



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



**2026-2027 DOCTOR OF SOCIAL WORK (DSW)
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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Introduction To the University of Maryland School of Social Work

Welcome to the University of Maryland School of Social Work's 2026–2027 Doctor of Social Work (DSW) Student Handbook

We're excited to support you on this important step in your professional journey. This handbook is designed to be a helpful resource throughout the year, offering clear information about program requirements, policies, procedures, and the many services available to you. It also reflects the values and expectations that guide our School and the social work profession.

As a member of our academic community, you are expected to follow the policies and procedures of both the School of Social Work (SSW) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). The handbook is updated annually before the start of the fall semester and applies to all students enrolled during that academic year.

Mission and Goals

Mission of the SSW Program

The University of Maryland School of Social Work's mission is to develop practitioners, leaders, and scholars who advance the well-being of people and communities and promote social justice. As national leaders, we create and use knowledge for education, service innovation, and policy development.

All educational programs and activities at the University of Maryland School of Social Work are informed by our mission

Mission of the DSW Program

The University of Maryland's Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program empowers experienced social workers to become innovative scholar-practitioners. Through a rigorous, evidence informed curriculum, students become ethical leaders, innovative and reflective educators, and highly skilled and innovative advanced clinical practitioners. Grounded in social work's core values of social justice, personal integrity, and valuing human dignity, the program emphasizes excellence in leadership, clinical practice, supervision, teaching pedagogy, and applied research. Graduates are prepared to use evidence-based practices that challenge inequities and drive meaningful and transformative changes for individuals, families and/or communities.

Goals of the DSW Program

Graduates of the Doctorate in Social Work program will:

- Integrate advanced theory and practice to strengthen psychotherapy and social work services for individuals, families, and communities across diverse populations and settings.
- Apply and critically evaluate biopsychosocial and social work theories to guide client-centered care and processes of change.
- Demonstrate sophisticated use of self and reflective practice to enhance therapeutic

- relationships and ethical decision-making in complex clinical encounters.
- Employ advanced clinical modalities including modalities of interest or that are relevant to each student’s work and context such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, interpersonal psychotherapy, EMDR, and other evidence-based approaches to address diverse client needs.
- Contribute to innovation in practice by developing integrative clinical, educational, and organizational frameworks and approaches that can move social work practice forward.
- Teach and mentor effectively by designing and delivering advanced clinical social work curricula, utilizing competency-based education strategies, case-based learning, and simulation methods for academic and organizational training environments.
- Provide leadership in supervision and consultation i.e. applying evidence-based frameworks and ethical principles to individual and group supervision in clinical, organizational and educational contexts.
- Advance research-informed practice and practice-informed research by developing expertise in qualitative methods and program evaluation strategies to evaluate interventions, inform program development, and contribute to scholarly knowledge.
- Cultivate leadership capacity to influence clinical practice, education, and organizational systems, while promoting innovation and equity in service delivery.

Core Values

As social work professionals, we hold ourselves to high ethical, academic, community, and professional standards. We firmly believe that every individual within our community, whether student, staff, faculty, or administrator, possesses agency and should be treated with the utmost dignity and respect. By embracing communal accountability, support, and dedication to these principles, we hope to shape both academic experiences and those beyond the classroom by nurturing a compassionate and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive and contribute meaningfully.

We expect that everyone connected to our program, whether student, staff, or faculty, work to uphold the following values embedded within the NASW code of Ethics and our university.

NASW Code of Ethics

1. Service
2. Social justice
3. Dignity and worth of the person
4. Importance of human relationships
5. Integrity
6. Competence

UMB Core Values

1. Respect and integrity
2. Well-being and sustainability
3. Justice and equity
4. Discovery and innovation

Requirements for Success

We believe every student in the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program has the ability to thrive and achieve excellence. Success in the DSW program requires a strong commitment to academic

excellence and professional growth. As a doctoral student, you are expected to engage fully in all aspects of the program and take responsibility for your learning. These expectations reflect the rigor and responsibility inherent in doctoral education and leadership development.

- **Be Present and Engaged**

Attendance and active participation in all scheduled class sessions are essential. Each class builds on prior learning and contributes to the group and promotes advanced-level dialogue that defines doctoral education.

- **Commit to Independent Scholarship**

The DSW curriculum is rigorous and designed to challenge you as a scholar-practitioner. In addition to class time, you should plan for substantial independent work, including reading, research, writing, and completing assignments between your monthly in class sessions. Doctoral-level study requires consistent engagement beyond scheduled meetings.

- **Manage Competing Demands Thoughtfully**

Balancing academic responsibilities with professional and personal commitments requires planning and flexibility. While the program is designed for students with full-time work and family responsibilities, the workload is significant. Consider how you will prioritize your academic obligations to ensure success. To support self-care and intentional rest, (an ethical mandate in our profession) we have designed the curriculum to include summers off. We hope this structure provides opportunities for balance amid the rigor of doctoral study.

- **Stay Informed and Connected**

You are responsible for meeting all deadlines and staying current with program communications. Regularly check your university email, monitor announcements on official platforms, and ensure you have reliable access to technology and internet services. Additionally, please reach out to your instructors and the Director, Associate Director, or Program Coordinator if you find you need additional support. We are all here for you!

- **Embrace Professional Standards**

As a member of the social work profession and the academic community, we are all expected to uphold the values, ethics, and policies of the School of Social Work and the University of Maryland, Baltimore. This includes our conduct and interactions with fellow students, instructors, and staff

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Core Expertise and Skills

Our program is guided by the **Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)** core expertise and skills that graduating DSW students are expected to acquire in a practice doctorate program. These competencies represent the advanced behaviors and knowledge that support your development as a scholar-practitioner and leader in the field. They are woven throughout the program and assessed in courses where assignments are intentionally designed to strengthen specific areas of expertise.

