

IOWA

2026-2027

BASW STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Welcome

Welcome to the University of Iowa School of Social Work! You are beginning professional education in a school with a history of commitment to social change and a mission to prepare effective social work professionals for evidence-based social work practice. Social work is distinctive among the helping professions with its commitment to social justice and social change to support the well-being of vulnerable and marginalized individuals and communities. This commitment is expressed in the School's focus on the person-in-environment perspective; collaborative change work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; policy advocacy; and culturally responsive approaches to social work practice.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY/STAFF ADMINISTRATION

Role	Faculty/Staff Member
Director	Miriam Landsman
Associate Director	Megan Gilster
BA Program Director	Alison Oliver
MSW Program Director	Stephen Cummings
Director of Practicum Education	Peggy Trosper
BA Practicum Coordinator	Liz Mendez-Shannon
Distance Education Administrator	Stephen Cummings
Ph.D. Program Director	Chris Veeh
National Resource Center Director	Miriam Landsman
Critical Cultural Competence Certificate Coordinator	Yolanda Spears
Resilience and Trauma-Informed Perspectives Certificate Coordinator	Harmony Linden
Academic Advisor	Iry Eicher

Mission

"The mission of the BASW program is to prepare students to become competent, culturally responsive generalist social workers whose knowledge and skill sets are grounded in diverse ways of knowing, critical self-reflection, and the values and ethics of professional social work practice. These values and ethics are reflected in the classroom and experiential learning to equip students to enhance overall well-being and advocate for human rights and social justice in our work alongside individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities." The program's goals are to:

- prepare generalist practitioners to work with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities;
- provide students with a base for continuing graduate education in social work and for lifelong learning; and
- prepare students for active engagement with issues of social justice, oppression, and social welfare in local, state, regional, national, and global contexts.

BASW PROGRAM ADMISSIONS, REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR AND CURRICULUM INFORMATION

Admission to the Social Work Major

Students directly declare the social work major at the time of admission to the University of Iowa. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences First-Year Admissions and Transfer Admission requirements.

Students can register for the professional core social work courses when they've successfully met the criteria of completing the following three pre-social work courses with a C or higher:

- SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the U.S. or approved Intro to Social Work course (3 s.h.)
- PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)
- SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)

And meet these requirements:

- 2.0 GPA minimum overall
- Completion of 45 s.h. or more
- Submits a signed Professional Social Work Agreement form (signed after criteria met)

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the accrediting body for schools of social work in the US. The University of Iowa's social work program has been continually accredited by CSWE since 1974. All CSWE-accredited programs educate and evaluate students on [nine Social Work competencies](#) that CSWE has articulated must be demonstrated in professional social work practice. The Social Work major includes a set of professional core courses. In these courses, your academic work will include these nine professional competency areas. You will receive feedback and be evaluated on these competencies in your academic courses and in practicum. Course syllabi for all social work courses in the major will include the competencies you will be expected to demonstrate as well as any competencies for which you will be assessed in that course. Students will be assessed on all nine competencies in the practicum placement.

The Curriculum

The Bachelor of Arts with a major in social work (BASW) requires a minimum of 120 semester hours, including at least 54 semester hours of coursework in the major.

The major in social work requires the following:

PRE-SOCIAL WORK COURSES (9 S.H.):

SSW:1022	Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.
PSY:1001	Elementary Psychology (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.
SOC:1010	Introduction to Sociology (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.

SOCIAL WORK COURSES IN THE MAJOR (33 S.H.):

SSW:3840	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	4 S.H.
SSW:3841	Fundamentals of Social Work Practice	3 S.H.
SSW:3842	Interpersonal Skills Laboratory	3 S.H.
SSW:3844	Introduction to Social Work Research	4 S.H.
SSW:3845	Social Work Processes	4 S.H.
SSW:3847	Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity	3 S.H.
SSW:4189	BA Generalist Practicum Seminar	1 S.H.
SSW:4193	BA Generalist Practicum	8 S.H.
SSW:4843	Social Welfare Policy and Practice	3 S.H.

CO-REQUIREMENT

POLI:1100	Intro to American Politics (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.
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REQUIRED ELECTIVES

Students must complete a minimum of 9 s.h. of electives in social work or aging and longevity studies (prefix SSW or ASP).

Students who are earning a minor or a certificate may apply up to 6 s.h. of SSW course credit from that program of study toward this requirement.

