



# MSW Program Academic Manual



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MSW Website:

<http://socialwork.uncc.edu/master-social-work>

University of North Carolina at Charlotte Graduate Catalog:

<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/catalog>

College of Health and Human Services Student Handbook:

<https://health.uncc.edu/sites/health.uncc.edu/files/media/2021-2022%20Student%20Handbook.pdf>

### **Common Acronyms**

MSW = Master of Social Work

BSW = Bachelor of Social Work

SSW = School of Social Work

CWEC = North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative

CHHS = College of Health and Human Services

F2F= Face-to-face class or meeting

FT = Full Time

PT = Part Time

AS = Advanced Standing

Note: There are two important manuals that you need to review as a Master of Social Work Student: 1) MSW Academic Program Handbook; and 2) [MSW Field Education Handbook](#).

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## **School of Social Work Vision and Mission**

### **Vision Statement**

To foster optimal health and well-being, equal human rights, and a just society.

### **Mission Statement**

To prepare future social work professionals for leadership in areas of culturally-informed, community-engaged practice, policy, and research, with a particular emphasis on persistent and emerging social problems in rapidly diversifying urban areas locally, nationally, and globally.

## **The MSW Program**

The MSW Program carries out the School's vision and mission by grounding students in social work's ecological framework. The program educates future social workers to think and work multi-systemically – to keep a simultaneous focus on people, their social environments, and their reciprocal relationships, while actively influencing organizations, communities, and social policy to bring about a more just society. Students in the program also have an opportunity to develop areas of specialization through elective courses in the School of Social Work and other departments at UNC Charlotte.

### **MSW Mission Statement**

The mission of the MSW Program at UNC Charlotte is to prepare future Master of Social Work professionals for leadership in areas of culturally-informed, community-engaged practice, policy, and research, with a particular emphasis on persistent and emerging social problems in rapidly diversifying regions.

### **Program Accreditation**

UNC Charlotte's MSW Program was re-accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 2016. The program is re-accredited through 2024.

### **History of the MSW Program**

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte is North Carolina's urban research university. It leverages its location in the state's largest city to offer competitive programs of research and creative activity, exemplary undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, and a focused set of community engagement initiatives.

UNC Charlotte's MSW Program began in 2000. In its first decade, the MSW Program began to achieve national prominence. In 2014, UNC Charlotte's Department of Social Work conducted an analysis of its program in comparison to UNC Charlotte peer institutions and other BSW and MSW programs in North Carolina. The analysis found that faculty research productivity outranked departments in peer institutions.

Based on its findings, the Department of Social Work formally proposed a name change to “School of Social Work” in February 2014. In the latest opinion polling by U.S. News and World Report (2019), UNC Charlotte’s MSW Program ranks #51, which places it in the top 20% of all MSW programs. It is the highest ranked MSW program in the US without an affiliated social work doctoral program.

The UNC Charlotte Board of Governors unanimously approved the Department’s designation as a School of Social Work on September 25, 2014. The designation as a School of Social Work opened the next chapter in our history, one in which our teaching, research, and service position faculty and students for engaged leadership in the University, the Charlotte region, the state, and the country.

### **Educational Objectives and Curriculum**

Educational objectives for the MSW Program are directly aligned with the Council on Social Work Education’s 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). There are two levels of curriculum: Foundation and Advanced.

#### **Generalist Curriculum**

The Generalist Curriculum is designed to promote knowledge, values, skills, and critical thinking skills required for the practice of social work. The Generalist Curriculum addresses the nine social work competencies from 2015 EPAS. These include:

- Competency 1 Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Competency 2 Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
- Competency 3 Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Competency 4 Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
- Competency 5 Engage in Policy Practice
- Competency 6 Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 7 Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 8 Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 9 Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Generalist courses.** The Generalist Curriculum consists of six (6) courses that are offered in the beginning of the course sequence. In the Generalist Curriculum, students spend 16 hours in a field practicum each semester. Generalist courses include:

- SOWK 6121 Social Work Practice Theories and Skills (3)

SOWK 6131	Social Work Research (3)
SOWK 6141	Foundations of Social Work (3)
SOWK 6151	Social Work, Social Justice, and Diversity (3)
SOWK 6441	Foundation Social Work Practicum I (3)
SOWK 6442	Foundation Social Work Practicum II (3)

### **Specialized Curriculum**

The Specialized Curriculum is designed to build upon the foundational knowledge, values, skills, and critical thinking skills required for the practice of social work. The Specialized Curriculum addresses the 9 advanced competencies established for our MSW Program, which are aligned with our School of Social Work mission and vision.

Competency 1	Identify as a professional social worker using ethical and professional behavior
Competency 2	Practice culturally-informed, community-engaged social work that champions diversity and difference
Competency 3	Advocate for a just society, equal human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice
Competency 4	Foster optimal health and well-being through practice-informed research and research-informed practice
Competency 5	Address persistent and emerging social problems through policy practice
Competency 6	Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in rapidly diversifying regions
Competency 7	Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in rapidly diversifying regions
Competency 8	Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in rapidly diversifying regions
Competency 9	Evaluate Practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in rapidly diversifying regions

**Specialized courses.** The Specialized Curriculum consists of 10 courses, which include an advanced level practicum requiring 16 hours weekly for two semesters. Students are expected to apply skills learned in the Generalist Curriculum to the Specialized Curriculum. The specialized courses include:

SOWK 6232	Practice and Program Evaluation (3)
SOWK 6242	Advocacy and Policy Change (3)
SOWK 6252	Mental Health Assessment (3)
SOWK 7122	Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals (3)
SOWK 7126	Advanced Social Work Practice with Groups (3)
SOWK 7127	Advanced Social Work Practice with Families (3)

SOWK 7222	Advanced Social Work Practice with Organizations (3)
SOWK 7223	Advanced Social Work Practice with Communities (3)
SOWK 7443	Advanced Social Work Practicum I (3)
SOWK 7444	Advanced Social Work Practicum II (3)
SOWK 7651	Synthesis and Reflection (3)

*Note.* For more information, on the 2015 accreditation standards, see the EPAS at [https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Accreditation-Process/2015EPAS/2015EPAS\\_Web\\_FINAL.pdf.aspx](https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Accreditation-Process/2015EPAS/2015EPAS_Web_FINAL.pdf.aspx)

### **Elective Courses**

MSW students consult with their advisors to choose graduate-level (5000 or above) electives that reflect their individual professional interests and goals. Students in the Campus-Based 2-Year and Distance Education 3-Year MSW Programs complete three electives (9 credits). Students in the Advanced Standing Programs complete two electives (6 credits) during the Specialized Curriculum.

The following is a list of academic unit prefixes from which graduate-level (5000-level or higher) elective courses can be selected without additional approval from one's academic advisor. Students can obtain permission from their academic advisor to take a graduate-level elective from another academic unit at UNC Charlotte that is not on this list, or to transfer in a graduate-level course from another institution. Students must justify how the course will enhance their preparation to practice as a masters-level social worker and receive support from their advisor for the choice of elective course.

### **Pre-approved UNC Charlotte Departments for MSW electives**

- Courses are not guaranteed to be offered by these academic units. Check the course schedule to see what courses are offered at the graduate-level (5000- level or higher)
- It is the responsibility of the student to check with that academic unit to gain any necessary permits (prior to registration and afterward)
- All electives offered in the School of Social Work are pre-approved
- Students must take Graduate level electives - 5000, 6000, 7000 levels
- Electives selected should purposefully align with the student's interest areas

<b>CHFD</b>	Child and Family Studies: Early Childhood Education
<b>CJUS</b>	Criminal Justice
<b>CSLG</b>	Counseling
<b>ELED</b>	Elementary Education
<b>GRNT</b>	Gerontology
<b>LTAM</b>	Latin American Studies
<b>MPAD</b>	Public Administration
<b>SOWK</b>	Social Work

<b>SPED</b>	Special Education
<b>WGST</b>	Women's and Gender Studies

Students can enroll in elective courses at UNC Charlotte or in graduate courses at other accredited institutions (including online). **All electives that are not from the UNC Charlotte Academic Units from the list of Course Prefixes above require the approval of the student's advisor prior to enrollment in the course.** If the student enrolls in a course without prior approval, the student risks receiving no credit for the course. In addition, for courses taken outside of UNC Charlotte:

- The course must be offered for Graduate credit as defined by the institution where it is completed, and
- If a course is taken outside UNC Charlotte, the student is responsible for getting credit transferred to UNC Charlotte toward the MSW.
- See the sections in this manual on Transfer of Credit and Post-Baccalaureate Credit for more information.