The six CSWE core expertise and skills for practice doctorate programs are:

- **Core Expertise and Skill 1:** Advance practice through innovative approaches
- **Core Expertise and Skill 2:** Use and critically evaluate research and knowledge
- **Core Expertise and Skill 3:** Engage in scientific inquiry that reflects doctoral-level scholarship
- **Core Expertise and Skill 4:** Develop and disseminate practice-relevant, research informed knowledge through a variety of channels, such as teaching, scholarship, professional presentations, mentoring, and administration
- **Core Expertise and Skill 5:** Provide leadership in social work practice and/or education
- **Core Expertise and Skill 6:** Develop and maintain substantive expertise in one or more areas of social work practice

Disability and Accessibility at the UMSSW

At the UMSSW, we value accessibility, neurodiversity, and the varied ways in which we embody and physically engage with content and spaces. A commitment to universal design is part of our mission to foster a culture of inclusion and belonging both within our school and our greater society. The UMSSW strives towards a university structure that reduces the need for accommodations for people with disabilities through proactive, inclusive design. You can learn more about our efforts [here](#). Additional information on requesting specific accommodations can be found in our section on UMB policies later in this handbook.

DSW Curriculum and Requirements

DSW Admission Requirements

Admission requirements for the Doctor of Social Work program are guided by CSWE Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Programs and by criteria established by our DSW Program Committee. These standards ensure that applicants are well-prepared for the rigor and depth of doctoral study and positioned for success as scholar-practitioners and leaders in the field.

Applicants must provide the following:

- **Master of Social Work Degree:** Successful completion of an MSW from a CSWE-accredited School of Social Work with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- **Advanced Practice Licensure:** LCSW-C (Maryland) or a comparable advanced clinical license is preferred.
- **Professional Experience:** A minimum of two years of direct practice experience following completion of the MSW.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Three professional references who can speak to your qualifications for doctoral study.
- **Writing Sample:** An original, social work–related document that demonstrates your writing and communication skills.
- **Essay Responses:** Responses to two brief essay questions designed to help us understand how your interests align with the opportunities offered by our curriculum.

- **Official Transcripts:** From all institutions attended for Master's level education.
- **Résumé:** Submitted as part of the application form.

DSW Admission Degree Requirements

- An overall minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for graduation. No course may be taken without having received credit for its prerequisite.
- Students must successfully complete a capstone project which will be presented in their final semester as part of the Capstone Project Lab. A grade for this course will be determined by the Director and Associate Director of the DSW program in collaboration with each student's capstone advisor.
- All students must submit a graduation application during their final semester. More information can be found [on the Registrar's website](#), including the application deadline.

Program Options

The DSW program offers a single program option focused on advanced practice (in the areas of clinical methods, leadership, teaching, supervision/mentorship, and applied research). Upon admission, all students follow a unified curriculum designed to support learning and professional growth.

The program is fully in-person and requires attendance for four weekend classroom sessions (approximately one per month), Friday through Sunday, during both the Fall and Spring semesters. In addition, students participate in a one-week intensive held in late summer of their first year. A calendar of required class dates is available on our program webpage to help students plan

Curriculum Overview

DSW Plan of Study

Our full plan of study is listed below along with the credit hours for each course. Please note that all classes are 3-credits apart from the Professional Development Seminar Series each semester, which is 1-credit. In total, the DSW is a 60-credit program completed over three academic years. Please note that this Plan of Study is subject to minor adjustments and updates as the program progresses.

DSW Plan of Study	
Year 1: Fall Semester (10-credits)	
SWCL 800: Opening Intensive: Orientation to Practice, Pedagogy, and Possibility in Advanced DSW Practice	3
SWCL 805: Neuro-Biological Basis of Human Behavior	3
SWCL 810: Philosophy of Science and History of Clinical Practice Theory	3
SWCL 811: Professional Development Seminar Series I	1
Year 1: Spring Semester (10-credits)	
SWCL 815: Psychopharmacology and Complimentary Therapeutics	3
SWCL 820: Adapting Foundational Models for Clinical Practice	3
SWCL 825: Supervision and Mentorship	3

SWCL 811: Professional Development Seminar Series I	1
Year 2: Fall Semester (10-credits)	
SWCL 830: Innovations in Clinical Practice	3
SWCL 835: Leadership in Social Work	3
SWCL 840: Applied Research Methods: Approaches in Clinical Social Work Practice Settings *includes capstone proposal	3
SWCL 812: Professional Development Seminar Series II	1
Year 2: Spring Semester (10-credits)	
SWCL 845: Workplace Law and Policy: Implications for Social Work Leaders	3
SWCL 850: Supervision and Mentorship Lab	3
SWCL 855: Integrative Practice	3
SWCL 812: Professional Development Seminar Series II	1
Year 3: Fall Semester (10-credits)	
SWCL 860: Social Work Teaching and Training: Pedagogical Theory and Practice	3
SWCL 865: Theory-to-Practice Clinical Simulation Lab	3
SWCL 870: Capstone Project Seminar	3
SWCL 813: Professional Development Seminar Series III	1
Year 3: Spring Semester (10-credits)	
SWCL 875: Course Curriculum Design Lab	3
SWCL 880: Leadership Lab	3
SWCL 885: Capstone Project Lab	3
SWCL 813: Professional Development Seminar Series III	1

All DSW courses prepare graduates to lead organizations that are resilient, values-driven, and responsive to the evolving landscape of practice, education, law and policy. The content covered represents research-based frameworks grounded in peer-reviewed studies, historical analysis, and social science methodologies. Our courses serve as a scholarly tool for examining systemic patterns, disparities, and related phenomena. This body of work supports critical inquiry and evidence-based analysis within the bounds of sound scholarship.

Curriculum Areas

Each course in the DSW curriculum maps onto one of our 5 “series” which represent core areas of curricular focus within our program. A list of our series and the connected courses are included below. These series are designed to support students in elevating advanced practice knowledge while engaging in innovation and practical application through a culminating interactive lab course associated with each series.

Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series

- SWCL 805: Neurobiological Basis of Human Behavior
- SWCL 810: Philosophy of Science and History of Clinical Practice Theory
- SWCL 815: Psychopharmacology and Complimentary Therapies
- SWCL 820: Adapting Foundational Models for Clinical Practice
- SWCL 830: Innovations in Clinical Practice
- SWCL 855: Integrative Practice

- SWCL 865: Theory-to-Practice Clinical Simulation Lab

Leadership Series

- SWCL 835: Leadership in Social Work
- SWCL 845: Law and Social Work-Place Policy
- SWCL 880: Leadership Lab

Teaching Pedagogy Series

- SWCL 860: Social Work Teaching and Training: Pedagogical Theory and Practice
- SWCL 875: Course and Curriculum Design Lab

Supervision and Mentorship Series

- SWCL 825: Supervision and Mentorship
- SWCL 850: Supervision and Mentorship Lab

Applied Research Series

- SWCL 840: Applied Research Methods: Approaches in Clinical Social Work Practice Settings
- SWCL 870: Capstone Project Seminar
- SWCL 885: Capstone Project Lab

Note: Our *Opening Intensive* and *Professional Development Seminar Series* courses include content situated within all five of our core curricular areas.

DSW Course Catalog

A comprehensive listing of DSW course descriptions is listed below.

Year 1: Fall Semester

SWCL 800: Opening Intensive: Orientation to Practice, Pedagogy, and Possibility in Advanced DSW Practice: 3-credits

This opening intensive course introduces students to the DSW program, offering a comprehensive orientation to advanced practice, pedagogical frameworks, and the transformative possibilities of doctoral education. Students will engage with core models such as the Social Change Ecosystem and Universal Design, exploring their application in social work education and practice. The course will include an overview of the current landscape of social work education and professional pathways for DSW graduates. It also introduces essential doctoral competencies, including scholarly writing, research processes, and the academic resources available to support student collaboration and success.

SWCL 805: Neuro-Biological Basis of Human Behavior: Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series, 3-credits

This course will provide an overview of the neurobiology shaping behaviors that inform clinical social work practice. Students will explore the impact of genetics, neuroanatomy and physiology in the etiology of emotional disorders and shaping behavior. The course will review basic neuroanatomy, behavior physiology, and neurodevelopment. The course explores the mind and body connection in moderating a person's mental health and psychological wellbeing. Special attention will be given to the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics and trauma theory including

the NMT metrics of sensory integration, self-regulation, relational function, and cognition.

SWCL 810: Philosophy of Science and History of Clinical Practice Theory: Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series, 3-credits

This course offers an integrated exploration of the philosophical foundations of scientific inquiry and the historical development of clinical practice theories within social work. Students will examine the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin evidence-based psychological and behavioral science, focusing on how knowledge is constructed, validated, and applied in practice. Key controversies in the philosophy of science such as the role of values in research, measurement limitations, and strategies of inference will be critically analyzed alongside approaches to theory development and testing. Building on this foundation, the course traces the evolution of influential clinical theories from the early to mid-twentieth century, including drive theory, ego psychology, object relations, self-psychology, attachment theory, family systems, and cognitive/behavioral approaches. Drawing from original texts, students will critically assess each theory's core constructs and assumptions, considering their relevance to contemporary practice and alignment with social work's values, ethics, and commitment to social justice. Through scholarly engagement and reflective analysis, students will deepen their understanding of how scientific and theoretical paradigms shape clinical practice, research, and the broader mission of social work, and how these contexts inform their own areas of practice.

SWCL 811, SCWL 812, SCWL 813: Professional Development Seminar Series: 1-credit per semester

This 1-credit seminar brings together students from all cohorts during each intensive weekend for a shared professional development experience. The course deepens students' exposure to advanced practice topics not fully addressed elsewhere in the curriculum, allowing them to select areas of interest that support their individualized professional goals. At least one session each semester will offer structured opportunities for student input, feedback, and collaborative discussion related to the program's curriculum, culture, and climate, while modeling program evaluation and collaborative decision-making strategies. Through these collective learning experiences, the seminar fosters community building, strengthens cross-cohort relationships, and supports a culture of mutuality and shared leadership within the program. *Note: Students participate in this seminar every semester, promoting ongoing engagement and cross-cohort connection throughout the DSW program*

Year 1: Spring Semester

SWCL 815: Psychopharmacology and Complimentary Therapeutics: Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series, 3-credits

Through this course in psychopharmacology, students will be introduced to the basics of pharmacotherapy and medication-assisted treatment addressing common DSM-5 diagnoses including debates around the biochemical underpinnings contributing to mental/behavioral health. Key medications with their clinical indications, symptom management, and dosage will be addressed. The course will review commonly used medications to treat mood disorders, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, personality disorders and schizophrenia. The course will emphasize the mechanism, action, contraindications, interactions with other medications and side effects of each class of medications. The sociocultural context relevant to psychopharmacological

interventions including access, demographic disparities, social determinants, cultural beliefs about medication, and their use as a complement to psychotherapeutic interventions will also be discussed. Students will be introduced to complementary therapeutic approaches around somatic practices, nutritional psychiatry, and the brain-body connection as part of an integrative framework for behavioral health care.

SWCL 820: Adapting Foundational Models for Clinical Practice: Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series, 3-credits

In this seminar-style course, students will explore in depth the three major psychotherapeutic frameworks that have historically guided clinical work in the United States: psychoanalysis / psychodynamic / relational, behavioral, and cognitive models. Students will examine the origins of these modalities, including the life experiences of the creators and the sociopolitical context in which these techniques emerged, and the core therapeutic skills and interventions associated with their implementation will be demonstrated and practiced. Students will also explore the ways in which these modalities have impacted conceptualizations of social justice in clinical practice. While these modalities have been utilized for quite some time, students will explore innovative platforms through which they are or could be delivered (for example using telehealth platforms, web or phone-based applications, and other mechanisms that might expand access to behavioral health services). Individually or in collaborative teams, students will choose a specific framework connected to one of these three streams of psychotherapy, concentrating on its application within their own area of focus or population of interest, including any needed adaptations and/or innovations to better meet the needs of the population or communities with which they work.