Courses that fulfill GE CLAS Core requirements cannot be used towards elective requirements.

TRANSFER CREDITS FROM OTHER CSWE-ACCREDITED SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMS

The program only accepts field/practicum education and practice course transfer credits from other CSWE-accredited or candidacy social work programs. Elective credits cannot be transferred.

NO CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCE OR PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE

While experience in volunteering, working, and life are valued, the CSWE does not permit the School of Social Work to grant academic credit for life experience or previous volunteer or work experience.

UI GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must also complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences General Education Program. The SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (3 s.h.) fulfills the General Education Program's Values and Society requirement. Introduction to Social Work courses taken at other institutions do not fulfill this general education requirement.

Students can also use other co-required courses to meet general education requirements (PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology, SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology, or POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics for the Social Sciences requirement).

GPA Requirement Overall Minimum in the Major

Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA in their social work courses in the major (excluding the co-required courses) and an overall 2.00 GPA in all courses.

Registration and Sample Course Sequence

A Sample Plan is available for students to guide your plan of study toward earning a BA in Social Work. Students are encouraged to complete CLAS Core requirements and social work pre-requisites in your first and second years. You can take social work electives in any semester. Students should work with their academic advisors to review their plans of study each semester to stay on track toward your intended graduation date. Many social work courses are offered only once each year. Students must receive authorization in their MAUI account from their social work academic advisor to register for professional core social work courses.

First and Second Years

Pre-requisite courses earning a C or higher:

SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States	3 s.h.
PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology	3 s.h.
SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology	3 s.h.

Co-requirement course:

POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics	3 s.h.
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You can take social work electives before enrolling in the professional core social work courses.

You can review Sample Plans in MyUI or review [this sample plan of study](#) on the SSW website for students who have completed at least 50 S.H. by the end of their second year.

Four-Year Graduation Plan

To stay on the University's four-year graduation plan, you must meet minimum requirements by certain semesters.

Before the third semester begins, you should have completed at least 30 s.h. of the 120 s.h. required for graduation.

Before the fifth semester begins, you are required to have met the criteria to register for the professional core social work courses by completing the following three pre-social work courses with a C or higher:

- SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the U.S. or approved Intro to Social Work course (3 s.h.)
- PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)
- SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)

And meet these requirements:

- 2.0 GPA minimum overall
- Completion of 45 s.h. or more
- Submits a signed Professional Social Work Agreement form (signed after criteria met)
- One other course that can be applied to the major – either electives or POLI1100 Introduction to American Politics.
- **Before the seventh semester** begins, you should have completed:
- Six more professional core courses in the major
- At least 90 s.h.

At least 90 s.h.

Before the eighth semester begins, you should have completed:

- All the professional core courses in the major except for SSW:4189 BA Generalist Seminar and SSW:4193 BA Generalist Practicum.
- Finalized your BA Generalist Practicum placement.

During the eighth semester, you must complete any remaining co-requirements, electives, or general education requirements and be registered for the remaining hours needed to earn 120 s.h. for graduation.

Certificate Programs

The School offers two certificate programs. Students working on a minor or a certificate may apply up to 6 s.h. of SSW credit toward the social work major. For more information, check out the link for each certificate program on the School's website.

Certificate in Critical Cultural Competence - <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/undergraduate/certificate-critical-cultural-competence>

Certificate in Resilience and Trauma Informed Perspectives - <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/undergraduate/certificate-resilience-and-trauma-informed-perspectives>

Honors in the Social Work Major

The School of Social Work has an honors program leading to a Bachelor of Arts with honors in social work. You must have a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.33 and complete a 6 s.h. honors project.

Students who are identified as Honors students at The University of Iowa (those with GPAs of 3.33 or higher) are encouraged to register for SSW:4192 Honors in Social Work. By successfully completing an Honors Project under the supervision of a faculty member in the School of Social Work, students will graduate with Honors in Social Work. Simply taking honors courses or being a member of The University of Iowa Honors program does NOT qualify for an "Honors" designation at graduation, nor can a student use that designation on their resumes after graduation. To have graduated with Honors in Social Work at The University of Iowa, students MUST register for and complete an Honors project and submit the required paperwork to the Registrar's Office prior to graduation. Only students who are admitted to the School of Social Work can undertake an Honors project and register for this course.