#### **Summer electives.**

Students in the Campus-Based 2-Year and Distance Education 3-Year Programs are allowed to move one or more of their electives to a summer session if desired. Advanced standing students already take an overload of credits during the summer, so they are not permitted to add an additional course to their summer course load unless approved by the MSW Program Director and a successful academic petition.

#### **Registration.**

Students are responsible for registering for their required and elective courses through the online portal, My UNC Charlotte. Registration dates for each semester are published in the UNC Charlotte Academic Calendar. Students **are guaranteed** a seat in all courses required to progress through their program option. Students **are not guaranteed** a seat at their desired day, time, or with a particular instructor. Students **are strongly encouraged** to register promptly to maximize date, time, and instructor preferences.

### **MSW Curriculum & Program Options**

The MSW Curriculum promotes its mission and goals through the Foundation Curriculum and the Advanced Curriculum. The Generalist Curriculum prepares students to apply generalist social work knowledge, skills, and values. The Specialized Curriculum prepares students for more specialized application of the profession's knowledge, skills, and values, to support the School of Social Work's vision and mission. All graduate students at UNC Charlotte have a culminating learning experience before graduation to earn their degrees. For the MSW Program, all students must successfully complete the course SOWK 7651 Reflection and Synthesis, which serves as the capstone course for the MSW Program.

The MSW degree may be pursued through the Campus-Based or Distance-Education Program Options. The Campus-Based MSW Programs includes both 1-Year (i.e., Advanced Standing) and 2-Year Plans of Study.

*Note.* Students across all Program Options are required to register with the same Practicum Instructors for the Fall and Spring semesters within an Academic Year.

### **Campus-Based MSW Program Options**

#### **Campus-Based 1-Year (Advanced Standing) Plan of Study**

The Advanced Standing Program is designed for students who have earned a BSW from an accredited social work program within the past seven years and wish to pursue the MSW. Advanced Standing students are not required to complete the Generalist Curriculum for the MSW. Under the Advanced Standing Program, the MSW can be completed in one calendar year, from May to May. Students complete 39 graduate credit hours, which includes 33 credit hours in the classroom and 6 credits in an approved field placement.

Classes begin during the Extended Summer Session and meet on the main university campus for 10 weeks in the summer months. In Summer, Advanced Standing students complete 9 hours of graduate level work designed to bridge the gap between their BSW curriculum and MSW Curriculum. In the Fall and Spring semesters, students complete the continue working on the Specialized Curriculum concurrently with students completing the Campus-Based 2-Year MSW Program. The Advanced Standing Program is outlined below.

#### Summer (9 credits)

- SOWK 6232 Practice and Program Evaluation (3)
- SOWK 6242 Advocacy and Policy Change (3)
- SOWK 6252 Mental Health Assessment (3)

#### Fall (15 credits)

- SOWK 7122 Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals (3)
- SOWK 7126 Advanced Social Work Practice with Groups (3)
- SOWK 7222 Advanced Social Work Practice with Organizations (3)
- SOWK 7443 Advanced Social Work Practicum I (3)
- Elective (3)\*

#### Spring (15 credits)

- SOWK 7127 Advanced Social Work Practice with Families (3)
- SOWK 7223 Advanced Social Work Practice with Communities (3)
- SOWK 7444 Advanced Social Work Practicum II (3)
- SOWK 7651 Reflection and Synthesis (3)
- Elective (3)\*

\*Electives – MSW students consult with their advisors to choose graduate-level electives that reflect their individual professional interests and goals. Electives often offered at UNC Charlotte from a list of academic unit prefixes that are pre-approved (see section on Electives above) can be taken without advisor approval.

### **Campus-Based 2-Year Plan of Study**

The 2-Year Plan of Study is designed for students to complete the MSW through 2-years of intensive study. For 2-Year Plans of Study, the Generalist Curriculum is completed during the first semester of coursework and first year of field, and the Specialized Curriculum is completed during the first spring semester and continues into the second year. Students complete a total of 60 graduate credits hours, which includes 48 credit hours in the classroom and 12 credits in an approved field placement. The schedule of courses for the 2-Year Plan of Study is outlined below.

#### **Year One**

Fall (15 credits)

- SOWK 6121 Social Work Practice: Theories and Skills (3)
- SOWK 6131 Social Work Research (3)
- SOWK 6141 Foundations of Social Work (3)
- SOWK 6151 Social Work, Social Justice, and Diversity (3)
- SOWK 6441 Foundation Social Work Practicum I (3)\*

Spring (15 credits)

- SOWK 6232 Practice and Program Evaluation (3)
- SOWK 6242 Advocacy and Policy Change (3)
- SOWK 6252 Mental Health Assessment (3)
- SOWK 6442 Foundation Social Work Practicum II (3)\*
- Elective (3)

#### **Year Two**

Fall (15 credits)

- SOWK 7122 Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals (3)
- SOWK 7126 Advanced Social Work Practice with Groups (3)
- SOWK 7222 Advanced Social Work Practice with Organizations (3)
- SOWK 7443 Advanced Social Work Practicum I (3)
- Elective (3)

Spring (15 credits)

- SOWK 7127 Advanced Social Work Practice with Families (3)
- SOWK 7223 Advanced Social Work Practice with Communities (3)
- SOWK 7444 Social Work Practicum II (3)

SOWK 7651 Reflection and Synthesis (3)  
Elective (3)

### **Distance-Education 3-Year MSW Program**

The Distance-Education 3-Year MSW Program is designed for students who wish to complete an MSW virtually. The Online Program will be completed over the course of three academic years. The Generalist and Specialized Curriculum in the Online MSW program is identical to that being offered on campus. Students are required to successfully earn sixty credits to graduate.

The Distance-Education 3-Year MSW Program at UNC Charlotte offers synchronous and asynchronous courses. Synchronous courses are offered during evenings and weekends to meet the needs of non-traditional students balancing employment, school, and families. During the last two years students complete two field placements which require a total of 16 hours per week on site at a social work services agency under the supervision of someone with an MSW.

Distance-education students will have the option of taking hybrid/blended or face-to-face elective courses, but at an additional cost. Below is the schedule of required courses. Students can opt to take electives anytime during the program, but they are encouraged to take them during years two and three.

### **Year One**

#### *Summer (6 credits)*

SOWK 6121 Social Work Practice: Theory and Skills (3)  
SOWK 6141 Foundations of Social Work (3)

#### *Fall (6 Credits)*

SOWK 6131 Social Work Research (3)  
SOWK 6151 Social Work, Social Justice, & Diversity (3)

#### *Spring (6 Credits)*

SOWK 6242 Advocacy and Policy Change (3)  
SOWK 6232 Practice and Program Evaluation (3)

### **Year Two**

#### *Summer (3 Credits)*

SOWK 6252 Mental Health Assessment (3)

#### *Fall (9 Credits)*

SOWK 7122 Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals (3)  
SOWK 7222 Advanced Social Work Practice with Organizations (3)

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SOWK 6441 Foundation Social Work Practicum I (3)

*Spring (9 Credits)*

SOWK 7127 Advanced Social Work Practice with Families (3)

SOWK 7223 Advanced Social Work Practice with Communities (3)

SOWK 6441 Foundation Social Work Practicum I (3)

**Year Three**

*Summer (3 Credits)*

Elective (3)

*Fall (9 Credits)*

SOWK 7126 Advanced Interpersonal Practice with Groups (3)

SOWK 7443 Advanced Social Work Practicum II (3)

Elective (3)

*Spring (9 Credits)*

SOWK 7651 Reflection and Synthesis (3)

SOWK 7443 Advanced Social Work Practicum II (3)

Elective (3)

**Graduate School Catalog Descriptions of MSW Program Courses**

Visit the following link for descriptions of MSW courses, prerequisites, and co-requisites.