SWCL 825: Supervision and Mentorship: Supervision and Mentorship Series, 3-credits

This course explores the principles, structures, and practices of supervision, consultation, and mentoring in Social Work across the continuum of professional development. Students will examine a range of supervisory approaches and mentorship frameworks, both formal and informal, alongside the theoretical concepts that inform these practices. Emphasis will be placed on integrating these models into work with students, supervisees, and mentees. Individual and small group supervision models will be demonstrated, practiced, and discussed in depth. Strategies for teaching and mentorship and coaching within multiple community settings will also be explored. Through simulations across academic and practice-based environments, students will identify and begin to refine their preferred approaches to supervision and mentorship.

Year 2: Fall Semester

SWCL 830: Innovations in Clinical Practice: Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series, 3-credits

In this seminar-style course students will build on Adapting Foundational Models for Clinical Practice, applying a parallel framework of exploration, inquiry, and application/simulation to engage with a variety of clinical modalities that have developed as part of a newer “third wave,” in clinical work. This wave represents a move toward more integrative practice models that center concepts like meaning making, trauma-informed care, individual and collective narratives, cultural humility, critical consciousness, mindfulness, relationship skills, the brain-body connection, and/or

values-centered action. In this context, models such as Narrative Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Schema Therapy, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy, Internal Family Systems Therapy, Animal Assisted Therapies, Creative Arts Approaches, and Healing Circles will be explored. Individually or in collaborative teams, students will choose a modality in which they would like to develop deeper knowledge and skill, concentrating on its application within their own area of focus or population of interest, including any needed adaptations and/or innovations to better meet the needs of the population or communities with which they work.

SWCL 835: Leadership in Social Work: Leadership Series, 3-credits

This course is designed to assist students in developing a personal philosophy and approach to leadership. The course will introduce historical and current theories on leadership, reflect on the various contexts in which leadership skills are exercised and consider leadership practices in multicultural environments. While there are many models of leadership development and practice, there is growing interest in human-centered leadership that emphasizes meaningfulness, equity, and impact. Research on leadership challenges and development highlight the need for leaders to be able to “futurize and humanize” their organizations, with a focus on workforce support for wellbeing and development, and agility and strategic advocacy for change in the work environment. The health and performance of the human services sector depends upon equitably equipping potential, emerging, and current leaders with relevant, meaningful, and impactful leadership skills. This course will align and interconnect leadership theory and development with leadership practice in the real world at the individual, relational and collective, and organizational levels.

SWCL 840: Applied Research Methods: Approaches in Social Work Practice Settings: Applied Research Series, 3-credits

This course introduces students to applied research in social work, with a particular emphasis on qualitative methods, implementation and translational science, and program evaluation. Students will explore six qualitative approaches commonly used in social work inquiry: 1) content analysis, 2) template analyses, 3) grounded theory, 4) participatory action research, 5) indigenous and decolonizing methods and 6) immersion approaches. Students will learn the key frameworks of implementation science to improve the adoption, fidelity, and sustainability of evidence-based and evidence-informed practices, and translational science strategies for translating research into practice. Students will also delve into multiple approaches to program evaluation including process, outcome/accountability, and impact evaluation, as well as the utilization of evaluation results in practice and policymaking. These methods illustrate key differences in research purposes, epistemologies, ethics, and methods. Students will learn to apply these approaches effectively within their own practice settings, considering both methodological rigor and contextual relevance. As part of the course, students will develop their Capstone proposal, including a comprehensive literature review and project timeline, laying the foundation for their final doctoral project which will exemplify applied-research as a practitioner-scholar.

SWCL 845: Workplace Law and Policy: Implications for Social Work Leaders: Leadership Series, 3-credits

This course provides students with an advanced understanding of the legal and policy frameworks that shape workplace environments in social work organizations and related settings. With a focus on employment law, civil rights protections, labor policies, and organizational compliance, students will critically examine how workplace law intersects with ethical practice, leadership, and advocacy in social work. As future leaders, administrators, and change agents, students will be responsible for creating organizational cultures that are both legally compliant and aligned with the core values of the profession

SWCL 850: Supervision and Mentorship Lab: Supervision and Mentorship Series, 3-credits

This experiential lab course serves as the culminating experience in the *Supervision and Mentorship Series* of the DSW curriculum. Building on foundational knowledge from the Supervision and Mentorship course, the lab will further explore coaching frameworks, ethical considerations, and strategies for adapting supervisory styles to diverse professional and community contexts. The course emphasizes experiential learning in forms of coaching, with students engaging in live supervision and mentorship with actual supervisees or mentees. At least one supervision or mentorship session will be recorded and used for structured consultation, collaborative learning, skill refinement and evaluation within the cohort. Through guided practice, peer dialogue, and faculty support, students will codify their personal approach to supervision and mentorship, preparing them to lead, teach, and coach in advanced clinical, community-based and academic settings.

SWCL 855: Integrative Practice: Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series, 3-credits

Traditionally, clinical education has emphasized the delivery of therapeutic services through specific frameworks or modalities. In practice, however, most clinicians develop their own integrative style, drawing on a range of clinical tools, philosophies, and interventions to meet the unique and diverse needs of the individuals and communities with whom they work (Zarbo et al., 2016). Openness to integrative, flexible, culturally responsive practice aligns with efforts to decenter rigid, medicalized perspectives and respond to people and communities within their specific sociocultural contexts. This course examines diverse frameworks for integrative practice, encouraging students to critically evaluate and research effective methodologies within their chosen area of focus. Through inquiry and innovation, students will propose novel approaches to enhance the efficacy of integrative practice across settings. Students will engage with multiple forms of evidence, including scholarly research, clinical resources, training workshops, community narratives, and collaborative feedback. Each student will develop a training guide, demonstration video, or scholarly paper draft that applies and adapts clinical modalities to the sociocultural context of the populations they work alongside emphasizing integrative, person or community-centered practice.