Students should give serious consideration to an Honors Project in Social Work in the Spring semester of their junior year and approach a faculty member about their interest in completing the project during the Fall and Spring semesters of their senior year. Students should communicate with their academic advisor about their interest in registering for Honors in Social Work to ensure it fits in their plan of study.

Students who wish to undertake an Honors Project will register for SSW:4192 Honors in Social Work (3 s.h.) in the Fall semester and register for SSW:4192 Honors in Social Work (3 s.h.) again in the Spring semester. Students who earn the 6 hours and satisfactorily complete the Honors Project (as determined by their faculty supervisor of the Honors Project) will earn the Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Social Work. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.33 or otherwise have a GPA of 3.33 at the time of graduation to graduate with Honors in Social Work.

Note: Although most students will register for the Honors Project in the Fall semester of their Senior year, students may begin their projects in the Spring semester of their Junior year with the approval of their Honors Project faculty supervisor. The negotiation of the timeline for the project must be approved by the faculty supervisor, dependent on their availability to monitor the project activities.

Options for Honors projects in the School of Social Work:

1. **Original research study:** This option is completed under the supervision of the faculty member that has agreed to supervise this study.
 - The research study can be an original idea developed and implemented by the student or may be part of a larger study of a faculty member that the student takes responsibility for.
 - a. The Honors paper would follow the outline of traditional research papers, including the Introduction, Method Section, Results, and Discussion.
 - b. Studies can be either quantitative or qualitative. They must follow the generally prescribed methods of data collection and analysis. The sophistication of the analysis will be determined between the student and their faculty supervisor. Descriptive studies are certainly appropriate, although hypothesis-testing may be possible if the student has sufficient knowledge for this level of analysis.
 - c. The Honors paper would follow the guidelines of APA in format.
2. **Research study:** Students can complete an Honors project that addresses a research question of interest, but it does not require original data collection or conventional statistical analysis. For example, a student might address a question such as "When can children be

reasonably expected to be left unsupervised by a parent for more than a short time?" This represents a research question that was pursued by a former Honors student in Social Work. The student researched the issue of children being left home unsupervised. They examined expectations of children when they are left home unsupervised between the time they finish their school day and their working parents return home. The student obtained and critiqued different evaluation tools to establish the criteria for judging the competence of children to be left unsupervised. There are many, many research questions that can be posed and answered by students that do not require original data collection and analysis. Many questions can be answered by a thorough review of the literature and examination of social work practices with the population of interest.

- a. The student and supervising faculty member agree on the research question and frame the study and project without an expectation of data collection and analysis.
 - b. APA guidelines are followed for this paper.
3. **Policy analysis or historical analysis:** In either of these two instances, the Honors student and their faculty supervisor agree on the social welfare policy or historical event that will serve as the basis for the Honors paper.
 - a. These papers will follow the conventional formats of papers devoted to subjects of policy or history.
 - b. APA guidelines are followed for this paper.
4. **Creative media:** Students will develop and disseminate a creative media project produced on the topic of interest. Topics must be social work-specific and agreed upon between the Honors student and the faculty supervisor.

For example, a student might produce a video on organizing and leading a protest action about an issue that represents social injustice that can be used in the Social Processes course. The student might have an interest in services for persons with disabilities and plan and produce a video on this element of social work practice that can be shown in the Human Behavior and the Social Environment course. There are many, many ideas for videos and other media formats that can be developed and implemented by students.

- a. In addition to the media product, the student must prepare an explanatory brief (written or recorded) in which they review the literature or information from key informants related to the topic of interest and present information about the development and utilization of the media material they developed.
5. **Educational or Professional Development Project:** This option involves the development of a curriculum, handbook, training manual, grant, or conference that addresses an issue of concern to social work. For example, a student might develop an agency handbook for survivors of sexual assault, an educational curriculum for high school students about eating disorders, a grant for funding a naloxone distribution program at a public library, a statewide conference on domestic violence. Possibilities for these projects – like all those described in #1-4 above, are only limited by the agreement of the product between the student and their faculty supervisor. The student must clearly play a leadership role in the development of the project, and the project should not have been used in any previous (or current) class that a student is enrolled in.

Honors Contract

At the time that students and their faculty supervisors agree to work together on an Honors Project, a contract will be established and signed by the student, faculty supervisor and Honors Advisor for the School. This contract will specify the learning goals, objectives, timeframe, parameters of the intended product, and specifying the Honors Option that is being used to guide the project.

