# APPENDIX B

University, Graduate College, CLAS and School of Social Work Policies Affecting Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies and Regulations</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rights and Responsibilities/Policies and Regulations Affecting Students</td>
<td>B-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School of Social Work Policies Affecting Students:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Advancement Policy</td>
<td>B-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem resolution within the School of Social Work MSW Program</td>
<td>B-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Letter of Agreement</td>
<td>B-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Honesty</td>
<td>B-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practica Structure and Process</td>
<td>B-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement on Standards</td>
<td>B-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Guidelines</td>
<td>B-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Students</td>
<td>B-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policies Related to Academic Planning:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising/Changes in Advisor</td>
<td>B-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Transfer Credit</td>
<td>B-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Skills Support Referral</td>
<td>B-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Regarding Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>B-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students for Whom English is a Second Language</td>
<td>B-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Limits for Completion of MSW Program</td>
<td>B-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readmitted Students</td>
<td>B-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Files</td>
<td>B-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Academic Planning Information</td>
<td>B-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Responsibilities</td>
<td>B-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions for MSW Degree Candidates</td>
<td>B-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis &amp; Oral Examination Guidelines</td>
<td>B-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination Proposal Form</td>
<td>B-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa Social Work Licensure</td>
<td>B-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent to External Background Check</td>
<td>B-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Computer Lab Waiver policy</td>
<td>B-36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Any questions regarding policy may be directed to the Program Administrator, Kate Kemp.*
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

There are a number of 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/or support. In the School of Social Work, you can obtain further information from the Program Administrator (Kate Kemp) or your faculty advisor.

University:

Policies and Regulations Affecting Students (Division of Student Services)
http://dos.uiowa.edu/policy-list/current/
A complete listing of the rights and responsibilities of all University students is given in Policies Related to Student Rights and Responsibilities, including the University's policies on human rights, on nonviolence, and on sexual harassment and consensual relationships, are stated in this document. Information on campus security and regulations governing student organizations are also described.

Graduate College: 205 Gilmore Hall
http://www.grad.uiowa.edu
The Graduate College web site includes the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College, Academic Grievance Procedures, Thesis policies and manual, and information of interest to Graduate students including the Graduate Student Senate, A Handbook for New Students, etc.

Graduate College Academic Grievance Procedure
For a graduate student, the particular grievance procedure to employ for a complaint will depend upon the area involved (student life, academic difficulties, employment, etc.) Generally, graduate students first explore how to pursue a grievance with their advisor or with an appropriate departmental administrator (department head or graduate coordinator). However, if students are uncomfortable or dissatisfied using this route, the Associate Dean of the Graduate College will counsel them on the options available. In addition, the Counseling Service, the Office of the Ombudsperson, and the Office of Affirmative Action will counsel graduate students on a confidential basis and will assist them in selecting an appropriate grievance procedure. The Graduate College web site provides details.
http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences – Academic Programs and Services (120 Schaeffer Hall)
http://dos.uiowa.edu/policy-list/current/ The CLAS handbook for students includes policies which apply to graduate students in Social Work. Of particular relevance are the following policies featured in the handbook are the policies and procedures related to “Student Complaints Concerning Faculty Actions” and “Student Academic Misconduct.”

Student Complaints Concerning Faculty Actions
From Division of Student Services Policies Affecting students: Student complaints concerning actions of faculty members are pursued first through the informal mechanisms established in each college for this purpose. Although there is some variation among colleges, these mechanisms generally involve the following steps: (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 and then the collegiate dean.
Graduate students may consult with the associate dean for academic affairs in the Graduate College concerning mechanisms for resolving complaints. Generally speaking, an academic complaint filed by a graduate student will be resolved without respect to the grievant’s employment status. Employment-related grievances are resolved in one of two ways. Graduate students who are not members of the UE-COGS bargaining unit should refer to the general University student-employee grievance protocol set forth in Section I https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/student-employee-grievance-procedure/. 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. http://cogs.org/.

A student dissatisfied with the outcome of an academic complaint against a faculty member at the collegiate level may ask the Office of the Provost to review the matter. In addition, a student dismissed from a college or from the University for academic reasons may ask the Office of the Provost to review the matter. A student who wishes more specific information about the review by the Office of the Provost should inquire at the office of their respective dean or the Office of the Ombudsperson.

If a student’s complaint concerning a faculty action cannot be resolved through the informal mechanisms available, the student may file a formal complaint which will be handled under the procedures established for dealing with alleged violations of the Statement on Professional Ethics and Academic Responsibility as specified in section III-15 of the University Operations Manual. A description of these formal procedures, found in section III-29 and following of the University Operations Manual, can be obtained from each college dean’s office; collegiate ombudsperson; University Ombudsperson; College of Liberal Arts, Office of Academic Programs; or the Undergraduate Academic Advising Center.

School of Social Work

The School has a number of policies concerning admitted MSW students which follow in this handbook – including School of Social Work Policies Affecting Students:

Student Advancement Policy ................................................................. B-4
Problem resolution within the School of Social Work MSW Program ........ B-12
Student’s Letter of Agreement ............................................................... B-15
Academic Honesty .............................................................................. B-17
Practica Structure and Process .............................................................. B-18
Statement on Standards ...................................................................... B-20
Classroom Guidelines ......................................................................... B-21
Nondiscriminatory Language ............................................................... B-22
Assessment of Students ..................................................................... B-25

Policies Related to Academic Planning: .............................................. B-26

Questions may be directed to Kate Kemp, Program Administrator.
POLICY ON STUDENT ADVANCEMENT IN THE MSW PROGRAM

Social workers’ professional actions and decisions impact the lives of vulnerable persons. Because the MSW is a professional degree, meeting academic performance standards is a necessary, but not sufficient, outcome for ensuring advancement in the social work program. As future social work professionals, social work students must meet the academic standards (knowledge, skills, and competencies) and professional behavior standards of the program which are based on, but not limited to the requirements of the NASW Code of Ethics and the University of Iowa’s Code of Student Life.

Graduate social work students are advanced from one semester to the next based upon meeting both satisfactory academic progress and professional behavior standards each semester. The MSW Program Director consults with faculty members each semester to review students’ academic progress in classroom courses and in the field experience. The MSW Program Director also informally consults with faculty about student concerns that may arise at any time during the semester. Students will be notified each semester, by letter sent to their University email account, whether they are advanced to the next semester. Students who receive an unconditional advancement are permitted to continue their progress through the program. If the faculty review raises concerns about a student’s academic performance or professional behavior, the student will be notified per the procedures described in the PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT ADVANCEMENT AND PROBLEM RESOLUTION section of this document about the process for remediating the concerns.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS OF THE PROGRAM

Graduate 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 on Page 8 of this handbook. Each course in the curriculum is designed to address multiple competencies through methods including lecture content, in class and written assignments, presentations, group projects, exams, and skill practice.

Academic Performance:

- Graduate students are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA for courses included in the MSW Course Plan, an overall 3.0 GPA for graduate-level courses, and satisfactory performance for non-letter graded courses. The SSW policy on unsatisfactory GPA is more restrictive than the Graduate College policy (provided in parenthesis). If after eight hours of graduate work, the student’s GPA falls below 3.0 (2.75 Graduate College), the student will be placed on departmental probation. If after completing eight more semester hours of graduate work on the student’s plan of study, the student’s GPA is 3.0 (2.75) or above, the student will be returned to good academic standing. If after completing eight more semester hours of graduate work on the student’s plan of study, the student’s GPA remains below 3.0 (2.75), the student will be denied permission to reregister. The student will be notified through the letter of concern process that she or he is failing to meet program standards. If the student has fewer than eight hours of coursework left in his or her plan of study, he or she may be dismissed from the program without a probationary period.

- Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic program and adhere to the Graduate College policy on plagiarism as stipulated in the Graduate College Manual [http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-college-manual](http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-college-manual)

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR STANDARDS OF THE PROGRAM:

Students’ professional behaviors and student impairment (as discussed below) are also issues to be considered when advancing students in the MSW program. Students are expected to adhere to the University of Iowa Code of Student Life (see II-A at [http://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/](http://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/)), the UI Policy on Sexual Harassment ([http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/sexual-harassment](http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/sexual-harassment)), and all other Graduate College and University policies governing student behavior. Social Work students are also bound by the NASW Code of Ethics in their interactions in the program and field placement. Additional or more specific descriptions of professional behavior are provided below. Students are expected to meet these behavioral standards in the classroom, the practicum setting, in interactions with faculty and peers, and when representing the School of Social Work in the community or outreach activities.
Professional Behavior and Violations:

- **Attendance**: Students are expected to abide by class attendance policies. Students are also expected to attend all required meetings requested by faculty or related to class group projects and program and practicum orientations. Students are expected to follow the course policy regarding notifying their instructors about absences.
  
  *Mild violation*: Example: The student misses a class, practicum day, or a required meeting that is not in keeping with the attendance policy or expectations for that course or activity, and does not provide ample notice and rationale for the absence.
  
  *Moderate to severe violation*: Example: A pattern of missing class, practicum, or other required meetings to the extent that the student may not be able to meet the course competencies, regardless of whether the absence meets University policy or excused absences.

- **Punctuality**: Students are expected to arrive to class, advising appointments, practicum placement, and other meetings on time. Students are also expected to complete assignments and other departmental or University requirements on time.
  
  *Mild violation*: Example: Student has some instances of arriving late to class, practicum placement, appointments or meetings or turns in required materials late.
  
  *Moderate to severe violation*: Example: A pattern of being late to class, practicum placement, appointments or meetings, and/or turning in assignments late or requesting extensions for class work.

- **Responding to Program-Related Communication**: Students are expected to respond to correspondence from faculty and classmates with whom they are working on projects in a timely manner. This includes regularly checking their UIOWA email account, the Record, and student mailboxes for program or course information. All written communication should be done in a professional manner.
  
  *Mild violation*: Example: Student does not respond to email requests from faculty or classmates related to coursework in a timely manner. Student has a single incident of responding in an unprofessional way to faculty or classmates.
  
  *Moderate to severe violation*: Example: Student exhibits a pattern of not responding to communication in a timely manner which is determined by the nature or urgency of the communication or course policy. The student routinely communicates in an unprofessional way in their program-related communication.

- **Respectful Communication**: Students are to treat classmates, faculty, future clients, and others in a respectful and non-judgmental fashion. This expectation for respectful communication applies in the classroom, the practicum setting, in interactions with faculty and peers outside the classroom, and when representing the School of Social Work in community or outreach activities.
  
  *Mild violation*: Example: All forms of disrespectful communication are considered moderate to severe violations.
  
  *Moderate to severe violation*: Example: Interrupting when others are speaking; having sidebar conversations in class; using a tone of voice that is irritable or hostile; eye rolling or other non-verbal forms of communicating disrespect; expressing disagreement with others' opinions and views in a disrespectful manner.

- **Engagement**: Students are expected to be engaged in their courses, practicum placement, and other program requirements. Students should also refrain from behaviors that may impact the engagement of others, such as the use of personal cell phones, social networking sites, or other forms of technology that may disrupt the learning of others.
  
  *Mild violation*: Example: Infrequent but inappropriate use of technology in the classroom or practicum setting such as texting, emailing, and/or surfing the web.
  
  *Moderate to severe violation*: Student exhibits a pattern of sleeping in class; and/or a pattern of engaging in activities that exhibit inattentiveness such as texting, checking emails or social media, and/or surfing the web during class.

- **Acceptance of Feedback**: Students will respond to suggested feedback by faculty and practicum supervisors and will then take steps to integrate the feedback into their professional conduct. Students will use the feedback as a tool to help strengthen their practice and awareness of self.
  
  *Mild violation*: Example: Student exhibits some defensiveness, anger, or a lack of ownership when receiving constructive feedback from others.
Moderate to severe violation: Example: Student exhibits a pattern of defensiveness, anger, denial or a lack of ownership when receiving constructive feedback from others or fails to integrate this feedback into their professional conduct.

- **Professional Attire**: In professional situations, including practicum placement, meetings, interviews and interactions with current or future colleagues, students will dress in a manner that is appropriate for the particular context or setting.
  - **Mild violation**: Example: Student occasionally dresses in a manner that is not considered professional for the particular context or setting.
  - **Moderate to severe violation**: Example: Student exhibits a pattern of dressing in a way that is not considered professional for the particular context or setting.

- **Reliability and dependability**: Students will complete all assignments and tasks by the assigned deadline for classes, group projects, committees, meetings, and/or practicum requirements. Students will actively participate in professional situations by attending meetings on time and being prepared to engage and participate in the agenda.
  - **Mild violation**: Example: Student has an occasion where work is incomplete or inadequate or disregards deadlines for assignments.
  - **Moderate to severe violation**: Example: Student exhibits a pattern of producing incomplete or inadequate work or disregarding deadlines for assignments.

**Student Impairment:**

The National Association of Social Worker’s Code of Ethics, Section 4.05, addresses social worker impairment that may interfere with professional social work practice and requires social workers to take necessary steps to address the impairment. Impairment may be reflected in a student’s inability or unwillingness to control psychosocial stress, mental health issues, substance abuse, or other personal problems that interfere with professional functioning. Students who are impaired show signs of being unable or unwilling to comprehend and resolve their personal issues in a manner that does not interfere with their professional responsibilities (Bemak, Epp & Keys, 1999; Lamb, Presser, Pfost, Baum, Jackson & Jarvis, 1987). Students are encouraged to contact the University Counseling Service -- [http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/services/psychiatry](http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/services/psychiatry)-- for assistance with any problems they experience.

**PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT ADVANCEMENT AND PROBLEM RESOLUTION**

A student’s academic problems or professional behavior violations or impairment may be self-identified or be observed by a student, faculty member, practicum instructor, adjunct instructor, academic advisor, staff person, agency/practicum supervisor, agency colleague, or client. Concerns must initially be reported to the MSW Program Director. If the concern is being brought by a faculty or staff member of the School, the faculty or staff member will serve as the school representative for the concern process. If the concern is brought by another student or an individual outside the School, the MSW Program Director will serve as the designated school representative who will address the student concern process. If the MSW Program Director, in his or her judgment, has a conflict of interest, the Director of the School will appoint an acting MSW Program Director to serve in the role to address that particular concern.

Student advancement issues can be addressed through an informal or formal concern process depending on the seriousness of the concern. At any procedural point, the student may begin a grievance process (please refer to the Grievance Policies and Procedures Policy on page B-10 of this document).