Year 3: Fall Semester

SWCL 860: Social Work Teaching and Training: Pedagogical Theory and Practice: Teaching Pedagogy Series, 3-Credits

The aim of this course is to provide students with a basic foundation in the theory and practice of social work teaching. The main focus of the course is to create, to the extent possible, the

simulation of real-world teaching situations designed to help students develop their teaching practice through a process of critical reflection, integration, and application. The course covers social work teaching at both the BSW and MSW levels. The course includes theories of andragogy and reflective practice, course design and lesson planning, critical analysis of and use of teaching technologies, teaching methodologies and techniques to create inclusive classrooms and engage students in self-regulated learning, methods for assessment and evaluation of students, and ethical considerations and current issues in social work education. Readings are drawn from social work education literature as well as from interprofessional perspectives, including teaching and learning in higher education. Students will each have the opportunity to design and teach a micro-lesson for collaboration and feedback, which they will be able to further expand, enhance and develop in the lab course associated with this series.

SWCL 865: Theory-to-Practice Clinical Simulation Lab: Advanced Clinical Theory and Methods Series, 3-credits

This experiential lab course serves as the culmination of the *Advanced Clinical Practice Series*, providing students with the opportunity to apply, refine, and innovate clinical approaches developed throughout the curriculum. Through in-vivo, simulation-based learning, students will deepen their integration of theory into practice, with a focus on adaptation, creativity, and responsiveness to diverse clinical contexts. The lab emphasizes the application of theoretical frameworks to real-time clinical encounters, while also fostering self-reflection, cultural humility, ethical decision-making, and the intentional use of self in practice. Students will engage in simulations that mirror both in-person and virtual/telehealth settings, allowing for exploration of effective consultation and implementation strategies across modalities. This course encourages trial and error, innovation, and critical dialogue, supporting students in their development as scholar-practitioners prepared to lead, teach, and practice in dynamic clinical environments.

SWCL 870: Capstone Project Seminar: Applied Research Series, 3-credits

This seminar builds on the approved Capstone proposal developed in the *Applied Research* course and serves as the bridge between planning and completion. Students will transition from conceptualization to active implementation of their doctoral Capstone projects, applying advanced research and practice skills in real-world contexts. The course provides structured guidance and collaborative support as students carry out their projects, document progress, and address challenges that arise during implementation. Emphasis will be placed on writing, analysis, and interpretation, as well as integrating advisor feedback to strengthen the scholarly and practice-based contributions of the work. By the end of the seminar, students will have substantially advanced their projects and prepared for the final stage of refinement and presentation in the *Capstone Project Lab*.

Year 3: Spring Semester

SWCL 875: Course and Curriculum Design Lab: Teaching Pedagogy Series, 3-Credits

This lab course builds on the *Social Work Teaching and Training* course to complete the Teaching Pedagogy series. Designed to simulate real-world teaching environments, this course supports students in refining their teaching practice through critical reflection, integration of pedagogical theory, and hands-on application. Students will design and implement a social work training series

or course aligned with their area of practice innovation. Emphasis will be placed on curriculum development, instructional design, and the adaptation of teaching strategies to diverse learning contexts and audiences. The lab will include structured teaching simulations, peer coaching, and instructor observation to foster ongoing growth as educators and trainers. Through iterative feedback and collaborative consultation, students will enhance their ability to deliver engaging, inclusive, and evidence-informed instruction. This course supports the development of a professional teaching identity and prepares students to contribute meaningfully to social work education and training in academic, clinical, and community-based settings.

SWCL 880: Leadership Lab: Leadership Series, 3-credits

This experiential leadership lab course serves as the culminating experience in the *Leadership Series* of the DSW curriculum. Building on foundational knowledge from the Leadership course, the lab is designed to be experiential, reflective, and practice-oriented with a strong emphasis on real-world application within diverse settings. A variety of learning application exercises will include mapping key moments that shaped leadership identity, weekly journal reflections on leadership challenges and growth, active listening circles and exercises to build empathy and presence, using an established model for change to lead a mock change initiative, identifying a real organizational challenge and apply leadership learnings to address it, and storytelling to share growth and insights.

SWCL 885: Capstone Project Lab: Applied Research Series, 3-credits

This lab course serves as a culmination of each student's DSW education - representing the final component of the *Applied Research Series* and a student's last academic milestone before graduation. Designed to support the completion and presentation of the doctoral Capstone project, the course provides structured guidance and collaborative support throughout the final stages of the process. In the first half of the course, students will focus on application of their learning to finalize their Capstone projects, including writing, analysis, interpretation, and integration of feedback from their advisor. Faculty will provide individualized consultation to support the refinement of each student's work. In the second half, students will formally present their completed projects to peers and faculty, demonstrating the scholarly and practice-based contributions of their work, lessons learned in the process, and how the project connects to their future goals.

Capstone Requirement

Throughout their matriculation, students will work on an original and comprehensive Capstone Project which integrates the knowledge and skills they have developed, strengthened, and refined throughout the course of the program. This project should position students as collaborative leaders, contributing new ideas, frameworks, or services to their area of focus in the realms of clinical education, leadership, and/or practice.

Students will work on their Capstone Project supported by a Capstone Advisor who is deeply engrained in the community connected to each student's area of focus. The student will be responsible for identifying their advisor, who must hold a doctorate degree and may be affiliated with the School of Social Work or an external community member with expertise connected to

the student's area of focus.

There are three options for the format of Capstone Projects that students may choose:

- The creation of an interactive web-based training that disseminates innovative clinical knowledge and learning opportunities in their area of focus.
- First-authorship of a scholarly paper published (or publishable) in an academic journal that contributes new clinical discourse in their area of focus.
- Development and (initial) implementation of a new program designed to address unmet needs within their area of focus and that contributes to individual or community healing, wellbeing, or access to knowledge in the clinical realm.

