

Students may request a change in advisor if they have identified a principal advisor who has agreed to serve as their advisor. The student should notify their current principal advisor to whom they are currently assigned and complete the Change of Advisor workflow form.

Graduate Transfer Credit

Students transferring from other CSWE accredited schools of social work shall complete a minimum of 24 s. h. of coursework after admission to the MSW program at the University of Iowa and agree to meet all requirements of the Iowa program.

The admitted transfer student is expected to produce course outlines, and sometimes assignments to assist the MSW Director and sequence faculty to assess comparability to the UI MSW program competencies and practice behaviors. The MSW Director will provide final approval of the student's plan to complete the program. The University of Iowa and the School of Social Work do not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

With approval from the MSW director, a maximum of 12 s.h. of graduate transfer credit for previous graduate work if it has been approved by Graduate Admissions as graduate credit and will be less than 10 years old at the time the student graduates. The courses must be identified on student transcript and must be in an area that makes them suitable as required courses when applicable, or as an elective. At least one elective (minimum 2 s.h.) must be preparatory for the students' specialized practicum. The academic advisor or the MSW director indicates in student's Advising Summary the number of hours and which courses to apply to the MSW degree.

Upon completion of previous course(s) review, the MSW Director provides a note in student's Advising Summary indicating which courses will transfer, if the course(s) is an elective or satisfying a required social work course. The grad coordinator will submit an Exception Request to update the student's degree audit. The MSW Director will provide final approval of the student's plan to complete the program. Requests to review transcripts and course outlines must be submitted no later than two weeks before the start of the semester.

If students expect to transfer in courses from other institutions, official transcripts must be submitted to, and evaluated by, Graduate Admissions prior to the end of their first University of Iowa semester, or graduation may be delayed. All students must be registered at The University of Iowa during the semester the MSW is to be awarded.

Procedure for Identifying and Referring Students Requiring Writing Skill Support

Instructors should identify students with writing problems and refer those students to the student's advisor if the problem is serious. The advisor may refer the student to the Writing Lab and/or develop a remediation plan utilizing the student advancement policy.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, instructors must make reasonable accommodations for students who have physical, mental, or learning disabilities. Refer to the University's Office of Civil Rights, <https://ocrc.uiowa.edu/disabilities>

The University is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all. If a student has a disability that may impact on the student's ability to complete the course requirements as stated in the syllabus, the student may seek accommodation through Student Disability Services (SDS). SDS is responsible for making Letters of Accommodation (LOA) available. The student must provide an LOA to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, but requests not made at least two weeks prior to the scheduled activity for which accommodation is sought may not be fulfilled. The LOA will specify what reasonable course accommodation the student is eligible for and those the instructor should provide. Additional information can be found on the SDS website.

A student with a disability is responsible for requesting accommodation. It is important that instructors help students preserve their privacy and maintain the confidentiality of student records, including records of disability accommodation. The instructor would like to hear from anyone who has a disability which may require seating modifications or testing accommodation or accommodation of other class requirements, so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Please contact the instructor during office hours. Instructors are not required to provide accommodation until the student has presented a Letter of Accommodation (LOA).

Students for Whom English is a Second Language

The school recognizes the special educational needs of social work students who speak English as a second language. Students will be assigned to an academic advisor with special interest whenever possible. The advisor will assist the student to obtain special educational assistance, as needed.

Instructors are expected to meet with such students at the beginning of each semester and help them to arrange for special educational assistance, as needed (e.g. extended time for exams and assignments, tutoring, writing skills). All incoming international students whose first language is not English are required to take an on-campus English Proficiency Evaluation upon arrival unless they meet any of the exceptions listed here. The course structure for international students may be individualized depending on English Language proficiency, educational background, and professional experience.

Time Limits for Completion of Program

Full-time students: complete MSW in 2 years (five) semesters.

Part-time students: complete MSW within 12 semesters and complete a minimum of two courses per semester.

Students who withdraw from the program or are inactive for three consecutive semesters must reapply for admission.

Readmitted Students

Readmitted students: shall meet the admissions requirements of the current program.

They shall meet the advancement policy requirements and will meet current specialization requirements.

General Academic Planning

"Banking" of credits is not permitted. Credits must be awarded for work produced in the semester of registration.

The specialization (Clinical Practice or Leadership Practice) must be declared by the time the student begins planning the specialized practicum. Changes in specializations must be discussed and approved by the advisor. The students must submit a Change of Specialization workflow form for approval.

Students may be able to change their status to or from full-time, two-year, or part-time: three, or four-year programs. Schedule an appointment with your advisor to discuss and draft a new course plan. Changing status requires consideration of: 1) the student's academic plan, 2) the availability of practicum placements, and 3) course availability and class size. After a new course plan is created with your advisor, submit a Request to Change Type

of MSW Program via workflow (the revised course plan is required to be attached to the form) for approval. This necessitates the approval of the faculty advisor, the practicum administrator at the site where the student intends to complete practicum, and the MSW program director.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to take responsibility for the following actions:

- *Maintain course planning form/MyPlan.* The course planning form or MyPlan is a resource to guide registration. This tool can be revised each semester and discussed with your advisor during registration advising appointments. An up-to-date copy shall be in uploaded in student's MyUI, Advising Summary following each advising appointment and/or communication regarding change to plan.
- Monitor degree audit for progress in meeting course requirements
- Register for courses each semester
- Respond to surveys which assist with program planning, which elective to offer, etc.
- Attend mandatory practicum planning meetings
- Complete practicum planning forms
- Submit Application for Degree

If the student is a thesis candidate, the student is responsible for meeting all deadlines including deposit deadlines. At the thesis defense meeting the student should obtain appropriate signatures from thesis committee on the "Report to the Graduate College" form and return it to the Program and Admissions Manager so that it can be forwarded to the Graduate College.