[MSW Courses Graduate School Catalog](#)

## Graduate School Academic Policies

Complete policies and procedures such as degree requirements, transfer credits, and grading can be found in the current UNC Charlotte Graduate Catalog. A copy of this catalog may be obtained from the Graduate School or online at the link above. Below is a link to current UNC Charlotte Graduate School Resources and policies.

<https://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/current-student-resources>

### Minimum Hours and Quality

All Advanced Standing, Traditional, and Online MSW students are expected to satisfactorily complete requirements for the degree. The MSW requires a minimum of 60 semester hours for Traditional and Online MSW students and 39 credit hours for Advanced Standing students, with an overall GPA of at least 3.0. Grades in all courses attempted will remain on the transcript and will be included in the calculation of the student's GPA as it is reported on the transcript, with the exception of a W grade.

### Grading Policies and Grade Point Averages

Complete information regarding grading policies, grades, credits, and obtaining transcripts is provided in the "Academic Regulations and Degree Requirements" section of the Graduate School Catalog, available at <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/catalog> Grades for graduate students are as follows:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>
A	Commendable	4
B	Satisfactory	3
C	Marginal	2
U	Unsatisfactory	0
I	Incomplete	
IP	In Progress	
W	Withdrawal	
P	Pass	
NC	No Credit	
AU	Audit	
NR	No Recognition Given	

The grade point average for a graduate student is based only on those courses in his/her approved program of study taken at UNC Charlotte. It is determined by multiplying the number of grade points for each grade (A=4, B=3, C=2, U=0) by the number of semester hours credit received in that course, adding all accumulated grade points together, and then dividing by the total number of semester hours the student has attempted (except

those for which the student received a grade of I, IP, W, P, N, AU, or NR). When a course not listed as "May be repeated for credit" is repeated, no additional credit hours accrue and the hours earned and grade points of the previous grade are replaced by those of the current grade. Graduate students must have a cumulative 3.0 GPA to graduate.

### **I (Incomplete) Grades**

The grade of "I" is assigned at the discretion of the course instructor when a student who is otherwise passing has not, due to circumstances beyond his/her control, completed all the work in the course. A grade of I is not appropriate for a student who is presently failing and needs more time to raise their grade in order to pass the course. The missing work must be completed and the final grade reported within a maximum of one calendar year from the date on which the "I" grade was recorded. The instructor assigning the "I" grade may specify a shorter time frame to complete the work. If the "I" is not removed, a grade of U is automatically assigned. Time extensions for the completion of an "I" grade beyond one year cannot be approved except by special request to the Graduate School and under extraordinary circumstances. The grade of I cannot be removed by enrolling again in the same course. Note: An I grade will not be assigned for a student who has never attended a class, has quit attending a class, or is failing.

### **Grades and Academic Standing**

An accumulation of three final course grades of C or ANY final course grade of U (Unsatisfactory) will result in automatic suspension from the UNC Charlotte Graduate School and the MSW Program. This is Graduate School policy. A graduate student whose enrollment has been terminated because of grades is ineligible to attend any semester or the summer session in any UNC Charlotte course unless properly reinstated through the appeal process at The Graduate School.

Graduate students must be continuously enrolled (does not include summer). If students need a break in their course progression, they must complete an academic petition for a leave of absence and it must be approved. See The Graduate School policies.

### **Time Limits to Degree**

Candidates must complete all requirements for a master's degree, including accepted transfer credit, within six years of the end of the first semester in which they registered in the Graduate School. If transfer courses are accepted, the six-year calendar begins on the date the transferred course is completed. Courses that exceed this time limit must be revalidated or retaken, whichever the graduate program decides is necessary, if they are to be included in the degree program. Courses taken at other institutions are not eligible for revalidation.

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

No otherwise qualified student shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to

discrimination or excluded from participation in the School of Social Work. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation to provide equal opportunity to meet academic criteria for professional behavior and scholastic performance. Any otherwise qualified student with a protected disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify the UNC Charlotte Office of Disability Services and provide documentation as needed. The Office of Disability Services will work with the faculty member(s) on how to accommodate the student. If the student has questions about disability-related policy, the Office of Disability website can be found at <https://ds.uncc.edu/>. Their office is located at Fretwell 230. The phone number is 704-687-4355 (voice/TDD).

### **School of Social Work Academic Policies**

The following is a description of academic policies specific to the School of Social Work MSW Program. These policies apply in addition to graduate school policies.

#### **Course Substitution Policy**

MSW students may request that certain required courses be substituted with another graduate level course if they meet specific guidelines. The following courses in the Foundation curriculum are eligible for a course substitution: Social Work Practice: Theories and Skills (SOWK 6121); Social Work Research (SOWK 6131); Foundations of Social Work (SOWK 6141); and Social Work, Social Justice, & Diversity (SOWK 6151). Courses can be substituted only if the following guidelines are met:

- The student earned course undergraduate credit from a CSWE-accredited social work program within six years of the semester in which graduation is planned.
- A course syllabus is provided for each course for which a substitution is requested. The syllabus must indicate that the course reflects the same content as one of the courses eligible for substitution (SOWK 6121, 6131, 6141, and 6151) at the graduate level. This determination is made by the MSW Program Director, who may consult with the admissions committee.
- The student received a grade of "A" in the associated undergraduate course being proposed for substitution.
- To clarify, the undergraduate credits are not counted as graduate credits. Rather, the associated required graduate course is substituted by a graduate elective course.

If each of these criteria are met, the approval procedure for a course substitution is as follows:

- 1) A copy of the course syllabus for each course is provided to the MSW Program Director, along with a proposal for a graduate course substitute from a current course schedule.

- 2) The MSW Program Director reviews the course syllabus and the student's transcript (to verify the course was completed and that the student received an "A").
- 3) For each course, the student or the MSW Program Director submits a request for a course substitution using the Graduate Academic Petition system at <https://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/academic-petitions>
- 4) The Graduate Academic Petition is forwarded to the Graduate School and University Registrar for approval. The substitution is only approved when the Graduate School and University Registrar approve.

### **Transfer of Credits**

"Transfer of credit" refers to graduate course credits earned at UNC Charlotte or another institution either before or after admission to the MSW Program. The MSW program, following UNC Charlotte Graduate School policy, will accept a maximum of twelve (12) semester hours of transfer credit toward a master's degree. Students cannot transfer credit for courses that counted toward another completed graduate or certificate degree. The UNC Charlotte Graduate School also requires that transferred courses be no more than seven years old at the time of the student's graduation (not acceptance into the program). Transfer credit will only be granted for courses taken at an accredited university. Students who are enrolled in the MSW Program who choose to take an off-campus course for transfer credit are strongly encouraged to discuss the off-campus course with their academic advisor before they enroll. Credits for Field Placement and Seminar cannot be transferred. The MSW Program does not give credit for previous work or life experiences.

The approval process for a course transfer is as follows:

- 1) A transcript showing the student has completed the course is forwarded to the MSW Program Director/Coordinator from the institution where the course was completed.
- 2) A copy of the course syllabus for each course is provided to the MSW Program Director/Coordinator.
- 3) The MSW Program Director/Coordinator reviews the course syllabus and the student's transcript to verify the course was completed successfully and was taken for Graduate credit at an accredited institution.
- 4) For each course, the student or the MSW Program Director/Coordinator submits a request for a transfer of credit using the Graduate Academic Petition system at <https://gpetition.uncc.edu/login>
- 5) The Graduate Academic Petition is forwarded to the Graduate School and University Registrar for approval. The transfer of credit is only approved when the Graduate School and University Registrar approve.