Each student, in consultation with their Applied Research Instructor will seek approval for their Capstone Project from the DSW Directors. The Capstone Project Proposal will be created as the final deliverable from their Applied Research course. The proposal will include a literature review, an outline of the proposed project, an explanation of the needs addressed by the project, its alignment with social work values and principles, potential impact and significance, and benchmarks of success that can be used for evaluation of the project at the culmination of the Capstone Project Lab. As part of the lab each student will present their project and its impact within a colloquium. Presentations will focus on the collection of work they've undertaken during their time in the DSW program, alignment with social work values, sharing and disseminating accomplishments and learning derived from their Capstone Project; and sharing their plans as they move this work forward. Additional information about the Capstone Project requirements and guidelines for selecting a Capstone Advisor will be outlined in a Capstone Guide for the DSW Program.

DSW Academic and Program Policies

Advising Policy

The advising policy for Doctor of Social Work (DSW) students is designed to foster practitioner-scholar development through structured mentorship, academic guidance, and professional support. Advising is a cornerstone of doctoral-level social work education and reflects the program's commitment to cultivating ethical, innovative, and impactful leaders.

Faculty Advisor Assignment: Upon admission to the program, each student is assigned a faculty advisor who serves as the primary point of contact for academic and professional guidance. Additional mentorship is provided during the Capstone phase to support students in completing this culminating project.

Advising Meetings and Documentation: Advisory meetings occur regularly, at least once per semester, and are documented collaboratively by the advisor and student to track progress, goals, and action steps. These records ensure transparency and continuity throughout the student's academic journey.

Scope of Advising Support

Faculty advisors assist students with:

- Course planning and mastery of advanced social work skills
- Capstone development and scholarly writing
- Teaching preparation and pedagogical strategies
- Leadership growth and professional identity formation
- Ethical decision-making in practice, research, and leadership

Student Engagement: DSW students are expected to engage proactively and reflectively in the advising process, taking ownership of their learning and professional development.

Guiding Principles: Advising practices are culturally responsive and trauma-informed, honoring power dynamics and promoting equity and collaboration in decision-making. Advisors provide guidance on integrating clinical expertise into teaching, research, and leadership within coursework and current employment contexts.

Feedback and Conflict Resolution: Clear feedback mechanisms are in place for all students, along with conflict resolution pathways that emphasize restorative practices. These processes ensure that advising relationships remain constructive and aligned with the program's mission.

Student Feedback and Participation in Program Planning: The School of Social Work has many mechanisms for providing feedback on planning and processes for the broader school. You can expect to receive opportunities to provide feedback after all events at the school, as part of our efforts to assess school and university culture and climate through regular surveys, and as it relates to our school-wide strategic plan. Within the DSW program we encourage students to provide regular and ongoing feedback and to be proactive in coming to us with concerns. There are several ways that we'll ask you to participate in the program planning process so that we can continue to evolve to best meet the needs of our students:

- Our *Professional Development Seminar Series* will bring students from all cohorts together once during each intensive weekend. At least one session per semester will be dedicated to providing intentional and structured opportunities for student input, feedback, and collaboration on both the program's curriculum and the culture and climate within our program and our school. This is part of an intentional process to build community and a sense of collaboration and mutuality within our program.
- Students at any time are encouraged to speak with their faculty advisor regarding any feedback or ideas that can help to enhance the program.
- During orientation all students will be provided with a link to submit anonymous feedback to the DSW administrative team at any time.

Academic Integrity Policy

The University of Maryland School of Social Work is an academic community dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the advancement of social justice. The success of this mission depends on our shared commitment to the highest standards of academic integrity. These principles are not only essential to scholarly work but are also foundational to the social work profession, as reflected in the CSWE National Statement on Research Integrity in Social Work and the NASW

Code of Ethics. As current and future leaders and scholar-practitioners, students are expected to understand and uphold these ethical responsibilities in both academic and professional contexts. This policy is designed to promote these values and prepare you to engage ethically throughout your doctoral studies and beyond.

The following definitions serve as a guide for students when questions arise. They are not exhaustive but outline common forms of academic misconduct:

- **Cheating:** Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. This includes the use of artificial intelligence tools when not explicitly permitted.
- **Plagiarism:** Representing the words, ideas, or data of another person as your own without proper acknowledgment. This includes copying text without quotation marks or citation, paraphrasing without credit, and using others' research or findings without attribution. Self-plagiarism, submitting the same work for credit more than once without authorization or appropriate citation, is also prohibited.
- **Fabrication and Falsification:** Creating or altering data, research results, citations, or information dishonestly. This includes making up data or results, misrepresenting existing data, or providing false information in an academic context.
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** Assisting or attempting to assist another student in committing academic misconduct.
- **Misrepresentation:** Falsely representing oneself or one's work, claiming credit for work not done, or failing to give proper attribution to collaborators.
- **Use of Unauthorized Tools:** The DSW curriculum includes learning about the ethical and innovative use of AI in teaching, practice, research, and leadership so you will be utilizing it in that context throughout the program. Instructors may allow or prohibit specific technologies such as large language models (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot), generative text tools (e.g., Quillbot, Grammarly AI), tutoring websites (e.g., Chegg, Course Hero), recording tools, or digital assistants. Students are responsible for following course-specific guidelines and obtaining appropriate consent regarding confidentiality from instructors and peers.

Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tool Usage

Generative artificial intelligence tools, software that creates new text, images, computer code, audio, video, and other content, have become widely available. Well-known examples include ChatGPT or CoPilot for text and DALL E for images. This policy governs all such tools, including those released during the academic year. While individual instructors may allow the use of these tools, as specified in their course syllabus, it is essential to understand and adhere to the following guidelines:

Prohibited Use

- **Assignment Completion:** AI tools may not be used to complete assignments on your behalf. All submitted work must reflect your own independent thinking, analysis, and

synthesis of course materials. While AI can be helpful for brainstorming ideas, organizing information, or providing editing support, it cannot generate the primary content of your assignments. Because many assignments in this program are designed to lead to published work or other forms of scholarly and professional dissemination, they may also be subject to external policies and guidelines regarding AI use. Students are responsible for ensuring compliance with these standards.