**Informal Concern Process**

If the student is experiencing an academic problem that appears temporary or the student’s professional behavior expectations constitute a ‘mild violation’, the individual raising the concern will notify the MSW Program Director. The MSW Program Director may respond to the concern directly or collaborate with the school representative or others regarding an appropriate response.

In most cases, the school representative or Program Director will request a meeting with the student to discuss the concern. In some situations, simply informing the student of the concern is sufficient at this informal level. An outcome of this meeting could also be a
determination that the student has not violated a professional behavior standard and no further action is required. In circumstances involving a minor academic concern or a mild violation of professional behavior standards, the school representative or Program Director and student can identify a plan for addressing the concerns. The school representative or Program Director will normally document the discussion about the concern in an email to the student, which will be copied to the MSW Program Director, and if resolved, no further action is needed and the student continues to advance through the program.

**Formal Concern Process**

If the conduct addressed in an informal meeting cannot be resolved informally, the concern falls within the “moderate to severe” violation category, or there is reason to believe the student is impaired, the MSW Program Director may designate the issue for resolution by the formal concern process. The purpose of this process is to address academic standards or professional behavior standards before the concern results in dismissal.

1. **Immediate Dismissal**

If the school representative has a concern about a student's conduct or impairment that he or she believes is so egregious as to be grounds for immediate dismissal, the school representative will notify the MSW Program Director and the Director of the School of this concern. The school representative will write a summary description of the concern. If the Program and School Directors concur that the circumstance meets grounds for immediate dismissal, the MSW Program Director will write a letter of dismissal to the student. The letter will specify in what way(s) the student is not meeting the School's standards. The letter will be sent to the student by email (UI account) and by mail. The student has a right to grieve this dismissal decision through the process described below.

2. **Letter of Concern, Departmental Probation and the Advancement Meeting**

A letter of concern is the means by which the School notifies a student that the student is not meeting a standard for advancement.

**a. Letter of Concern.** When the MSW Program Director designates an issue for resolution by the Formal Concern Process, he or she will ask the school representative to write a letter of concern to the student. The letter will specify in what way(s) the author of the letter believes that the student is not meeting the School's standards. The letter will be sent to the student by email (UI account) and by mail, and copied to the student's advisor and the MSW Program Director.

Upon receipt of the Letter of Concern, the student must contact the school representative to schedule the Advancement Meeting described below with the school representative, the student's advisor, and the MSW Program Director. If the student fails to respond to the letter within two weeks of the date it was sent, the school representative may notify the MSW Program Director who may initiate the dismissal process described below.

**b. Advancement Meeting and Remediation Contract.** The school representative will meet with the student, the student's advisor, and the MSW Program Director, to develop and agree to a plan to assist the student in addressing or remediating the concern. The MSW Program Director or designee will write a remediation contract, obtain signatures and place the contract in the student’s file. The student's advisor will receive a copy of the contract. The contract will state

i. the nature of the concern(s) in an appropriate level of detail

ii. the actions to be taken by the student and, if applicable, others

iii. the dates by which each action must be completed.

iv. the date by which the MSW Program Director and the school representative will review the contract to determine whether all actions were completed on time

v. the student is on departmental probation until the terms of the contract are met

The contract must be signed by the student, the MSW Program Director (or designee), and the school representative.
c. Refusal to Meet or to Sign the Contract. By signing the remediation contract, all of the signatories agree to the terms of the contract. If a student is unwilling to meet to develop a remediation contract or is unwilling to sign the contract, the School may conclude the student has not demonstrated sufficient commitment to progress in the program and maybe dismissed. If the student does not agree to sign the contract and the School takes some action as a result, the student can initiate a grievance process with regards to the School’s action by providing written notification to the Director of the School within two weeks of any such action. Such written notification should conform with the requirements of the Grievance Policy and Procedures below.

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

e. Remediation Contract Evaluation. The faculty member or school representative who wrote the letter of concern, on or before the date specified in the contract, will meet with MSW Program Director to discuss the student’s progress meeting the conditions of the remediation contract. If the student has satisfied the contract requirements by the agreed-upon dates, the MSW Program Director will notify the student by email to the student’s University account, with a copy to the student’s file.

If the faculty member/school representative and MSW Program Director determine that the student has not fulfilled the remediation contract requirements, subject to the guidance set forth below in subsection (f), the MSW Program Director will notify the student by email of the unfulfilled contract terms and the potential for dismissal (see Section 2 below, “Letter of Dismissal or Alternative Action”).

f. Failure to Fulfill the Remediation Contract Requirements. When the student does not meet all action steps in their remediation contract by stated deadlines, the MSW Program Director will begin the dismissal process described in Section 2 below. This dismissal process pertains only to the School of Social Work. A student dismissed from the School is not dismissed from the University unless the reason for dismissal meets the Graduate College criteria (see http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal).

The school recognizes three potential circumstances in which the failure to meet remediation contract requirements may not warrant dismissal:

(a) If the student renegotiated the remediation contract PRIOR to deadlines. Renegotiation includes meeting with members of the advancement committee, rewriting the remediation contract and obtaining signatures;

(b) If the student can document an emergency that prevented him or her from renegotiating the remediation contract before deadlines stated in the contract or that prevented him or her from completing an action in the contract before its’ deadline; and/or

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. Students must speak with the MSW Program Director and their advisor to discuss how to document the emergency.

(c) 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 him or her from meeting the remediation contract action steps and/or from renegotiating a new contract before the deadlines stated in the contract.

2. Letter of Dismissal or Alternative Action.

If the MSW Program Director concludes the student has not met the conditions of the remediation contract and should be dismissed from the program, the MSW Program Director will send an email to the student’s University of Iowa email account informing the student of the dismissal decision and instructing the student that he or she can meet with the MSW Program Director. If the student does not contact the MSW Program Director to schedule an appointment within one week of the email, the MSW Program Director will write and send the letter of dismissal.
At the meeting with the student, the MSW Program Director and the school representative will discuss the unfulfilled remediation contract provisions and hear any evidence that the student may offer relating to why the student believes he or she 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 has determined that the student did NOT complete all actions on time, 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 write a letter of dismissal to the student stating the student has not met all conditions of the program and/or remediation contract, is not advanced to the next semester, and will not be permitted to re-register. A copy of the dismissal letter is sent to the student, the Director of the School, the school representative, the student’s advisor, and the Graduate College. A copy 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 below.

**Alternative Action.** If the Report concluded the student did NOT complete all actions on time, but the MSW Program Director concludes that good cause exists for the student to remain in the program, the MSW Program Director will prescribe any additional conditions required for the student to remain in the program through alternative action, and the timeframe by which those conditions will be met. The MSW Program Director will notify the student of his/her decision by letter, with a copy to the school representative and the student’s advisor. The letter will also state whether the student remains on departmental probation while an alternative action is being taken.