### **Post-Baccalaureate Policies**

#### **Admission to MSW courses for non-degree students.**

Non-degree students with an interest in social work graduate education are welcome to

apply for course admission to certain courses if they meet certain conditions. The conditions are:

- The individual must be accepted by UNC Charlotte's Graduate School as a post-baccalaureate student. The Graduate School accepts post-baccalaureate applications from individuals with an undergraduate degree whose overall undergraduate GPA is 2.75 or higher. Students can apply to become a post-baccalaureate student by going to <http://gradadmissions.uncc.edu> and clicking the Apply button.
- The post-baccalaureate student can only register for courses after all MSW degree students who need the course for graduation have registered. This requires the permission of the MSW Program Director.
- The post-baccalaureate student can only register for courses that do not have a course prerequisite and are approved by the MSW Program Director.

The post-baccalaureate student is welcome to apply to the MSW Program; however, completing graduate social work courses as a post-baccalaureate student does not guarantee admission to the MSW Program, even if the student does well in courses as a post-baccalaureate student.

#### **Post-baccalaureate credit.**

For students who enter the MSW Program, twelve (12) hours of graduate credit earned as a post-baccalaureate student can be transferred as credit toward the MSW at the discretion of the MSW Program Director. Post-baccalaureate courses taken at UNC Charlotte are only eligible for transfer toward the degree if they will be less than seven years old at the time of the student's graduation date (not acceptance into the program). Transfer credit will only be granted for courses taken at an accredited university. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss post-baccalaureate course transfer with the MSW Program Director.

#### **Field Practicum Grades**

A student can receive a grade of C in field practicum and proceed to the next semester of field practicum. However, students cannot receive more than 6 credits of C grades. See Field Education Handbook.

#### **Cohort Use of Social Media Sites**

Historically, MSW student cohorts have developed social media pages to stay abreast of volunteer opportunities, student organization updates, and events. These sites are solely maintained and created by students. The School of Social Work does not provide any oversight of these sites. If students decide to utilize these sites to maintain communication within their cohort, they are advised to ensure that the content of the site adheres to the NASW Code of Ethics and professionalism standards. Please do not utilize these sites to belittle students, speak negatively about instructors, or for any negative purposes.

### **Academic Advising**

Students are assigned an MSW faculty advisor upon entering the program and usually retain that advisor for the full course of study. Changes in faculty and faculty work assignments may dictate a change in student advisors. Guidance for the student/advisor relationship is as follows:

- 1) Faculty advisors are encouraged to meet with MSW students in-person, through UNC Charlotte web conferencing tools (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet), or by phone depending on the student's Program Option and individual needs.
- 2) Faculty advisors are encouraged to provide flexible appointment times, including some evenings and weekends for Online MSW students who are balancing work, school, and families.
- 3) Advisors are charged with assisting in monitoring their advisees' readiness for professional practice.
- 4) Faculty are strongly encouraged to reach out to students assigned to them for advising. Students are strongly advised to arrange to meet with their assigned advisor each semester, especially during the first year, to support their progress in the program.
- 5) Advisors consult with students on the student's choice of electives. Students can take graduate-level electives from the list of academic unit prefixes listed earlier. Electives in another UNC Charlotte graduate program that are not listed, or those taken at another university must be approved by the advisor. Electives may be from another academic discipline but must relate to the School of Social Work's mission to work with vulnerable populations.
- 6) Students may invite their advisors to Step I, Step II, or Step III support meetings.
- 7) Advisors are involved in nominating their advisees for special recognition and encouraging their students to participate as graduate students in public and professional arenas.
- 8) Withdrawals, leaves of absence, medical leaves, and terminations can be coordinated by the student's advisor in consultation with the MSW Program Director for Traditional and Advanced Standing students, or MSW Online Coordinator for Online students.

School of Social Work staff are available for general academic and professional advising questions. Staff such as our Program Associate, Administrative Support Specialist, and Project Coordinator for Student Outreach and Engagement are available for student

support for the following:

- MSW program requirements
- Class scheduling
- Curriculum structure
- Scholarship information
- School Social Work Licensure information
- Child Welfare Education Collaborative information
- State Licensure/Certification information
- General graduate student assistance

### **Licensure**

For students that plan to practice in North Carolina and will be seeking licensure upon graduation, please review North Carolina guidelines and information here:

<https://ncswboard.gov/lcsw-associate/>

For students who plan to practice outside of North Carolina, please review pp. 88-89 of the Inventory of Licensure Pathways developed by UNC Charlotte Distance Education Office:

<https://distanceed.charlotte.edu/sites/distanceed.charlotte.edu/files/media/Inventory%20of%20Licensure%20Pathways%20-%20General%20Disclosures%20REVISED%208-1-2021.pdf>

### **University Supports**

In addition to academic advising, the following supports are available to graduate students at UNC Charlotte. Students are welcome to pursue these services at any time. Faculty and staff may refer students to these services for assistance, but a referral is not necessary to access services.

#### **Student Assistance and Support Services (SASS)**

The Student Assistance and Support Services (SASS) is available to assist, support and advocate for students experiencing a broad range of issues, concerns or challenges interfering with a student's ability to be successful academically or personally.

<https://sass.uncc.edu/>

#### **Graduate & Professional Student Government (GPSG)**

The Graduate & Professional Student Government (GPSG) advocates for the interests of graduate students, provides a forum for free and open discussion of matters affecting graduate students, and provides some financial and organizational support for attending events within the campus community and in Charlotte.

<http://suar.orgsync.com/org/gpsguncc/home>

### **Center for Wellness Promotion**

The Center for Wellness Promotion presents a variety of group and campus-wide wellness and prevention activities related to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, sexual responsibility, and men's and women's health issues. <http://wellness.uncc.edu/>

### **UNC Charlotte Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides short-term individual and group counseling, psychological assessment, consultation for faculty, staff, parents, and students, and educational programs to the campus community. <https://caps.uncc.edu/>

### **UNC Charlotte Center for Graduate Life**

A part of the Graduate School at UNC Charlotte, the Center for Graduate Life (CGL) is a friendly, welcoming place where graduate students and postdoctoral fellows come to polish professional and personal skills, find a quiet spot for study, connect with others, or just relax. It is located in Cone University Center 268. <https://gradlife.uncc.edu/>

### **UNC Charlotte Title IX Office**

The Title IX Office is committed to supporting all members of the university community by providing equitable services and resources including education, investigations, and care coordination in relation to sex-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual and interpersonal misconduct. The Office is happy to meet with individuals during the COVID-19 Pandemic via Zoom. For additional information see: <https://titleix.uncc.edu/>

### **UNC Charlotte Speaking Resource Center**

UNC Charlotte has formed a Speaking Resource Center housed in Atkins Library Room G33. The Center, sponsored by Communication across the Curriculum (CxC), aims to provide students with aid in crafting oral presentations across a plethora of majors and courses at UNC Charlotte. <https://communication.uncc.edu/news/speaking-resource-center>

### **Office of Equity, Identity, and Engagement**

This is a new office created to educate, develop, and engage students regarding their various intersecting identities (gender identity, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual identity, etc). The mission is to provide students an affirming and equitable environment committed to fostering a campus community that celebrates and supports expansion of identities. <https://identity.uncc.edu/>

### **Jamil Niner Food Pantry**

The pantry provides assistance to UNC Charlotte undergraduate and graduate students that struggle with food insecurity. In 2013 the USDA defined food insecurity as a condition that occurs when people do not have enough resources to feed themselves. The pantry offers a variety of nutritious meals and frequently gives demonstrations on what meals can be made with the food in their pantry. <https://ninerpantry.uncc.edu/>

### **Office of Disability Services (ODS)**

If the student has a documented disability and requires accommodation in any course, contact Disability Services the first week of the semester (location: Fretwell 230; and phone: 704-687-4355 voice/TDD). Information about available services may be found at <http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps51.html>. Accommodations for learning will be arranged by that office and communicated to the Instructor. See the ODS website for more information <http://ds.uncc.edu/>

### **Writing Resources Center**

Social work relies on well-developed verbal comprehension skills and expressive communication skills. The MSW curriculum is writing intensive. Most classes have assignments of one major paper and/or several minor papers. Almost all paper assignments require students to use the publication style found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition (2020). For students who want to improve their writing skills, UNC Charlotte has a Writing Resources Center staffed by graduate writing consultants who work with writers at all stages of the writing process: prewriting, focusing, organizing, revising, and editing. Programs include one-on-one and group consulting; online writing consultants for distance education students; classroom presentations; and library and internet research. The Writing Resource Center has dedicated hours for graduate students and also makes individual appointments to accommodate student schedules. Students can find the Writing Resources Center in Cameron Bldg., Room 149. The phone number is 704-687-1899 and email is [wrcelp@uncc.edu](mailto:wrcelp@uncc.edu), website <http://writing.uncc.edu/writing-resources-center>.