- **Citation Accuracy:** Do not use sources that are cited by AI tools without reading those sources yourself. This is crucial because AI tools can create citations for sources that do not exist and AI tools may cite real pieces of writing, but the cited content may be inaccurate.
- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** You may not copy the academic work, discussion posts, or reflections of another student into any type of AI tool as their privacy cannot be guaranteed on these platforms. Similarly, do not include identifying personal information about yourself or others in your AI prompts.

Academic Integrity and AI Tool Usage

The use of AI tools should enhance your understanding and critical thinking, not replace your intellectual engagement and analysis. It is your responsibility to clearly communicate the AI's involvement in your work and distinguish your original contributions from any AI-generated content.

- **Citing AI Tools:** To maintain academic integrity, always cite the use of AI tools appropriately in accordance with the APA citation style guidelines. The [APA blog provides specific instructions on how to cite ChatGPT](#) and similar AI models.
- **AI Transparency Statement:** If you choose to use AI or other technologies, you are required to include an AI Transparency Statement. The statement should describe the AI tools you utilized and discuss their impact on your project (i.e. grammar correction, content generation, data analysis) in less than 300 words. Position the statement after the references section of your APA formatted works.

By adhering to these guidelines, you can responsibly incorporate AI tools into your work while ensuring academic integrity and transparency.

Addressing Bias and Accuracy

Be aware that AI algorithms replicate systematic biases found in academic and popular media and may provide inaccurate information. As scholars, it is crucial to approach AI-generated content critically and use your content knowledge or seek information from reputable secondary sources to verify any potentially biased or inaccurate information. This will ensure that your academic work is well-informed, reliable, and free from any unintended bias introduced by AI tools.

Course Attendance and Engagement

Attendance and active engagement are essential to your success in the DSW program. Each class session is an opportunity for individual learning, meaningful dialogue, and building a strong scholarly community. Because most courses meet only four times per semester, missing even one

session can significantly impact your learning and progress. Students are expected to attend all sessions in person and participate fully. If an unavoidable circumstance requires you to miss a class, contact your instructor as soon as possible to develop a plan for making up missed content. Absences should be rare and only for compelling reasons. Class meeting dates are provided well in advance of the start of the program, so students are expected to plan accordingly. Missing more than one class session in a semester means you cannot pass that course and will need to retake it, which may delay graduation. In exceptional circumstances, an exception to this policy may be considered. Students who believe they meet these criteria should contact the DSW Program Directors for guidance.

Transfer of Graduate Credits into the DSW Program from another DSW or PhD program

Our DSW Program allows a limited number of equivalent credits to be transferred from another doctoral program.

Eligibility Criteria: To be considered for transfer, completed credits from another DSW or PhD program, must meet the following requirements:

- **Accredited Source:** Credits must be earned from a DSW or PhD program at a regionally accredited and/or CSWE accredited or accreditation eligible institution.
- **Academic Relevance:** Courses must be equivalent in content, rigor, and learning outcomes to those offered in the University of Maryland's DSW curriculum. The DSW Director and Associate Director will make these determinations.
- **Recency:** Credits must have been earned within the past five years.
- **Grade Requirement:** Only courses with a grade of B or higher (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) will be considered. However, other supporting documents will be considered if this GPA falls below the criteria for admission.
- **Documentation:** Applicants must submit official transcripts, course syllabi, and a written justification for each course they wish to transfer.

Transfer Limits

- A maximum of **6 graduate credits** may be transferred.
- Transfer credits may not be applied toward the DSW capstone or applied research courses
- Professional, practicum, or life experiences are not eligible for credits or transfer.

Review Process

- The DSW Director, Associate Director and/or designated faculty member from the DSW Program Committee will evaluate all transfer requests.
- Decisions will be based on academic alignment, CSWE accreditation standards, and the student's academic performance in courses being reviewed for transfer
- Applicants will be notified of the decision in writing within 30 days of submitting a transfer credit request.

Appeals

Students may appeal a transfer credit decision by submitting a written request to the DSW Director within 15 days of the decision. The decision of the appeals process is final and may not be appealed further.

Procedures for Reviewing Transcripts and/or Other Materials to Determine Course Equivalency

A structured and transparent process is used for reviewing credits transferred to the UMSSW's DSW program. We require applicants to submit detailed documentation of the course they are requesting waver, including official transcripts and full course syllabi. This allows for a thorough comparison of learning objectives, content, and rigor of course work. A faculty committee then evaluates the submitted materials to map course outcomes to the DSW program's learning objectives ensuring alignment with doctoral-level expectations and CSWE accreditation standards. Additional steps include verifying credit hours, instructional format, and assessment methods to confirm parity with our DSW curriculum. All decisions are documented for consistency and accountability, and applicants are offered a formal appeal process if credits are denied.

Taking Courses at Other UMB Schools or Independent Study

The DSW program offers a structured plan-of-study that most students should plan to complete as outlined. We also value interdisciplinary learning and recognize that students may benefit from coursework outside the School of Social Work or through independent study opportunities. These options when implemented should enhance your doctoral experience while maintaining the integrity and rigor of the program.

Eligibility and Approval

- Students may request to take a course at another UMB school or propose an independent study when the content aligns with their academic goals, specifically their Capstone Project, and complements the DSW curriculum.
- All requests must be approved in advance by the DSW Director in consultation with the Associate Director and DSW Program Committee to ensure the course meets program standards and credit requirements.

Process for Requesting Approval

1. Submit a Written Proposal

Include the following:

- Course title, description, and syllabus (or independent study outline)
- Explanation of how the course supports your Capstone project or professional development as a scholar-practitioner
- Proposed semester and schedule
- Proposed course the credit from this experience would replace and a rationale as to how relevant learning objectives will still be met.

2. Review and Decision

The DSW Director will review the request in consultation with faculty as needed. Approval will be based on relevance, academic rigor, and availability.