**Dismissal, Confidentiality and Letters of Recommendation**

All faculty, staff and other school representatives will abide by all applicable privacy rules and 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

a. ask for the request in writing,

b. ask the student to state whether the student waives the right to read the letter prior to the staff or faculty member submitting it, and

c. inform the student that a faculty or staff member can decline to provide a letter of reference for the student.
School of Social Work Advancement and Grievance Outcomes

School Representative identifies a standard unmet or unlikely to be met

MSW Program Director informed of concern

Concern addressed informally

School Representative writes letter of concern/sent to student, advisor and MSW Program Director

Student’s failure to respond to the letter may result in dismissal

Failure to sign the contract may result in dismissal

Advancement Meeting, Remediation Contract and Departmental Probation

Contract fulfilled, student advanced

Letter of Advancement

Contract not fulfilled

Alternative action, departmental probation

Contract fulfilled, student advanced

Contract not fulfilled

Letter of Dismissal
### Documents Used in the Advancement Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Document</th>
<th>Written by . . .</th>
<th>Sent to . . .</th>
<th>Includes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Concern</td>
<td>MSW Program Director or other school representative</td>
<td>● Student&lt;br&gt;● Copy to MSW Program Director, advisor, student’s file&lt;br&gt;● If plagiarism is alleged, the College must receive the letter</td>
<td>● Concern&lt;br&gt;● Request for advancement meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remediation Contract</td>
<td>MSW Program Director or designee</td>
<td>Copy to school representative, advisor, student, student’s file</td>
<td>See narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Advancement with Departmental Probation</td>
<td>MSW Program Director if the remediation contract exceeds one semester</td>
<td>● Student&lt;br&gt;● Copy to advisor, student, student’s file</td>
<td>Decision to advance on departmental probation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/ School Representative Report</td>
<td>Faculty member who wrote the letter of concern</td>
<td>● MSW Program Director&lt;br&gt;● Copy to advisor, student, student’s file</td>
<td>● Satisfactory completion or&lt;br&gt;● Request for dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Advancement or Alternative Action</td>
<td>MSW Program Director</td>
<td>● Student&lt;br&gt;● Copy to Director of the School, school representative, advisor, student’s file</td>
<td>Decision to advance or alternative action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Dismissal</td>
<td>MSW Program Director</td>
<td>● Student&lt;br&gt;● Copy to Director of the School, school representative, advisor, student’s file&lt;br&gt;● Graduate College</td>
<td>Decision to dismiss</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Problem Resolution within the School of Social Work
Policy and Procedures for Graduate Students

Problem Resolution

The problem resolution process in the School of Social Work is used to address problems involving dismissal and problems not involving dismissal. Information on students' rights and responsibilities in the Graduate College can be found at http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-iv-academic-standing-probation-and-dismissal. Notwithstanding the grievance procedure set forth below, students and faculty are at all times 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:

(a) the facts and circumstances of the alleged violation,
(b) the University, College, or School procedure, rule, regulation, or policy allegedly violated,
(c) the person or persons alleged to be in violation,
(d) the date(s) of the alleged violation, and
(e) 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 all evidence in support of the student's claim(s). 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 individual who may have information pertinent to the grievance. The Director of the School may also schedule a follow-up meeting with the student if appropriate. At the conclusion of this evidence-gathering process and depending on the nature of the issue, the Director of the School will:

(a) take action within his or her authority to resolve the issue and provide to the student a written response explaining the rationale for such action,
(b) refer the student to the Graduate College or to another office (e.g., Office of the Ombudsperson), or
(c) determine that the issue is grievable at the School level and proceed as described below.

If the Director of the School determines, in his or her sole discretion, that the issue is grievable 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 written 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. Upon reaching a decision, the committee will make a recommendation to the Director of the School in writing and accompanied by its 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 his or her 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 can take to address his or her issue.

If the basis of the grievance was dismissal, the letter will state whether the student is advanced, dismissed or on departmental probation. If the student is placed on departmental probation, then an advancement meeting will be scheduled with the student.
# Student's Admission Agreement for the MSW Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (Please print)</th>
<th>UI student ID#</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>State</td>
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<tr>
<td>email address(es)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phones - home#</td>
<td>cell #</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Update contact information to ensure future mailings:
My contact information is new from when I applied: [ ] Address  [ ] Phone  [ ] email

Center (check one): [ ] Iowa City  [ ] Des Moines  [ ] Quad Cities  [ ] Sioux City  [ ] On-line
Program (check one): [ ] 2 year  [ ] 3 year  [ ] 4 year  Bachelor's degree in Social Work? (check one): [ ] Yes  [ ] No

Please check the appropriate box and complete the form as instructed to let us know your plans to attend:

☐ I plan to attend
☐ I do **NOT** plan to attend UI MSW

Read attachments, and complete the reverse side of this form.

To complete the Admissions process,
You must sign and return the statement on the back of this form by April 15th to:

UI School of Social Work
Tomeka Petersen, Admissions and Programs Coordinator
308 North Hall
Iowa City IA 52242-1223

Postage paid envelope is enclosed for your convenience.
At the School of Social Work, we seek to engage in constructive, respective dialogue as personal values are challenged in the process of developing a professional social work identity. We seek to respectfully engage with others who are different from ourselves in the classroom and the community, regardless of our personal values.

Therefore we expect that applicants accepting admission will join faculty and staff in this effort, and will:

Encourage and welcome diversity in all aspects of campus and community life.

Address social justice issues that affect human beings as a consequence of oppression, poverty, marginalization and alienation because of the intersection of multiple factors, including those identified by CSWE: class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, sex, sexual orientation and religious, non-religious, or spiritual beliefs.

Refrain from prejudicial language and discriminating behavior and challenge stereotypes when others speak in derogatory generalizations.

Agree that hate speech or actions are not tolerated in the School.

Foster intercultural dialogues, examine individual biases, and critically analyze intersections of privilege and oppression.

Expand understanding of cultural diversity by exploring other cultures through rigorous academic study and participating in/supporting community events.

Demonstrate empathy in a culturally sensitive manner, to listen, and work to solve problems peacefully.

Create a community that is a safe environment for all.

Adhere to program policies articulated in the Social Work Student Handbook (including the professional competencies articulated by CSWE in the Educational Policy Statement).

To complete the admissions process, the following statement must be signed:

I have read the following documents and agree that I am bound by the provisions of these policies.

Please check each box to confirm you have read:

- The statement above that supports a culturally inclusive community where all people are respected.
- the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Worker's
- International Federation of Social Workers Code of Ethics (http://ifsw.org/policies/statement-of-ethical-principles/)
- the Student Advancement Policy
- the Statement on Academic Honesty
- the Practicum Policy
- the UI Code of Student Life http://dos.uiowa.edu/conduct/

[Signature] [Date]
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:

1) presentation of the ideas of others without credit to the source
2) use of direct quotations without quotation marks and without credit to source
3) paraphrasing without credit to the source
4) participation in group project which presents plagiarized material
5) failure to provide citations for material obtained through electronic research
6) downloading and submitting work from electronic data bases' without citation
7) submitting material created/written by someone else as one's own
8) copying from someone else’s exam, homework, or laboratory work
9) allowing someone else to copy or submit one's work as his/her own
10) accepting credit for a group project without doing one’s share
11) submitting the same paper in more than one course
12) using notes or other materials during test without authorization
13) not following the guidelines specified by instructor for “take home” exams
14) 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. Please refer to the MSW Educational Handbook or the PhD Handbook, which includes a description of the Student Advancement Policy, and the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations. http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-college-manual.
PRACTICA STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

I. Structure and Sequence

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

A. **Foundation Practica Course.** Students admitted to the M.S.W. program without a Bachelor's Degree with a major in social work from an accredited program are required to take Foundation Practicum: 210 contact hours during the spring semester of the first year for full-time students, during the summer semester of the first year for 3-year program students, or the spring semester of the third year for four-year students. Three (3) semester hours of credit will be earned for successful completion of the Foundation Practicum.