## **School of Social Work Special Programs**

### **North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative**

The North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative (CWEC) includes specialized, in-depth training in child welfare knowledge, values, and best practices. The program was established in 1999 to improve public child welfare services in North Carolina and is administered by the Jordan Institute for Families at UNC Chapel Hill. More information about the Collaborative can be found at <https://socialwork.uncc.edu/bachelor-social-work-bsw/north-carolina-child-welfare-collaborative> or contact the CWEC UNC Charlotte campus liaison, Dr. Ticola Ross.

### **School Social Work Certification Credits**

Graduates of the MSW Program may also qualify for licensure as a school social worker in the state of North Carolina. The School Social Work license is awarded by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. To be eligible for school social work licensure, MSW students must complete a two-semester field placement in a school setting, take SOWK 5102 School Social Work, and take another course from a list of approved electives. Students interested in school social work licensure should begin planning with their advisors and the MSW Field Education Director as early in the program as possible. The School of Social Work's Field Director, Dr. Ticola Ross has additional information about school social work licensure. Information is also available at <https://socialwork.uncc.edu/school-social-work-licensure>

### **Early Childhood Mental Health Certificate**

The Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Certificate is an interdisciplinary post-baccalaureate certificate program that addresses the increasing need for mental health services for children birth to five years of age. The certificate program welcomes professionals with an undergraduate or graduate degree in a human services field, including counseling, education, early childhood special education, pediatrics, allied health services (i.e., occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology), psychology, and social work. Individuals who are currently enrolled in a human service-related graduate degree program at UNC Charlotte are also welcome to apply.

The ECMH Certificate is sponsored jointly by UNC Charlotte's School of Social Work and Department of Special Education and Child Development. The certificate program requires a minimum of 15 graduate credit hours, including four core courses and one elective course. For more information about the program and eligibility requirements, contact the ECMH Certificate Director, Professor Kevin Edwards-Knight, or visit the certificate webpage at <https://socialwork.uncc.edu/early-childhood-mental-health-graduate-certificate/5>.

### **Graduate Certificate in Gerontology**

The Graduate Certificate Program in Gerontology is offered by the Department of Gerontology, which is housed within the School of Social Work. The Certificate was designed to provide supplementary graduate education in Gerontology for individuals with an interest in working with older adults who either have a graduate degree in another field or are currently enrolled in a graduate degree program at UNC Charlotte. The certificate program requires the completion of a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate level coursework in core and elective courses related to the study of aging and older adults. MSW students who pursue the Graduate Certificate Program in Gerontology can use some required social work courses as credit toward the certificate before they graduate. The Graduate Certificate Program in Gerontology is administered by the Gerontology Program. More information about the graduate certificate can be found at <http://gerontology.uncc.edu/graduate-programs>

*Note.* UNC Charlotte offers a number of graduate certificates. For more information on offerings, visit <http://gradcertificate.uncc.edu/certificate-programs> and <https://gradadmissions.uncc.edu/programs>

### **Post-Graduate Licensure Eligibility**

Graduates of the MSW Program and North Carolina residents are eligible to pursue North Carolina State Licensure or Certification at three levels: Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Certified Master Social Worker, and Certified Social Work Manager. Graduates who are NC residents and interested in providing clinical services to individuals, groups, and families often apply for the Licensed Clinical Social Worker Associate (LCSWA) immediately upon graduation. The LCSWA is a temporary license that will allow you to practice Social Work. To obtain your full license and become an LCSW, you must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum of 3,000 hours of post MSW paid clinical employment (appropriately supervised clinical practice) accumulated in no less than two (2) years, nor more than six (6) years; and
- Minimum of 100 hours of supervision from a LCSW, MSW with an additional 2 years post LCSW clinical social work practice, on a regular basis: at least one (1) hour of supervision for every thirty (30) hours of clinical practice. A maximum of twenty-five (25) hours may be group supervision.

Licensure or certification is managed by the North Carolina Certification Board for Social Work. The Board may be contacted via the web at <http://www.ncswboard.org> or phone at (800) 550-7009.

Students who plan to practice social work outside of North Carolina are responsible for researching the requirements related to social work licensure in states where they plan to work. You can find your local chapter of the NASW here:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Chapters/Find-a-Chapter>

See the section above on School Social Work certification for more information on licensing in school social work.

## **Student Participation in Academic Governance**

### **Graduate and Professional Student Government**

The Graduate Social Work Association (GSWA) is a chartered affiliate of the UNC Charlotte Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG). The purpose of the association is to provide student support, promote research, and strengthen the graduate school in general. For further information on the GPSG, refer to the Graduate Student Association website at <http://suar.orgsync.com/org/gpsguncc/home>. Each year the graduate student body elects a president, vice president, and treasurer. The officers provide leadership in planning social functions, fundraising and charity events, promoting scholarly activities, and administering the association's budget. The GPSG also serves as an advocate for student interests and a conduit to the faculty and administration for student concerns and ideas.

## **Student Organizations**

### **Graduate Social Work Association (GSWA)**

As an affiliate of the Graduate and Professional Student Government, the Graduate Social Work Association qualifies for funds for continuing education and research activities. The Graduate Social Work Association was chartered in Fall 2001 in accordance with the Graduate and Professional Student Government by-laws. The president of the Graduate Social Work Association serves as the representative from the School of Social Work to the GPSG organization. Student activity fees fund the organization's programs and activities, including travel to professional conferences, speakers, and research activities. The GPSG sponsors an annual research fair with monetary awards to excelling students. Elections are held within the School of Social Work each spring for the following year's officers. All MSW students are automatically members of the Graduate Social Work Association; there are no dues. An appointed faculty member from the School of Social Work serves as the advisor to the Graduate Social Work Association.

### **Advocates for Change**

Advocates for Change is a student-led graduate level student organization. Faculty serve as advisors but the organization is run by students. Advocates for Change began with a group of MSW students at UNC Charlotte in February 2015 as a student response to media reports and peer-reviewed research reports demonstrating inequitable treatment of disadvantaged and minority individuals by health, education, and law enforcement services in the region, state, and nation. According to its mission statement, Advocates for

Change is “Master of Social Work and Master’s level students from other disciplines who are committed to providing services to the UNC Charlotte campus and Charlotte community. The Advocates for Change goal is to enhance the quality of life for oppressed and vulnerable populations through advocacy, human services delivery, and research.” The organization was formally recognized by the University’s Graduate and Professional Student Government in November 2015.

**Phi Alpha Honor Society**

Phi Alpha is an academic honor society for BSW and MSW students of excellence. Nu Theta, the UNC Charlotte chapter of Phi Alpha, was founded in 2005. Its purpose is to recognize and advance academic excellence and scholarship in social work practice. Membership eligibility is open to MSW students who have completed at least 12 credit hours toward the master’s degree; it is based on academic excellence (3.8 or higher GPA), leadership ability, a high standard of personal behavior, and dedication to the social work profession.