Although most Honors Projects will involve a single option, it may be possible for selective students to combine options across consecutive semesters as long as the final product represents a cohesive effort. For example, if a student was involved in some aspect of a large practice-based research study with their Honors faculty supervisor in the fall semester and wrote an abbreviated Research Report of the findings (Option #1), in their second semester, they might develop a "Practice Manual" for agency social workers (Option #5) that was directly associated with the research findings. The final product—the Honors Thesis— would be a "combined" paper that incorporated both the research study and the practice manual. Guidelines for the submission of the paperwork associated with *completion* of the Honors Project are found on the UI Honors Program website:

<http://honors.uiowa.edu/>

Honors students can also elect to pursue an honors designation for non-honors classes by agreement with the course instructor and receive credit for experiential learning. Please see the Honors Program website for requirements.

Minor in Social Work

A minor in social work requires a minimum of 15 s.h. in social work courses, including 12 s.h. in courses numbered 3000 or above taken at The University of Iowa. You must maintain a 2.00 GPA in all courses for the minor. You cannot apply pass/non-pass (S/U) course credits to the minor. You must also take SSW:1022 Social Justice and Welfare in the United States or equivalent introduction to social work course from another institution approved by the department. Students completing the minor cannot take required professional social work major courses. These courses are only available to students that have declared a social work major and have met the criteria to enroll in the professional core social work courses.

Individual Study SSW:3191

Individual Study allows you to pursue an area of interest that is not offered in the regular curriculum. To complete an individual study, you ask a faculty member with expertise in your topic to supervise your study. You must complete a Contract for Individual Study form [on the advising webpage](#), signed by you and your supervising faculty member and approved by your advisor. Information about faculty members' areas of expertise is on the School's website: <http://clas.uiowa.edu/socialwork/people>

BA GENERALIST PRACTICUM

Practicum Experience is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. In your practicum placement you will engage in supervised social work practice and apply classroom learning in the practicum setting. Detailed information regarding BA Generalist Practicum Experience and BA Generalist Practicum Seminar are available on our Practicum Education website (<https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/practicum-education>) and our Practicum Education Handbook (<https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/practicum-education/handbook>). Our Practicum Education Director, Peggy Trosper (peggy-trosper@uiowa.edu) is also available to answer any questions you have about practicum placement. Below are some details you should be aware of as they prepare for your practicum placement.

Completing all Required Social Work Courses in the Major

You must complete all pre-requisites before you can enter practicum placement. You do not have to have completed all your social work electives or other degree requirements before entering practicum.

Semester and Clock hours for completing BA Generalist Experience

BA Generalist Practicum Experience and Seminar are typically offered in the spring and summer semesters. BA Generalist Practicum is graded S/U. You will register for eight (8) semester hours for practicum experience and complete at least 400 clock hours in your practicum placement. If you are completing practicum in the spring semester, this averages out to 26-27 hours per week over the semester. If you complete practicum experience in the 12-week summer session, you will be in practicum placement for 33-34 hours per week. Your weekly hours may vary according to activities and learning opportunities in the agency or community. You must make up any time missed because of circumstances such as agency holiday(s), planned vacation, and illness. Make-up time is negotiated between the you and your practicum instructor.

You should carefully consider the integration of work and life commitments with your practicum experience in your planning process.

BA Generalist Seminar

The seminar is a one (1) semester hour required course which is offered concurrently with Practicum Experience. The seminar provides opportunity for students to exchange their experiences in their generalist practice settings using an interactive group format. Application of knowledge, skills and values is facilitated through seminar activities, helping students grow into professional identities as culturally responsive practitioners.

Academic and Professional Advising

Academic Advisor. You will have an assigned academic advisor in the major. Your advisor monitors your progress throughout the program. Each semester, you are required to meet with your advisor to review your plan of study and degree audit and get approved to register. You must be authorized in MyUI by your advisor to register for courses.