B. **Advanced Practica Course.** All students admitted to the M.S.W. program are required to take the Advanced Practicum during the fall and spring of the final year. The minimum required 700 contact hours of Advanced Practicum will earn 10 semester hours of credit.

C. **Co-Requisite Courses.** Foundation Seminar for Foundation Practicum and Advanced Seminar I and II for Advanced Practicum.

II. Placement Assignment Process

Approved placement sites and agencies are within a 50-mile radius of Iowa City/Cedar Rapids, Quad-Cities, Des Moines, and Sioux City. The sites provide learning opportunities for the two concentrations and many fields of practice. Placements outside these practicum centers are permitted by special arrangement, require approval by the Field Administrator/Director and are contingent upon both UI SSW resources as well as student's ability to travel to the School of Social Work center for required meetings and seminar participation.

A. **Foundation Practica** are assigned by either the Practicum Director or, in the Quad Cities, Des Moines, and Sioux City and online centers, by the Center Practicum Administrator.

B. **Advanced Practica** 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.

III. Employment While a 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, those who must work to support families, and who therefore find it difficult to be full-time students.
There are times in the MSW program, however, when part-time students will likely find concurrent full-time employment very difficult, if not impossible. These times are when students are fulfilling the requirements for the Foundation Practicum (210 hours) and the Advanced Practicum (700 hours total – minimum of 350 hours in the fall and 350 hours in the spring semesters of the final year). Combining 3-4 days/week in practicum with course work obviates the possibility of continuing in full-time employment.

**Before registering in the MSW program, part-time students must make plans to reduce or eliminate their outside employment while they are in Foundation and Advanced 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.
STATEMENT ON STANDARDS

As part of an academic institution, and in preparation for professional practice, the School of Social Work has some general expectations of which students and faculty should be aware.

1. Papers and other written work should conform to college standards of written English. They should be grammatically correct. Refer to dictionaries for spelling, manuals of style for footnotes, bibliographies, etc. Papers should be typed if possible.

2. Because social work is learned through process as well as content, class discussion and interaction is an integral part of your education in the School. Usually doing the reading without attending classes will be insufficient for mastering the course material. Therefore, students are expected to attend classes or to inform instructors prior to class if unable to attend due to illness or other legitimate reasons.

3. The School of Social Work expects that students entering the profession of social work, as well as faculty and practitioners already in the field, should have a commitment to eliminating discriminatory attitudes and actions, conscious or unconscious, with respect to race, class, sex, age, and sexual preferences, etc. Language often unintentionally expresses institutional racism, sexism, etc. As part of professional preparation of students and professional development of faculty, students and faculty should sensitize themselves to discriminatory biases and assumptions in oral and written language, attitudes and behaviors. This concern should guide presentations, papers, and lectures and should influence selection of readings and textbooks.

Examples of discriminatory biases and assumptions in oral and written language include:

-- comments are made that express racial, sexual, class and other stereotypes;

-- written work uses masculine pronouns when reference to both males and females is intended. Plurals and neutral nouns can usually solve the problem. (Note: non-sexist writing is increasingly expected in papers and manuscripts submitted for publication, so change in this direction is also good preparation for professional writing.)

-- terms are used that put the constituency of social services in a one-down position, e.g., when terms like "girl" or "boy" are used in reference to adults or young adults; first name usage without permission or reciprocity.

The School expects its constituents to demonstrate commitment to the social work values that place high value on the worth and dignity of all people.
INSTRUCTOR AND STUDENT GUIDELINES
FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSIONS

The content of this course will be intellectually, personally, and emotionally challenging. To achieve the objectives of the course, the classroom environment must be a safe one where all can feel supported in discussing their thoughts and feelings, asking questions, and stating their opinions. It is equally important that all statements made are respectful and do not demean or humiliate any individual present or any group of people. The following guidelines for classroom discussions are adapted from materials written by the Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis. We offer them here as a starting point for negotiating the ground rules we will adopt and agree to observe as a class to create a safe environment that will promote productive interaction.

1. Recognize that we are all at different stages of learning about and accepting the existence of prejudice and discrimination based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, physical and mental differences and other characteristics.
2. Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups, whether we belong to a majority or minority group.
3. Agree not to blame others or ourselves for the misinformation we have learned in the past, but accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
4. Assume that people—both those we study and those in this class—do the best they can.
5. Recognize that social workers identify with different cultural, political, and religious belief systems, and are free to practice their beliefs within the professional guidelines described by the NASW Code of Ethics.
6. Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This does not mean that you can't disagree, only that you must do so respectfully, and be prepared to clarify your statements with specific information, experiences, and/or examples.

Adopted by faculty 12/10/03
ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS

The marking system used in the Graduate College is described in detail at:
http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-vi-marking-system

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. 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.

2. Students admitted on conditional status must achieve regular status within two sessions of registration by obtaining a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a minimum of eight letter graded hours.

3. Students are required to maintain a 3.0 throughout the M.S.W. program.

4. Graduate students do not earn credit for courses graded below C- per Graduate College policy.

5. Students wishing to take S/U course for letter grade may do so by petitioning the instructor not later than second class meeting. If approved the student shall give a copy to the Admissions and Programs Coordinator in the Iowa City Office. This privilege should be allowed only in exceptional circumstances.

6. It is recommended that, when feasible and appropriate, faculty arrange that essay exams and papers be submitted with identification number instead of student name.

7. 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). This means a meeting with the advisor and instructor is required to review the students' academic progress. Faculty are not obligated to allow a student to repeat a course. 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.

8. 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.
POLICIES RELATED TO ACADEMIC PLANNING

Advising

When possible, students are matched to faculty advisors based upon interest areas checked on the students’ applications. Advisors provide academic advising, determine the application of specific graduate transfer courses to the MSW plan of study and approve and sign drop/add slips and clear 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 concentration. In the event that a concern is filed regarding a student’s advancement in the program, the advisor is involved in assisting 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 faculty advisor who has agreed to serve as their advisor. The student should notify the advisor to whom they are currently assigned and the Program Administrator of the change using the Advisor Change Form.

Students requesting a change in advisor but who have not identified an advisor who will agree to advise them should obtain a list of advisors who are available (by areas of interest and by numbers of advisees currently being served) from the Program Administrator. The student may select one advisor from this list. The student fills out an advisor change form which is signed by the new advisor, Program Administrator and copied to the previous advisor, student file and Programs Coordinator.

When a change in advisor needs to be made because present advisor will not be available, the Program Administrator provides a list of faculty available to serve as advisor. Student fills out an Advisor Change Form which is copied to new advisor, previous advisor and Program Administrator. The MSW Program Director serves as “back-up” to advisors absent for one semester or less.

Graduate Transfer Credit

Advisors may grant a maximum of 12 s.h. 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’ advanced practicum. Advisor indicates on Graduate Planning Sheet the number of hours to apply to M.S.W. degree, and places in student file.

Transfer students from other CSWE accredited schools of social work shall complete a minimum of 36 s.h. after enrolling as M.S.W. students at The University of Iowa but will probably need to complete more than 36 in order to satisfy School requirements. The transfer Student is expected to produce course outlines, and sometimes assignments to assist the Program Administrator, 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.