## **Student Academic Performance and Conduct Grievance Procedures**

Academic and professional standards are essential to the existence of and growth of an academic community. Maintaining academic and professional standards is ultimately the responsibility of the instructional faculty but is shared by all members of the academic community. The School of Social Work supports the University in its efforts to:

- Maintain an environment that supports and enhances the educational purpose of the University;
- Protect the health, safety, welfare, and property of all persons in the University community;
- Encourage appropriate standards of individual and group responsibility to the University community; and
- Foster the personal, social, and ethical development of members of the University community.

Students in the School of Social Work must comply with academic policies set by the University and the student conduct codes set forth by the School of Social Work. Graduate students in the School of Social Work must also comply with academic policies set by the Graduate School. When a concern arises around academic performance or student conduct, the School of Social Work follows University policies and procedures to reach a resolution. In absence of a related University policy, the School of Social Work follows its Multi-Step Resolution Process.

### **University Level Policies and Procedures**

As indicated above, when a concern arises around academic performance or professional conduct, the School of Social Work reviews and follows University policies and procedures. A complete list of University policies can be found at:

<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/university-policies>.

Violations of the [Code of Student Responsibility - Policy 406](#) and [The Code of Student Academic Integrity](#) warrant immediate action and are addressed through University procedures. Examples include, but are not limited to, egregious academic dishonesty (as defined by the instructor), sexual misconduct, acts of harm, illicit drug use, and theft. Acts of harm include harassment, intimidation, bullying, and injury. In such cases, the instructor will notify the Program Director immediately. University policies and procedures will be followed. The student's standing in the program may be impacted by the resolution of the case. A temporary Compliance Plan may be developed until a resolution is reached at the university level.

### **School of Social Work Policies Regarding Student Conduct**

MSW students are bound by two codes of student conduct as outlined below:

- The first are University policies regarding student conduct, including Policy #406 - Code of Student Responsibility (<http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-406>) and Policy #407 - Code of Student Academic Integrity (<http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>).
- The second is the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, which can be found at <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/>. It is the responsibility of all social work faculty to coach students regarding the NASW Code of Ethics. This coaching occurs through infusion of ethics throughout the program curriculum, formal and informal meetings with the student, course-specific policies, and assignments aligned with the MSW Program curriculum map.

In addition, social work students must comply with course policies set by each course instructor. These policies should be presented in writing to the student in the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester. Instructors are given wide latitude to set their own course policies on topics such as late work, attendance, or use of social media in the classroom.

### **School of Social Work Multi-Step Resolution Process**

#### **Procedures Governing Concerns related to Social Work Students**

**Step 1. Consultation with the student.** Instructors should work directly with the student to resolve academic performance and/or classroom conduct concerns using a problem-solving approach. A problem-solving approach means the instructor identifies a specific behavior of concern, communicates constructively and respectfully with the student about the specific concern, and, with the student's input, develops a specific plan for resolving the concern. It is the instructor's responsibility to inform the student that the meeting is considered a Step 1 meeting and document the concern using the SSW Academic and Performance Concerns form. The form will include the details about the student meeting, and the proposed plan for resolving the concern. Faculty members are encouraged to inform students about available campus resources that can help them. Faculty members are also encouraged to inform and document students about the potential consequences of not resolving the concerns (i.e., failing grade on an assignment or in the course). Academic concerns that implicate [University Policy 407, Code of Student Academic Integrity](#) or conduct concerns that implicate [University Policy 406, Code of Student Accountability](#) should be directed to and processed through Student Accountability and Conflict Resolution.

**Step 2. Consultation with the BSW/MSW/Field Program Director.** If the concern remains unresolved after Step 1, the instructor may forward documentation about the initial meeting with the student to the BSW/MSW Program Director. The BSW/MSW Program Director will either suggest an alternative solution to the instructor or schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the concern. In cases where an alternative solution is proposed, the instructor will communicate with the BSW/MSW/Field Program Director about the

outcome and, if the suggestion did not resolve the concern, the Program Director will schedule a meeting with the student. The instructor is welcome to attend the meeting between the student and the BSW/MSW/Field Program Director. It is the BSW/MSW/Field Program Director's responsibility to document the concern and inform the student that meeting or alternative solution is considered Step 2 in the process. The details about the meeting with the student and the proposed plan for resolving the concern will be documented in the same SSW Academic and Performance Concerns form. The BSW/MSW/Field Program Director will provide a copy of the updated form via email to the instructor and the student within five (5) business days of the meeting with the student.

**Step 3. Formal Review.** If the student concern is still unresolved after Step 2, the concern may be referred to the Academic and Performance Committee for Formal Review.

### **Academic and Performance Committee (APC)**

The Academic and Performance Committee (APC) is an ad-hoc committee that will be appointed by the SSW Director as needed. The APC will review cases referred for formal review, formulate next steps and also review requests for reinstatement and readmission.

Prior to the formal review, the instructor should contact the appropriate program director and then the director will request that the SSW Director develop an ad-hoc APC.

Students may be referred for a number of reasons including, but not limited to:

- Failure to maintain the standards of UNC Charlotte, the School of Social Work, and those held by the profession
- Marginal performance towards CSWE competencies for social work practice
- Failure to meet academic requirements of UNC Charlotte, The UNC Charlotte Graduate School, and the School of Social Work
- Failure to adhere to agency policy and professional standards during field placement
- Suspension and/or termination from field placement
- Relating to students, colleagues, professors, client and/or agency personnel in a disrespectful manner
- Pattern of problematic behavior
- Request by faculty member for a review due to the student's poor coursework/field performance
- Uncertainty about the social work profession and/or
- Request for reinstatement and/or readmission

### **Procedures for the Academic and Performance Committee**

The APC will reach out to the student to inform them about the concerns, any immediate requirements and/or referrals (e.g., Niner Cares, Student Accountability, Civil Rights and

Title IX, CAPS, Wellness Promotion) and request a formal review meeting. Any relevant documentation will be collected and made available to the student at least 2 days prior to the meeting. If the student would like to submit any documentation, the documents must be submitted to the APC 2 days prior to meeting. Possible types of relevant documentation include:

- (1) SSW Academic and Performance Concerns form
- (2) Statement from the Student. Please note if the statement includes any safety concerns, harassment or discrimination claims, a referral will be made to the appropriate campus office
- (3) Letters of support, Material pertaining to the student's course and/or field performance and feedback from faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, advisors, and other appropriate parties such as the Division of Student Affairs that may have worked with the student.

The formal review may occur in-person or virtually at a mutually agreed upon time. The student may bring one support person and must complete a [FERPA waiver](#) form for the support person. If the student chooses to bring a support person that is also a member of the SSW, the dual roles will be considered by the APC to assess for any possible conflicts of interest.

During the meeting all parties will have an opportunity to share and request any additional information. A member of the APC will take notes. If students require accommodations, they should contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) prior to the meeting. The APC will review the materials that have been submitted and make a decision even if the student chooses not to attend the meeting.

The APC's decision will be submitted to the School of Social Work Director.

### **Course of Actions**

Possible outcomes include the following

- a) *Continue without new conditions*: The concern(s) have been addressed and no further action is needed.
- b) *Continue with new conditions*: The concern(s) have been substantiated and a Formal Compliance Plan is established, which may include, but is not limited to, setting goals, mentorship and support, additional advising, adjustments to the students course plan, additional courses and/or field hours. Additionally, the circumstances may require documentation in the student's record and other university level sanctions. The Compliance Plan is accepted by the student.
- c) *Program Termination*: A Compliance Plan is not offered or is declined.

### **Appeal Process**

Students have the right to appeal the decision of APC. Appeals should be made in writing/electronically to the SSW Director within 15 days after the decision. The SSW Director will review the appeal and determine next steps and/or the final decision. If the decision is related to field placement, the student will not be placed in a field placement until the appeal is resolved.