Your advisor can help with:

- Class registration
- Questions about School of Social Work scholarships
- Clarifications on School policies and procedures
- Dropping or adding a class
- Learning more about academic certificates, the Honor's program, and immersion opportunities

Professional Advising Your academic advisor can provide professional advising, including helping you identify your social work career interests, discussing post-graduation plans, and connecting you with resources on campus for post-graduation employment opportunities, such as the Pomerantz Career Center. Pomerantz Career Center career coaches are available to social work students to help with resume writing, interviewing skills, and job search strategies. School of Social Work faculty and staff, including the BA Program Director, are available to provide professional advising upon student request and can be available during student drop-in hours throughout the academic year

Student Services Center. The School's Student Services Center is located in 308 North Hall. The Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM. Staff are available to answer your questions.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

There are several sources of information regarding students' rights and responsibilities at the University, 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 academic advisor.

University Policies

Division of Student Life, Policies and Regulations Affecting Students

Policies Related to Student Rights and Responsibilities

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

CLAS Undergraduate Programs Academic Policies

<https://clas.uiowa.edu/academics/handbook>

- **Students have the right of equal treatment** from all instructors and staff at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Differences in treatment are prohibited when based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth and related conditions), disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, or associational preferences, see the [University's Policy Manual, Part II, Chapter 3: Human Rights](#).
- **Students have the right to expect certain practices of their instructors.** Faculty members have the responsibility for creating in their classroom or laboratory a climate that encourages students' endeavors to learn. [University's Policy Manual, Part III, Chapter 15: Professional Ethics and Academic Responsibility](#)
- **Students have the right to file complaints.** If a student has a complaint regarding a CLAS course or CLAS instructor, the student should contact the instructor or course supervisor first. If not resolved, the student may contact the Departmental Executive Officer (DEO). The DEO for the School of Social Work is Miriam Landsman. If a complaint cannot be resolved at the departmental level, the student may contact CLAS Undergraduate Programs (319-335-2633, clas-undergrad@uiowa.edu) to discuss their concerns. The college typically reviews formal complaints only for the current or previous semester. If the student's complaint is not resolved at the collegiate level, depending on the nature of the complaint the student may contact the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, or the Office of Civil Rights Compliance utilizing the procedure specified in the [University Policy Manual II-3.3](#). Additional information regarding Student Complaints Concerning Actions of Faculty Members may be found on the [Dean of Students website](#).

In addition, the [Office of the Ombudsperson](#) may assist students on a confidential basis to discuss problems and concerns.

STUDENT ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Student Academic and Professional Standards

As future social work professionals, social work students are expected to meet the *academic standards* (knowledge, skills, and competencies) and *professional behavior standards* of the program, which are based on the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), [CSWE Social Work Competencies](#), and the University of Iowa's [Code of Student Life](#).

Academic Standards of the Program

Undergraduate social work students are expected to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies stipulated by the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) described in the BA Social Work handbook. Each course in the curriculum is designed to address the Social Work Competencies across four dimensions of learning—knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes.

Academic Performance

- Students are expected to maintain an overall cumulative 2.0 GPA in letter-graded courses in the major and a satisfactory (S) grade in non-letter graded courses in the major.
- Students must maintain an overall 2.0 GPA. The minimum GPA of 2.0 is consistent with CLAS policy and includes a grade point average of 2.0 (C) in all college work attempted

and all work undertaken at the University of Iowa.

- Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic program and adhere to the [CLAS Code of Academic Honesty](#).
- If a student does not meet all of the above GPA conditions, the student is on [academic probation](#) and will receive notification from CLAS Undergraduate Programs. Probation serves as a warning that unless your academic performance improves you may be [dismissed from the College](#) and may not graduate.

Professional Behavior Standards of the Program

Due to the nature of professional social work practice, the School of Social Work has expectations of students that may be different from what students experience in non-professional programs. The standards are linked to students' abilities to become effective social work professionals and align with building proficiency in the CSWE Competencies. Undergraduate students are expected to consistently demonstrate satisfactory professional behavior standards in the classroom and in their practicum placements. Persons who teach and supervise students in the program assess student performance and apply their professional judgment to determine if standards are being met during a student's course and/or practicum. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the social work profession, combined with a professional's own experience and practice wisdom. In addition to the professional behavior standards described below, UI students must also adhere to the University of Iowa Code of Student Life, the UI Policy on Sexual Harassment, and all other applicable College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and University policies.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

Respectful and Responsive Communication

Respectful 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 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.

Responsive communication. Students respond promptly to all forms of correspondence including emails from classroom instructors, practicum instructors, staff, clients, others, and when working on projects, classmates.

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.

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).