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 University of Iowa semester, or graduation maybe 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 faculty 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.

Policy Regarding Students With Disabilities
https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/

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. [See also the University's Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, and their guide http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu] A student with a disability is responsible for requesting accommodations. 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 accommodations or accommodations of other class requirements, so that appropriate arrangements maybe made. Please contact the instructor during office hours. Instructors are not required to provide accommodations until the student has presented a Letter of Accommodation (LOA).

Students with Learning Disabilities

An advisor or instructor who believes that a student's academic performance has been affected by an undiagnosed learning disability may refer the student to the Office of Student Disability Services for formal assessment. Students who have undergone formal assessment and are found to have a learning disability may request that instructors make reasonable accommodations for them in order to have an equal opportunity to complete course work satisfactorily.

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.

   a) Such students will be assigned an academic advisor with special interest in their culture-area whenever possible. The advisor will assist the student to obtain special educational assistance, as needed.

   b) 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).

   c) Non-native English speaking students who are admitted are required to pass the overall English Proficiency Composition exam administered by the University’s Linguistics Department/ESL Program. Failure to pass this exam will result in an automatic transfer to the part-time program. If and when the exam is passed, the student may be reinstated to the full-time program in consultation with the Advisor and Director of Admissions.

   d) 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 do not complete in four years must petition the Director for approval to extend their program.

Students who withdraw from the program, or become inactive for two consecutive semesters must reapply for admission. If student drops, Advisor lets the Admissions and Programs Coordinator know, and they in turn will advise student of policy and reapplication procedure and update student list.

Readmitted Students

a) shall meet the requirements of the current program;
b) shall meet the advancement policy requirements;
c) shall meet the current concentration requirements.

Student Files

Active student files are accessible to the student, faculty, and designated staff. Following graduation, student files are archived following the protocol for reducing alumni student files of any extraneous material not needed.

General Academic Planning

Students shall not be permitted to register for more hours than weeks in which courses are offered (by rules of the Graduate College).

There can be no banking of credits--credits must be awarded for work produced in semester registered.

Concentration must be declared by the middle of the first semester, and changes in concentrations must be discussed and approved by advisor and director of graduate program. There is a form to process when changing concentration (available in this handbook and center office).

Students are Responsible for:

Maintaining Registration Planning Sheet. This sheet should be updated each semester with advisor conference prior to registration. Up-to-date copy should always be in student's electronic file and/or on the shared drive that faculty and administrators can access.

Registering each semester

Responding to surveys which assist with program planning, which elective to offer, etc.

Attending mandatory practicum planning meetings

Completing practicum planning forms

Submitting Application for Degree

If a thesis candidate, the student is responsible for meeting all deadlines including first and final deposits. 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 Administrator so that it can be forwarded to the Graduate College.
Completing current student, exit and alumni surveys.

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

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 Advanced 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).

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**INSTRUCTIONS FOR MSW DEGREE CANDIDATES**

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

1. The thesis candidate must submit a signed final examination proposal form to the Program Administrator.

2. All students should submit degree applications in MyUI.

3. The Program Administrator will complete the **Request for Final Examination** for thesis candidate and **Plan of Study** forms for all students, which must be submitted to the Graduate College. The student's program of study will be reviewed at this meeting to ensure all curriculum and Graduate College policies have been followed. The Program Administrator will contact students and advisors only if there is a question or problem. Student receipt of a copy of the Plan of Study indicates that the Plan of Study has been approved by the Graduate College. The Program Administrator will also submit notice to the Iowa Licensure Board of the students' graduation date and intent to sit for the exam prior to graduation, IF the student requests this.

4. 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 Program Administrator. An **Application for Change in Plan of Study** form or a **Deletion Notice** may need to be filed with the Graduate College.

**SUMMER GRADUATES TAKE NOTE:** To receive the degree in July/August, summer graduates **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 M.S.W. degree the following December. File your Application for Degree in the **fall** semester before the University deadline.
THEESIS AND ORAL EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

Overview

Students at the University of Iowa may choose to complement their preparation for practice by completing a thesis and defending it in an oral exam. The thesis is a study involving analysis and interpretation of primary or secondary data or critical analysis of social policy. The study's methodology, analysis, and interpretation should be of publishable quality. Students orally present their proposed study to their thesis committee at a thesis proposal meeting. After completion of their written document, students defend it before their thesis committee. At the defense, the student describes their thesis question and hypotheses, if applicable, justifies their methodology, and defends their results.

Social work practitioner-scholars make an important contribution to the profession's practice and policy knowledge base. Students typically complete a thesis to contribute to the profession's knowledge base, to increase their knowledge in their substantive area of practice, and/or to prepare for doctoral study.

Choosing to complete a thesis and the attendant exam requires careful consideration, given the demands of the MSW program. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to discuss the feasibility, cost and timeline of their proposed thesis project with faculty members early in their program.

To account for the time necessary to complete the thesis, students may earn up to 6 semester hours of thesis credit which are applied to their elective course requirement. The chair/co-chair of the thesis committee supervises the thesis credits. Students may register for a minimum of 1 s. h. of thesis credit for the semester they begin their proposal (Summer in the timeline above). [Note: thesis credit is available in the summer only if the chair agrees to supervise these hours.] Students typically earn between 2 and 6 s. h. of thesis credit; the number of hours is negotiated with the thesis chair. Thesis hours earned without successful completion of the final exam cannot be applied to the MSW plan of study. If students do not successfully complete the thesis/exam, they may request that their thesis hours be substituted with elective hours. This request is made to the students’ faculty advisor after consulting with the program administrator.

Students may also elect to complete the Thesis Seminar course (42:304) to support the development of the thesis proposal. Consent of instructor is required to register for this course. This course also applies to the required elective credits for the MSW program.

Expenses for data collection, copy-editing of the thesis, any illustrative material, photocopying, and copyright are the responsibility of the student. There is a nonrefundable fee charge by the Graduate College to cover processing and publication costs of the thesis.

Procedures and Deadlines

It is critical that students thoroughly understand the expectations of the School of Social Work and the Graduate College as they begin their thesis project. Failure to understand these expectations and meet deadlines may result in postponement of graduation. In addition to reviewing this section of the MSW Handbook, students should carefully review the Thesis Manual, the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College, and the University calendar for “First Deposit” (usually in early April) and “Final Deposit” (usually in early May) deadlines.

The student must be enrolled during the session in which the degree is to be conferred.
The Examining Committee

A committee of faculty members works with the student to support the development, conduct and completion of the thesis project. The committee consists of at least three members of the graduate faculty of the University of Iowa; the Chair or Co-chair of the committee and at least one other member must be from the School of Social Work. Members of the graduate faculty—assistant, associate and full professors—are automatically eligible to serve on committees. The Graduate College will consider recommendations of clinical faculty for appointment to thesis committees with chair and DEO support. To obtain approval for clinical faculty appointments, the chair drafts a letter describing the clinical faculty member's expertise and submits it to the program administrator. The program administrator, on behalf of the DEO, writes and submits the letter of recommendation to the Graduate College. The letter is signed by the DEO.

The thesis committee chairperson fills the role of primary mentor to the student, working closely with the student through all phases of the thesis. The topic of the thesis need not be closely related to the chair's ongoing area of scholarship. Meetings between the chair and student typically are scheduled at regular intervals throughout the course of the project. Throughout this process the student works with the chair and committee members to refine the manuscript.