### Reinstatement Procedures and Readmission

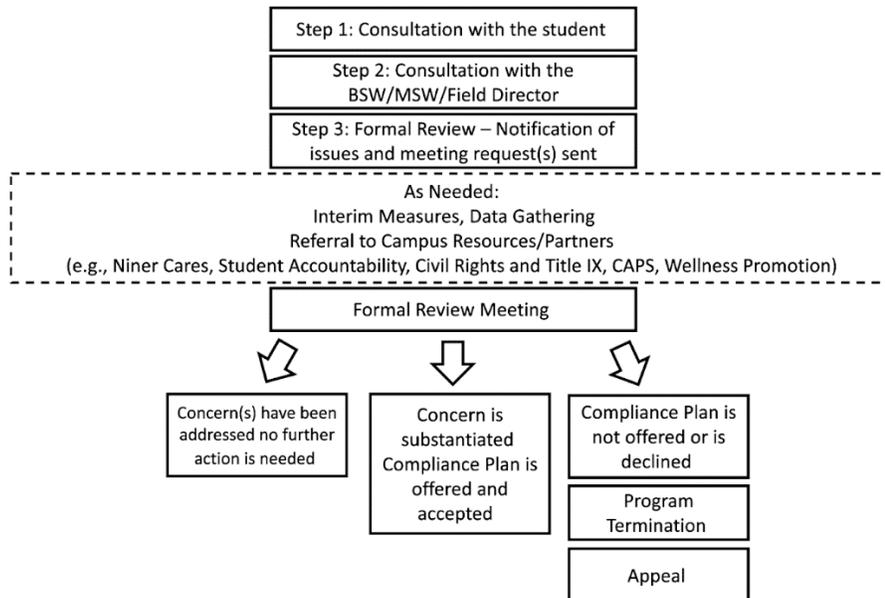
The SSW will follow the outlined Reinstatement and Readmission policies for undergraduate and graduate students in the Division of Academic Affairs and Graduate School, respectively.

Students returning to field placement after suspension, reinstatement, or readmission should refer to the policy on Returning to Field Placement in the current Field Education Handbook.

### Exceptions to the Multi-Step Resolution Process

University policies and procedures take precedence over the Multi-Step Resolution process. Violations of the University-level Code of Student Responsibility - Policy 406 and The Code of Student Academic Integrity warrant immediate action and are addressed through University procedures. In addition, there may be some other student conduct issues that warrant immediate action (skipping Steps 1 and 2). It is within the purview of the BSW/MSW/Field Program Director to proceed to an immediate Formal Review (Step 3) in such cases.

## Multi-Step Resolution Process for Student Academic and Performance Issues Process Flow



### **Special Note about Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication, multiple submission, plagiarism, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Refer to The Code of Student Academic Integrity for definitions of these terms. Course instructors determine whether they believe academic dishonesty has occurred. When the instructor believes academic dishonesty has occurred, University procedures are followed. However, the instructor might believe the student violated the policy on academic integrity unintentionally. In a case where a violation appears to be unintentional, the instructor can attempt to coach the student on how to avoid the problem in the future, rather than immediately reporting the violation. As part of the coaching process, the instructor can offer the student an opportunity to remedy the concern such as re-submitting work for a reduced grade. If the issue is not resolved through the coaching process, a pattern persists, or if the instructor believes the student intentionally committed academic dishonesty, then the instructor will follow the procedures outlined in University Policy #407.

### **Special Note about Student Impairment**

Students experiencing substance abuse or other mental health challenges that interfere with their academic and/or field work should seek consultation with their faculty advisor. Students are also encouraged to seek support from CAPS (<https://caps.uncc.edu/>), that provides resources, services, or referrals to appropriate facilities in the community. If a faculty member or student suspects impairment of a colleague, please refer to the NASW Code of Ethics 2.08 and 4.05 (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/>), University Policy 711 (<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-711>), and/or the Multi-Step Resolution Process for guidance on remedial actions.

## **Student-Initiated Grievance Procedures**

### **Student Concerns about an Instructor**

Students might experience concerns with their course instructor. The student should follow a multi-step process for resolving concerns about a course instructor.

**Step 1. Consultation with the Instructor** - Approach the instructor and work directly with the instructor to address the concern using a problem-solving approach - A problem-solving approach means the student has identified a specific behavior of concern, communicates constructively and respectfully with the instructor about the specific concern, and, devises a specific plan for resolving the concern. It is the student's responsibility to document the concern, the meeting time, and the proposed plan for resolving the concern or clearing up misunderstandings. It is strongly recommended that the student communicate the outcome of the meeting via email to the instructor; this serves as an opportunity to thank the instructor for being responsive, clearing up the outcome of the meeting, and documenting that the issue was addressed.

**Step 2. Consultation with the MSW Program Director** - If the concern remains unresolved after Step 1, the student can make an appointment to speak to the MSW Program Director.. Copies of written communication with the instructor about the student's concern will be helpful. The MSW Program Director will suggest an alternative solution to the concern. At Step 2, it is the MSW Program Director's responsibility to document the concern, the details about the student meeting, and the proposed plan for resolving the concern. The student will carry out the alternative solution. For instances when the MSW Program Director is also the Instructor, the School of Social Work Director (or designee) will be consulted.

**Step 3. Joint Meeting** - If the concern is still unresolved after Step 2, then the student, the Instructor, and the MSW Program Director (or alternate) will meet jointly to discuss a solution. All parties will arrive at a consensus solution. It is the MSW Program Director's responsibility to provide written documentation of the meeting and the consensus solution. For instances when the MSW Program Director is also the Instructor, the School of Social Work Director (or designee) will be consulted.

**Step 4. Formal Grievance** - If Steps 1 through 3 do not resolve the issue, the student might consider a formal grievance. Information related to student grievance policies and procedures can be found at: <http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-411>. *Students are free to file a grievance at any time*, but following Steps 1 through 3 is a way to ensure the Dean of Students Office that the student has taken reasonable steps to resolve their concerns.

**Exception to Steps 1 through 4.**

Some instructor conduct warrants immediate attention. This includes intentional intimidation of students, harassment, disregarding student confidentiality, blatant discrimination based on student characteristics, or threats of harm to students. These behaviors should be reported immediately to the MSW Program Director (or alternate). For instances when the MSW Program Director is also the Instructor, the School of Social Work Director (or designee) will be consulted. All instances of this conduct result in an immediate Joint Meeting (Step 3). The MSW Program Director will be kept apprised of the case.

**Special Note about Student Programmatic Feedback**

Students are encouraged to provide feedback about the program to their MSW Committee Representative, to be discussed during Committee Meetings. Students are also encouraged to participate in the end of year surveys.

**Additional University Procedures**

The School of Social Work follows all University grievance procedures. Students are encouraged to click the links to read relevant policies and procedures in their entirety.

**University Policy 403:** In order to maintain a harmonious relationship between The University of North Carolina at Charlotte and its students, it is the policy of the University to provide for the settlement of problems and differences through orderly grievance procedures. Every student shall have the right to present their problem, in accordance with the procedures established, in order to seek redress free from interference, coercion, restraint, discrimination, or reprisal. The following procedures have been established to address areas of concern to students:

- [Discriminatory personal conduct](#)--violations of [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the Education Amendments](#)
- [University Policy 411, Student Grievance Procedure](#)-applies to alleged discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity and expression), age, national origin, or disability as well as problems arising in the relationship between a student and the University that are not governed by other specific grievance procedures
- [University Policy 406, Code of Student Responsibility, Chapter 8, Sexual Misconduct Complaint Procedures](#) (Replacing [Sexual Harassment Policies and Grievance Procedures](#) as they relate to student-on-student sexual harassment)
- Student conduct procedures under [The Code of Student Responsibility and the Code of Student Academic Integrity](#)
- Appeals from denials of admission or readmission to the University under [Admission Appeals Process](#)
- Review of decisions concerning [residency status, deposits, tuition, and fees](#)
- [University Policy 410, Policy and Procedure for Student Appeals of Final Course Grades](#)
- [Undergraduate student academic appeal and grievance procedures](#)
- [Graduate student academic and termination appeals](#)
- Serious grievances related to the [student's education records](#)
- Grievances related to [delivery of special services to students with disabilities](#)

### **Special Note about Sexual Harassment**

All students are required to abide by the UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy (<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-502>), including the policy on Responsible Use of University Computing and Electronic Communication Resources (<http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps66.html>). Sexual harassment, as defined in the UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy, is prohibited, even when carried out through computers or other electronic communications systems, including course-based chat rooms or message boards. Please see the University policy on reporting sexual harassment and sexual misconduct

[http://unccdso.uncc.edu/org/officeofstudentconduct/Sexual\\_Misconduct](http://unccdso.uncc.edu/org/officeofstudentconduct/Sexual_Misconduct)

Students who allege sexual harassment and sexual misconduct by their instructor, students, faculty, or staff are free to report and address this conduct through the various

reporting methods available at the link provided above.