Students who have fees due to the University of Iowa (i.e., library) will not be permitted to register for the next semester or to graduate.

Students who plan to complete final examination thesis prior to the final semester must first have approval of advisor, School of Social Work Final Exam Committee, and person in charge of final exam. Student must have completed 5 s.h. of Specialized Practicum with a Satisfactory grade prior to completion of final exam. No more than one required course should remain in the semester after student undertakes final requirement (See Instructions of MSW degree candidates).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MSW DEGREE CANDIDATES

A student planning to graduate and/or complete Master's Final Examination must complete the following steps:

- The thesis candidate must submit a signed final examination proposal form to the Graduate Coordinator.
- The Graduate Coordinator will complete and submit the Request for Final Examination to the Graduate College.
- Each student's degree audit is reviewed by a team at UI to ensure all curriculum and Graduate College policies have been followed. When all requirements are met, the degree audit will show a message of, "IP courses used; all reqmts complete [sic]".
- All students apply for degree via MyUI, Degree/Graduation icon.
- Changes in the Student's Plan of Study summary sheet, current registration, or an anticipated change in one's graduation date must be reported immediately to the Graduate Coordinator. An Application for Change in Plan of Study form or a Deletion Notice may need to be filed with the Graduate College.

For students planning to graduate in the summer (July/August), must complete all course work by the end of the summer session. Students who complete the program after the July deadline will be awarded the official MSW degree the following December. File your Application for Degree in the fall semester before the University deadline.

THESIS AND ORAL EXAMINATION

A thesis and final oral examination is not required for the MSW degree. Students may pursue a thesis under the supervision of a social work faculty member and two additional committee members. Students typically complete a thesis if they intend to pursue doctoral education or another position that requires a high level of research competency. A thesis is not required for admission into a Ph.D. or DSW granting social work program. In addition to refining their research skills, students develop skills collaborating with a committee to complete their thesis research. Working with a committee is likely to help prepare students to complete the Ph.D. dissertation and successfully defend it.

Students who wish to explore the thesis option may speak to their adviser, the director of the MSW program, or the director of the Ph.D. program. Because the thesis requires human subject's approval and may involve the collection of data, students in the two-year program should decide whether to pursue a thesis during their first semester in the program and ask a faculty member to chair their thesis by the end of their first semester.

With advisors' permission, students may apply up to six semester hours of Thesis Hours to the elective requirement for the MSW degree. Thesis Writing Seminar is offered in the fall semester in Iowa City for 1–3 semester hours and applied to the elective requirement.

Guidelines for the Proposal

Students submit a proposal to their committee for approval before they collect data, if applicable, and analyze data. The proposal is typically 30 pages and includes the following elements (page estimates in parentheses):

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the problem (<2)

Mini or brief literature review (<2)

The gap you will fill (1 paragraph)

Purpose (1 sentence)

Research questions (1)

Overview of methods (<1)

Preview of subsequent chapters (<1) Chapter 2: Literature

Introduction/preview of literature (<1)

Review of the literature (15-20)

Summary/conclusion: State of the literature, gap(s) in literature, and how you will fill gap(s). May include a (restatement of) your research questions or hypotheses (2-3)

Chapter 3: Methods

Design, sampling, selection criteria (2)

Sample size and, if known, sample characteristics (2)

Data collection procedures (2)

Human subjects, if required by your chair (1)

Measures (cf. Instruments; 2-3)

Data analysis procedures and, if applicable, power (2) References

Tables and figures Measures/instruments Consent form(s), if applicable Timeline, if requested

Guidelines for the Thesis

Before the oral exam, students revise the chapters that were included in their proposal and write the Public Abstract (less than 250 words), and the Results and Discussion chapters.

Chapter 4: Results

Chapter 5: Discussion

Summary

Interpretation

Limitations

Recommendation for Future Research

Recommendations (e.g., policy, practice, social work education)

Conclusions

Deadlines and Other Important Information

Students considering the thesis should carefully read all Graduate College policies related to the thesis. <https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/academics/thesis-and-dissertation>

The student's chair will help them navigate these policies and the thesis process

Professional Advising

The School of Social Work provides various opportunities for students to prepare for a career in social work.

Professional licensing

All master's level social workers in Iowa are advised to apply for professional to practice social work at the Master's level. At the last practicum seminar of the fall session, students will be invited to consider whether they want to sit for the Iowa SW Licensure exam prior to graduation.

In early January, the School of Social Work updates a handbook with the specific steps required to apply for the social work license.

Career Planning

Throughout the academic year, Practicum and Career fairs are arranged to provide students the opportunity to learn about current employment opportunities.