Thesis Timeline

Students usually begin work on the thesis concurrent with 42:270 Advanced Social Work Research. Students should plan a minimum of 12 months to complete a thesis. Depending on the project undertaken, the thesis project could require 18 months. Students first identify a chair for their committee and then additional members of the committee in consultation with the chair. Together the student and his/her chair develop a timeline for completion of the project.

The following timeline is typical for full-time (2-year) students: (the plan would be modified for part-time students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Program Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Research Practice I (SSW:6148 - 042:148)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify chair and committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Development of thesis proposal (Thesis credit—negotiated with thesis chair)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Program Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Thesis Seminar (042:304) – optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Defense of thesis proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IRB approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Complete data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analyze data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completion of manuscript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Deposit to Graduate College (early April)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral defense of thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second deposit to Graduate College (early May)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After the draft of the thesis proposal is approved by the student's chair (Year 2, Fall), the student distributes a copy to each committee member at least one week before the proposal defense meeting; an earlier deadline may be set by the chair and committee members.

The student is responsible for scheduling the proposal defense at least three weeks prior to the meeting. This meeting must occur at least two semesters before the degree requirements will be completed.

The thesis proposal must be approved by the thesis committee before data are gathered or analyzed. The “Final Examination Prospectus Form for Thesis Candidates” must be submitted to the Program Administrator within two weeks after the proposal meeting so that a “Request Report Form” approving the committee membership may be filed with the Graduate College. If revisions to the proposal are required, they must be completed prior to this form being filed.

When the thesis is completed, the student is responsible for scheduling the defense of the completed thesis at least three weeks prior to the meeting. At least two weeks prior to the meeting, or the date identified by the committee, the final draft of the thesis is submitted to each committee member. The student also submits the document to the Graduate College as the “First Deposit” for review of formatting and general characteristics. The thesis is then orally defended before the committee. Any final changes required by the committee at the defense are made before the final submission (Final Deposit) to the Graduate College.

Thesis Content

A thesis proposal includes the first three chapters of the thesis, references and appendices. A typical proposal would include the subsections outlined below. Additional or different subheadings may be warranted to help the reader find specific information. The chair and student use their judgment as a guide to the number and type of subheadings to use.

Example of thesis sections and subheadings:

Title Page

Abstract

Chapter 1: Introduction
- Statement of the problem and its significance to social work
- Purpose of the study
- Research questions and/or hypotheses
- Brief summary of the chapter

Chapter 2: Literature
- Critical review of the literature related to the students’ study question and
- Gaps in the literature that will be addressed by the proposed study

Chapter 3: Methods
- Proposed design, sample, data collection procedures, measures, and data analysis. If applicable, the statistics that will be used to analyze these data
- Potential weaknesses of the study
- Proposed procedures for the protection of human subjects. If human subjects are used in the study, guidelines for the University of Iowa’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) protection of human subjects must be followed and appropriate forms filed. The forms are completed and submitted after the thesis proposal has been approved but before data collection begins. The required forms and guidelines can be found at http://research.uiowa.edu/hso/. If data are being collected from an
organization other than the University of Iowa, written permission from the agency/organization is needed as part of the University’s human subjects review process.

References

Appendices
• Draft of correspondence with respondents, consent form, instrument, etc.

Prior to the final exam, students revise the chapters that were included in their proposal (above), and write the Results and Discussion chapters.

The complete thesis includes the above sections with the following additions:

Chapter 4: Results

Chapter 5: Discussion
• Summary
• Interpretation – May be included in the Results, Discussion, or both chapters
• Strengths and Limitations
• Recommendations – Policy, practice and/or scholarship
• Conclusions

Appendices
• Correspondence with participants
• Consent form
• Instrument
• Tables may be included in the text or placed after the appendices. Their placement should be discussed with the Chair and committee members.

The format style of the thesis must conform to guidelines provided in the Graduate College’s Thesis Manual. The manual can be downloaded or viewed from the Graduate College’s web page: http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/theses-and-dissertations/graduate-college-thesis-manual To avoid unnecessary revisions, it is important to understand the College’s formatting rules prior to writing the proposal. The College provides an electronic template to format the thesis. When Graduate College style rules do not apply, the thesis should follow the guidelines presented in the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

Oral Defense or Final Examination

The oral defense or final examination of the thesis is available in the Spring and Fall sessions only, unless all members of the thesis committee agree to serve in the summer. Students who have completed all work except the final examination may register for Master’s Final Registration.

At the beginning of the session in which the final exam is completed, students must set a timetable with their committee chair that includes necessary working meetings prior to the FIRST DEPOSIT deadline date and the date of the oral examination which occurs AFTER THE FIRST DEPOSIT. Students are responsible for scheduling the final examination meeting with their committee.
Students should give their chair a copy of the thesis at least two months prior to the FIRST DEPOSIT deadline date for review. Under the direction of the chair, the thesis may be distributed to the committee members for review and comments.

One copy of the thesis—complete, accurate and in final form, as judged by the chair—must be submitted to the Graduate College with the "First Deposit Checklist" for a check of formal characteristics by the FIRST DEPOSIT deadline date in the session in which the degree is to be conferred. The College strongly advises students to turn in the thesis at least 10 working days before the FIRST DEPOSIT deadline. If the FIRST DEPOSIT is turned in shortly before the deadline and it is incomplete, students may not be allowed to graduate that session.

Student initiated changes in the thesis may not be made by the students after the FIRST DEPOSIT. Copies of the thesis are given to the committee members at this time.

At least two weeks before the final exam, the chair invites the public to attend the exam by publishing the student’s name, title of thesis, and date and location of the exam in The Record.

Enough time should be allowed between the FIRST DEPOSIT and the oral exam for corrections required by the Graduate College to be made before the exam. This requires that students obtain the Graduate College Checker’s comments as soon as available.

Results of Oral Defense/Final Examination

The exam will be evaluated by the committee as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. A satisfactory exam is one in which at least two of the three members determine the exam is satisfactory. Minor changes or corrections can be required. The “Report of the Final Examination”—which is obtained from the Program Administrator by the student—is due in the Graduate College no later than 48 hours after the examination, and by the deadline date established by the Graduate College.

After approval from the Graduate College and by the thesis committee, two copies of the thesis must be deposited with the Graduate College by the FINAL DEPOSIT deadline date in the graduate session.

In addition to the submission to the Graduate College, the student will present one final copy of the thesis to the Program Administrator for the permanent social work archive and a final copy to the chair and members.

In the event that two of the three final examination committee members concur that the thesis is not satisfactory, the chair will notify the student, the Program Administrator, and the student’s advisor in writing no later than the date in which the “Report of the Final Examination” is due to the Graduate College. The notification will include (a) the deficiencies in the exam and (b) whether the student is eligible for re-examination.

If the School of Social Work recommends re-examination, the student may present himself or herself for re-examination, but not sooner than the next regularly scheduled examination period in the following session.

Within 12 months following the date in which the original final examination was due, the student must submit a written request, signed by the chair, to the DEO of the School of Social Work to be reexamined.

Reexamination must occur within 24 months following the date in which the original final examination was due.