Addressing 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/>

Addressing Student Concerns and Problem Resolution Process

Students are expected to make satisfactory progress by demonstrating knowledge, skills, competencies, and behaviors, as outlined in the Academic and Professional Behavior Standards, in the classroom and in their practicum placement. Satisfactory progress entails meeting or exceeding stated academic standards and adhering to all ethical and professional standards. When a student is not making satisfactory progress toward their degree due to concerns related to academic and professional behavior standards, the following process will be utilized. Please note that the School of Social Work student concern process does not replace or overrule university disciplinary procedures—depending on the nature of the concern, university disciplinary procedures may be initiated along with or instead of the School of Social Work internal system at faculty, staff, and administration discretion. If the academic concerns are solely based on a student not meeting minimum GPA requirements, the concern is addressed through the [CLAS Academic Probation process](#).

Informal Concern Process

The informal process is the most appropriate course of action for most concerns.

Step 1. Consultation with the student. When an instructor or staff member has concerns regarding academic and/or professional behaviors, that person should communicate the concern constructively and respectfully and work with the student to develop a specific action plan for addressing the concern and reviewing progress. Instructors and staff members are encouraged to inform students about available campus resources and supports. The person with the concern should also inform the student about the potential consequences of not resolving the concerns (e.g., failing grade on an assignment, not graduating on time, being dismissed from practicum). The instructor or staff member documents the discussion(s), proposed plan, available resources, and expectations for resolving the concern by email communication with the student.

Step 2. Consultation with the BA Program Director. If the concern remains unresolved after Step 1, the instructor or staff member may forward documentation and request consultation with the BA Program Director. The BA Program Director will either suggest an alternative solution to the instructor or schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the concern. In cases where an alternative solution is proposed, the instructor or staff member will communicate with the BA Program Director about the outcome and, if the suggestion did not resolve the concern, the BA Program Director will schedule a meeting with the student and the person with the concern. The student's academic advisor is also welcome to attend this meeting. At this meeting, the BA Program Director will be responsible for facilitating a conversation about the concerns, actions taken to resolve the concern, available campus resources for student support, and collaboratively develop an updated action plan. The BA program Director will provide a summary of the meeting and proposed action plan for resolving the concern via email to the instructor and the student.

If the student does not respond to communication about the concern and/or does not meet the expectations of the proposed action plan developed in this informal concern process, the instructor or staff member will consult with the BA Program Director if the concern should be resolved via the consequences outlined in the action plan or escalated to a Formal Concern Process

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 from the BA Program.

Immediate Dismissal

If a person has a concern about a student's professional behavior or impairment that they believe is so egregious or unsafe to others as to be grounds for immediate dismissal, they will notify the BA 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 BA Program Director and the Director of the School will ask the person with the concern to write a summary of the concern. The BA Program Director and Director of the School will consult with CLAS Undergraduate Programs. If the BA Program Director and School Director concur that the concern meets grounds for immediate dismissal, the BA 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.

Formal Letter of Concern, Advancement Meeting and Probation

Letter of Concern. To initiate the Formal Concern Process, the student is notified they are not meeting a standard for advancement by a Letter of Concern. The instructor or staff member who initiated the concern writes the Letter of Concern and sends it to the BA Program Director for review. The letter will describe how the student has not met the School's standards with relevant documentation and any actions attempted to resolve the concern. The BA Program Director will send the student and their academic advisor the Letter of Concern by University of Iowa email, request a meeting with the student, and instruct the student to contact the BA 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 BA Program Director may initiate the dismissal process.

Advancement Meeting and Remediation Contract. The BA Program Director, the student, the student's faculty mentor, and the person(s) with the concern will meet to develop a plan to help the student address the concern. The BA Program Director will write the remediation contract, obtain signatures, and save the contract as a secure Workflow document. 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 BA 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 BA 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 remediation contract or is unwilling to sign the contract, the student may be dismissed, pending review with CLAS Undergraduate Programs.

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

BA 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 Progress Review. The person who wrote the Letter of Concern will meet with the BA 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 BA Program Director will notify the student by email (UI account) 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 communicate with the BA Program Director to discuss how to document the emergency. Renegotiation may include meeting with an 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 and/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 BA 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 BA Program Director concludes the student has not met all conditions of the remediation contract, the BA Program Director will email the student of the dismissal decision and invite the student to meet with the BA Program Director. If the student does not contact the BA Program Director to schedule a meeting within one week of the email, the BA Program Director will send the Letter of Dismissal.