### **Student Termination by the University**

The University maintains the right to terminate a student's enrollment in a course for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to: course schedule changes, course cancellation due to low enrollment, or the student's non-fulfillment of course prerequisites, academic suspension, suspension for violation of Policy 406 - The Code of Student Responsibility, or suspension in violation of Policy 407 - The Code of Student Academic Integrity.

If the student's enrollment at the University has been terminated, an automatic termination from the MSW Program also results.

The student may invoke University Policy 411 - Student Grievance Procedure, within seven (7) business days of the receipt of the written notice of termination from the School of Social Work. The notice can be found at: <http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-411>. Otherwise, the student's termination is final.

### **MSW Student Reinstatement after Suspension**

The Graduate Catalog (<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/catalog>) includes the policies and rules that govern graduate studies at UNC Charlotte. It is updated annually.

A student who has been suspended from the Graduate School and/or a program of study may appeal his/her suspension. The student cannot continue in the program until he/she is reinstated. After notification of suspension is received, the student initiates the appeal procedure by submitting a "Suspension Appeal Form" to the MSW Program Director explaining any extenuating circumstances. The student must also include a plan for remedying academic and/or conduct concerns. The "Suspension Appeal Form" is available on the "Forms" page (<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/forms>) of the Graduate School website.

The UNC Charlotte Graduate School's procedures for appealing an academic suspension or termination for the purpose of reinstatement can be found at <https://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/suspension-and-termination-appeals>

If the Graduate Program Director is required to make a recommendation regarding reinstatement (i.e. - letter of support for Category 1 appeal, Suspension Appeal form), the Assistant Director of the School of Social Work will be consulted with before the Graduate program Director makes their recommendation. The Field Director, the student's Academic

Advisor, the Admissions Committee and/or previous course instructors may be consulted if additional information is needed to make the determination. Even if the MSW Program Director supports reinstatement, the final decision rests with the Graduate School, not the School of Social Work. If the Graduate School approves the request, the MSW Program will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of any remediation plan.

### **Other Important University, College, and School of Social Work Policies**

#### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

No otherwise qualified student shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the School of Social Work. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation to provide equal opportunity to meet academic criteria for professional behavior and scholastic performance. Any otherwise qualified student with a protected disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify the UNC Charlotte Office of Disability Services and provide documentation as needed. The Office of Disability Services will work with the faculty member(s) on how to accommodate the student. Contact information and resources for the Office of Disability Services is listed below:

- Disability Services website: <https://ds.uncc.edu/>
- Non-Discrimination on the Basis of a Disability - University Policy 501.1-  
<https://legal.uncc.edu/revisions/2014-11-04/new-policy-501.1-nondiscrimination-basis-disability-regulation>
- Disability Services phone number: 704-687-0040

#### **University Code of Student Responsibility**

The purpose of the Code of Student Responsibility (the Code) is to protect the campus community and to maintain an environment conducive to learning (Introductory statement from the UNC Charlotte brochure about the Code of Student Responsibility). The entire document may be found at <https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-406>

#### **Academic Integrity**

All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action. Students are expected to submit their own work, either as individuals or contributors to a group assignment. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are provided in the Code book, which is available online at: <http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html>. Note: Faculty may ask students to produce identification at examinations and may require students to demonstrate that graded assignments completed outside of class are their own work. Faculty are strongly encouraged to adhere to the academic integrity policy when there are suspected incidents of plagiarism. Students may wish to seek additional information about the academic integrity policy should an issue or concern

arise.

### **English as a Second Language**

If the student speaks English as a second language, the student should inform course instructors as soon as possible.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte affirms that its educational and employment decisions must be based on the abilities and qualifications of individuals and may not be based on irrelevant factors, including personal characteristics, that have no connection with academic abilities or job performance. Therefore, the University prohibits discrimination and harassment in its educational and employment decisions and provides equal opportunities for all members of the University community and for all those seeking to join the University community.

The following factors may not form the basis for educational or employment-related decisions: race; color; religion, including belief and non-belief; sex, including but not limited to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition, and parenting; sexual orientation; actual or perceived gender identity, including but not limited to gender expression, transition status (including but not limited to physical transition), transgender status, and gender nonconformity; age; national origin; physical or mental disability; political affiliation; veteran status; and genetic information.

In March 2016, the North Carolina General Assembly and Governor Pat McCrory enacted the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, also known as House Bill 2. This law replaces local nondiscrimination policies with a statewide policy. The University and the School of Social Work appreciate the serious concerns many have regarding this law. We want to assure every current and future member of our community that UNC Charlotte recognizes and values the inherent dignity and worth of each individual student, employee, and visitor.

### **Gender-Neutral Bathrooms**

One of the requirements of the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act is that persons must use the bathroom that reflects the gender on their birth certificate rather than their gender identity. UNC Charlotte will continue to label multiple-occupancy restrooms and changing facilities for single-sex use with appropriate signage. However, in 2014, UNC Charlotte undertook an initiative to provide single-occupancy, gender-neutral restrooms across campus to make selecting a restroom easier for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors, including transgender individuals, families, and individuals with disabilities who may have an attendant. A list of gender-neutral restrooms, along with maps to those restrooms and a list of additional planned restrooms, can be found at the link here.

<http://legal.uncc.edu/restrooms>

### **Sexual Harassment**

All students are required to abide by the UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy (<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-502>), including the policy on Responsible Use of University Computing and Electronic Communication Resources (<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-307>). Sexual harassment, as defined in the UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy, is prohibited, even when carried out through computers or other electronic communications systems, including course-based chat rooms or message boards.

### **Religious Accommodation**

It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious observances on which they will be absent by submitting a Request for Religious Accommodation Form (<https://diversity.uncc.edu/campus-diversity-resources/religious-observances/request-religious-accommodation-form>) to their instructor prior to the census date for enrollment for a given semester <https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-409>. The census date for each semester (typically the tenth day of instruction) can be found in UNC Charlotte's Academic Calendar (<https://registrar.uncc.edu/printable-calendar>).

### **CHHS Laptop Policy**

All students, graduate and undergraduate, taking College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) courses are required to possess a laptop with webcam and microphone. Our courses may require a laptop or other compliant device for in-class assignments.

We recommend the following minimum configurations:

#### ***Windows.***

- Windows 10 Operating System
- 1.8 Ghz or higher
- i7 Processor
- 16 GB Ram
- 512 GB Hard Drive
- Web Camera (internal or external)
- Microphone

*Note.* Chromebooks do not satisfy this policy.

#### ***Apple.***

- iMac Pro or Macbook Pro - High Sierra (Mac OS 10.13) Operating System
- 2.0 GHz or higher
- i7 Processor
- 16 GB Ram
- 512 GB Hard Drive

Adopted by SSW Faculty: August 2022

- Web Camera (internal or external)
- Microphone

NinerTech offers compliant models at student discounted pricing that may represent a savings over regular commercial purchase. Access the NinerTech Computer Store at <https://ninertech.uncc.edu/>.

Students may avail themselves of loaner equipment such as that provided via Atkins Library (<https://library.uncc.edu/atkins/laptoplendingdetails>), but should not rely on that option for all of their computing needs. This requirement extends to non-majors, pre-majors and post-baccalaureate students enrolling in any of our CHHS courses and to students enrolling in courses delivered by CHHS faculty under a designation or cross-list not associated with one of our programs.

End of Manual. Revised August 2022.