The examination may be repeated only once.
FINAL EXAMINATION PROSPECTUS FORM FOR THESIS CANDIDATES

Date: ____________________________

Student's name: ____________________________

Center: [ ] C  [ ] DM  [ ] QC  [ ] SC  [ ] On-line

University ID #: ____________________________

Expected date of final examination (session/year): ____________________________

Expected date of graduation (session/year): ____________________________

I approve the prospectus and agree to serve on the final examination committee.

Chairperson:

Print Name ____________________________ Signature ____________________________

Member:

Print Name ____________________________ Signature ____________________________

Member ____________________________

Print Name ____________________________ Signature ____________________________

A copy of this form, signed by the committee, must be filed with the program administrator within two weeks after the prospectus meeting.

Turn in to the Programs Coordinator in 308 NH for copies and departmental processing:

original: [ ] Programs Coordinator for Student file

cc: [ ] Program administrator  [ ] Student

8/1/17
Iowa Social Work Licensure

All Master's level social workers in Iowa must apply for licensure, and must be licensed to practice social work. 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.

To apply for licensure in Iowa (and request permission to sit early) each student must:

1. Go to the Iowa Board of Social Work Examiners website http://idph.iowa.gov/licensure/iowa-board-of-social-work and apply online

2. The Board requires that the School provide a statement that the student is in good standing and expected to graduate in the spring or summer if you wish to sit for the exam before your final transcript is available. The School's Program Administrator (Kate) will conduct a degree audit in January, for all students in practicum seminar, and submit the plan of study for those students to the Graduate College. She will then send the required statement of expected graduation to you as an email attachment. If you choose to apply and sit early for the exam, you will need to attach this letter to your application to the Board. If you do not want to sit early, or are moving to another state, and don’t intend to apply for Iowa licensure, you can just discard the email.

3. Request Transcript from University of Iowa Transcripts section in the Registrar’s office by requesting on MyUI (other options are offered here https://registrar.uiowa.edu/transcripts Be sure and check that you want them to hold transcript for: End of Current Semester Degree” to be sent to the Board after you graduate (or else they will send it now, which is not helpful). The final transcript is available approximately three weeks after graduation. Have it sent to Iowa Board of Social Work Examiners, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Bldg. – 5th Floor 321 East 12th Street Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075

4. The Board will notify you by mail when your application is accepted and inform you of how to schedule and sit for the Exam.

5. Then you just need to successful complete the MSW program!

The School has purchased study guide materials that students may check out in each center.

Licensure requirements vary by state. The American Association of State Social Work Boards http://www.aswb.org supplies phone numbers, addresses and email addresses for each state’s licensure board as well as information about the exam (its contents, how to prepare, etc.)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact kate-kemp@uiowa.edu
Professional degree programs customarily include clinical practicum requirements for graduation. As a pre-requisite for enrollment in a practicum course in UIHC, students are required to undergo a criminal background check. This check includes, but is not limited to, past criminal offenses, and registry information, such as child and dependent adult abuse information.

As a pre-requisite to your enrollment in a course with a clinical practice component you must agree to undergo a criminal background inquiry. This inquiry will be based on your social security number and will evaluate state, local, and federal data bases for each of your reported addresses. If there is evidence of arrest for a crime(s), conviction for a crime(s), presence on an abuse registry, or other information which reasonably suggests that patient safety might be compromised, your College will be notified, and you will be asked to provide additional information. A determination about your continued progress in the academic program will then be made by the College in accordance with collegiate and university procedures.

Please indicate your consent to this check by completing the form below.

Name of Student

Last Name

First Name

Middle Name

Other Names Used

Date of Name Change

Gender: [ ] Male

[ ] Female

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

List all cities, states, and zip codes of residences for the past 7 years:

City

State

Zip Code

City

State

Zip Code

City

State

Zip Code

City

State

Zip Code

City

State

Zip Code

Social Security Number

Drivers License Number

Name of Student

College

Date of Birth
AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize, without limitation, any party or agency contacted with by the University of Iowa, any of its agents or any entity employed by the University of Iowa to conduct an external review of my background as described above.

I hereby release the University of Iowa and its agents, employees and agents and employees of any party or entity contacted by the University of Iowa for purposes of providing criminal background information from any and all claims that I may have arising from or relating to the collection or reporting of information obtained in the process of a criminal background investigation to assure my qualification for participation in a clinical practicum.

I understand that my date of birth is used solely as an identifier to avoid possible misidentification while completing the background check process.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE INFORMATION ABOVE AND I GIVE MY PERMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TO CONDUCT A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION AS A PRE-REQUISITE TO ENROLLMENT IN A CLINICAL PRACTICUM.

______________________________________________
Signature of Student

______________________________________________
Date

______________________________________________
Signature of Witness
Procedures for Requesting a Waiver from Research Practice I, Research Practice II, and/or Computer Lab

To request a waiver to one or more of the research sequence courses students need to:
1) Review the criteria for a waiver from the individual course(s) provided below;

2) Meet with (or contact) the Research Sequence chair to discuss a waiver prior to, or within one week of, the start of the academic year. Students should bring with them, or provide electronic copies of, course outlines from graduate and/or undergraduate level research and statistics courses, and copies of their independent research proposals, reports, theses, or dissertations; and

3) Complete all requirements of the waiver in the semester of the request, or prior to the semester in which the course is scheduled on student’s plan of study, in order to be advanced to the next semester.

Criteria for Waiving Research Practice I (SSW 6148)
The student must:
1. Have satisfactorily completed a graduate level research course with content equivalent to SSW 6148 Research Practice I with a grade of B or higher within the last eight years; (in exceptional circumstances undergraduate course work will be considered) and

2. Have completed a research proposal with the following major sections: Introduction, Literature review, Methods (design and sample, data collection procedures, human subjects review procedures, measures, data analysis). The substantive topic of the project must be related to social work practice or policy.

Note: Students who Waive Research Practice I but not Research Practice II:
Students who waive Research Practice I may not have an approved research proposal to carry out in the Research Practice II course. In most cases, these students will need to arrange a one (or two) credit hour independent study that includes the creation of a research project with a Research Practice I instructor. The independent study must be completed by the end of the fall semester prior to beginning Research Practice II. Registering for the independent study requires the instructor’s prior permission.

Criteria for Waiving Research Practice II (SSW 7270)
The student must:
1. Have satisfactorily completed a graduate level research course with content equivalent to SSW 7270 Research Practice II with a grade of B or higher within the last eight years (in exceptional circumstances undergraduate course work will be considered), and

2. Have completed a research project and prepared a report, thesis, or dissertation with the following major sections: Introduction, Literature review, Methods (design and sample, data collection procedures, human subjects review procedures, measures, data analysis), Results, Discussion or Conclusions. The substantive topic of the project must be related to social work practice or policy.

For Students Who Meet Most but Not All Criteria:
When students meet most but not all criteria for waiving Research Practice I and/or II, the research sequence chair may require a student to complete a one credit hour independent study to acquire the necessary content to meet all criteria.

Waiver from Computer Lab (SSW 6146)
Students may be eligible for a waiver from SSW 6146, Computer Laboratory, if they are able to demonstrate the level of competency using SPSS for data entry and analysis required in the research courses, and covered in the Computer Lab course. The Research Sequence chair will designate a research instructor to assess the student’s level of competency in the computer lab. The required SPSS skills include: data entry, recoding, creating new variables, computing composite scores and univariate analyses.

Updated/approved Aug, 2017