At the meeting with the student, the BA 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 BA Program Director will take one of two actions: dismiss or an alternative action.

Dismiss. If the BA Program Director determines the student did NOT meet all conditions in the remediation contract and the BA Program Director does not believe that the evidence proffered by the student at the meeting warrants the student's continuation in the program, the BA 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 Associate Dean of CLAS Undergraduate Programs. The letter will be sent to the student by University 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 BA Program Director concludes that good cause exists for the student to remain in the program, the BA 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 BA 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 University-related processes 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 submits it, and
- inform the student that a faculty or staff member can 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 are outlined in the *CLAS Academic Policies Handbook, Student Rights and Responsibilities*.

<https://clas.uiowa.edu/academics/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities#rights>

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 BA 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 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 CLAS Undergraduate Programs 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 make an appointment to talk with a CLAS Undergraduate Programs staff member to discuss the complaint and how to engage in the CLAS formal appeal process and submit a formal letter of appeal to the CLAS Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education. The student may also contact the Office of the 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.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

There are many opportunities for student participation and input in the School, the campus, and the community. The following are ways to get involved.

Student Input

- Students evaluate each course and instructor using the university-wide Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT), which are reviewed by the Director each semester
- All BA students are invited to respond to an annual survey about their experiences in the program and give input into the program's activities and course offerings. Your feedback is important to us and is reviewed by the School administration and the Curriculum Fidelity Committee members to support and improve the student experience in the School of Social Work. Survey results and BA program next steps are shared with students during annual program meetings, to which all students are invited. Those meetings provide additional opportunities for student feedback to share concerns and inform next steps.
- Students are also invited to serve on our Student Advisory Board. The School selects BA student representatives through an application process. The Student Advisory Board (SAB) of School of Social Work serves as a platform for student voices to provide input into the academic and professional experiences across undergraduate and master's (in-person and online) programs.

The Social Work Student Association (SWSA)

The Social Work Student Association (SWSA) is a formally recognized undergraduate organization by the University of Iowa Office of Student Life. SWSA is open to social work majors and social work minor students. The goals and functions of SWSA are determined through student input and participation.

SWSA focuses upon community service activities, fundraising, providing social networking opportunities, hosting invited speakers, and connecting with NASW concerning social issues and social legislation. Meetings are announced on the BA email listserv.

Phi Alpha Honor Society

Delta Nu, founded by the School of Social Work in 1995, is a chapter of Phi Alpha, a national social work honor society. Its purpose is to recognize and advance academic excellence and scholarship in social work practice. Students meeting the requirements for participation will receive an invitation to apply for membership. Benefits of membership include eligibility for scholarships, professional networking, and national presentation opportunities. You can learn more about Phi Alpha at the national website: <https://phialpha.org/>. For information about our School's chapter, please contact the Chapter Advisor, Stephen Cummings, for details.

Volunteering

Volunteer experiences can be an enriching part of a student's preparation for a career in social work. Students are encouraged to volunteer throughout their undergraduate work. You can find a listing of [volunteer opportunities](#) on the School of Social Work website.

RESOURCES

College and University Information and Support

Student Disability Services (SDS): <https://sds.provost.uiowa.edu/>

Office of Student Financial Aid: <https://financialaid.uiowa.edu/>

Academic and Student Support: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic-support>

Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/>

The Pomerantz Career Center: <https://careers.uiowa.edu/>

Mental Health and Wellness: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/mental-health-wellness#mental-health>

University Health Services: <https://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/>

Well-being at Iowa: <https://wellbeing.uiowa.edu/>

Sexual Harassment & Misconduct Resources: <https://ocrc.uiowa.edu/sexual-misconduct>

Student Life at Iowa: <https://studentlife.uiowa.edu/>

Leadership and Engagement/Student Organizations: <https://leadandengage.uiowa.edu/>

International Student and Scholar Services, including Study Abroad: <https://international.uiowa.edu/iss>

Office of the Ombudsperson: <https://ombudsperson.org.uiowa.edu/>

Student Life Cultural Centers <https://gpsg.uiowa.edu/programs-and-services/ui-cultural-centers>

- Afro-American Cultural Center
- Latino-Native American Cultural Center
- The Asian Pacific American Cultural Center (APACC)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer (LGBTQ+) Resources

Women's Resource and Action Center (WRAC)

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