3. Registration and Credit

Students are responsible for completing registration steps and any additional administrative requirements.

Independent Study Guidelines

- Independent studies must have a clearly defined learning plan, deliverables, and timeline.
- A doctoral-level faculty member from the SSW must agree to supervise the independent study and provide regular meetings and feedback.
- Students should expect the same level of academic rigor as a formal course.

Important Considerations

- Requests should be submitted at least one semester in advance to allow time for review and coordination.
- Tuition and fees for courses outside the School of Social Work may vary; students are responsible for confirming costs.
- Students must remain in good academic standing to pursue these options.
- Courses in the Applied Research series and courses that measure CSWE core expertise and skills cannot be replaced. Only one course in a student's plan of study can be replaced with this option.

Failure to Meet Standards and Expectations of the Program

At the University of Maryland School of Social Work, we strive to foster a restorative culture where accountability, learning, and growth are prioritized. When a student does not meet the standards and expectations of the DSW program, our first goal is to work collaboratively toward remediation and support.

Students will be referred to the DSW Director, Associate Director, and/or a designated faculty member from the DSW Program Committee for consultation. Together, we will explore options that may include:

- A discussion and development of a remediation plan
- Referral to campus or external resources for additional support
- Consequences such as failure of associated assignments or courses
- Referral to a Student Review process
- In rare cases, dismissal from the program

Situations that pose a risk to other students, clients, or the School of Social Work community may result in immediate suspension pending review. The UMSSW reserves the right to require a fitness-for-duty evaluation and to suspend or dismiss any student for illegal conduct, unsafe practice, or behavior that threatens the health, safety, or integrity of the UMB community.

If an allegation of unacceptable personal or professional conduct arises, the Dean of the School of Social Work may suspend the student pending due process proceedings. The Dean will notify the student promptly in writing, and the student may appeal the suspension in writing within 10 business days of receiving notice. If an appeal is filed, a student review hearing with faculty representatives appointed by the DSW Program Committee will follow.

Rescinding an Offer of Admission

The University of Maryland School of Social Work (UMSSW) is committed to maintaining the integrity and professionalism of our academic community. In rare circumstances, the School may withdraw or rescind an offer of admission. This decision is never taken lightly and occurs only for reasons such as:

- **Misrepresentation:** Any part of the application contains false or misleading information.
- **Behavioral Concerns:** The applicant engages in behavior that raises concerns about professional suitability based on the NASW Code of Ethics.
- **Violation of Policy:** The applicant engages in conduct that violates the UMB Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy, the SSW Technical Standards and Conduct Policy, and/or the SSW Academic Integrity Policy.

Procedures for Rescinding Offers of Admission

If an offer of admission is rescinded, the decision is made jointly by the Associate Dean of Admissions and the DSW Director. The applicant will be notified promptly via email. Applicants may appeal the decision in writing. Appeals are reviewed by the DSW Director, Associate Director, and/or a representative appointed by the DSW Program Committee. Decisions made through this process are final.

Please note that admitted applicants officially become DSW students on the first day of classes. At that point, all policies and procedures for enrolled students apply. These policies are outlined in this handbook and in the [UMB Policies and Procedures](#).

Grades

Grades in Academic Courses

The letters A through C- and F are used to evaluate performance in classroom courses. No Mark (NM) indicates that the instructor has not yet submitted the final grade.

A cumulative grade point average of “B” or 3.0 is required for graduation. Every credit hour below a 3.0 must be balanced by a credit hour above 3.0, unless it is repeated. When a course is

repeated, the new grade, whether higher or lower, replaces the old grade and becomes the grade of record for calculating the grade point average. A course, regardless of the grade, may only be repeated once.

The grade of “F” indicates failure to achieve a satisfactory level of performance, and the course must be repeated. The original “F” grade remains on the student’s permanent record, but it is the subsequent passing grade that is used to compute grade point average. Thus, a grade “F” cannot be balanced.

GRADE	QUALITY POINTS	NUMERICAL EQUIVALENT
A	4.00	93 – 100
A-	3.67	90 – 92.9
B+	3.33	87 – 89.9
B	3.00	83 – 86.9
B-	2.67	80 – 82.9
C+	2.33	77 – 79.9
C	2.00	73 – 76.9
C-	1.67	70 – 72.9
F	0.00	0 – 69.9
P	N/A	N/A
I	N/A	N/A
NM	N/A	N/A

Grieving a Grade

Students who wish to grieve a grade for a course should follow the procedures outlined in *Appendix A: Student Grievance Committee*.

DSW Program Policy: Academic Performance, Ethical Conduct, and Termination

Our goal is to approach all concerns with transparency, respect, and a focus on helping students succeed whenever possible. The DSW program is committed to supporting students in meeting high academic and professional standards while providing clear processes for accountability and fairness. These policies are designed to ensure transparency and uphold the integrity of doctoral education.

1. Evaluation of Academic Performance

- **Standards**
Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 and demonstrate satisfactory progress in coursework, Capstone development, and professional competencies.
- **Assessment**
Faculty evaluate performance through grades, participation, milestone completion, and evidence of doctoral-level scholarship.
- **Academic Warning**

If a student falls below these standards, they will receive a formal academic warning along with a collaborative development plan and timeline. This plan will be created in partnership with the student and the DSW Director and/or Associate Director to support improvement and success.

Due Process Protections

We believe in fairness and transparency. If concerns arise regarding academic performance or ethical conduct, the following steps will guide the process:

1. Notification and Documentation

- Students will receive written notice outlining the concerns, including specific details, supporting evidence, and potential consequences.
- This notification will come from the DSW Directors.

2. Student Opportunity to Respond

- Students may submit a written response and request a meeting with the DSW Directors or a designated review panel to share their perspective.
- If a formal student review is required, the policies and procedures outlined by UMSSW for all students will be followed under the guidance of the Dean.

3. Review and Appeal

- A formal review will be conducted by a student review panel nominated by the DSW Program Committee.
- Students may appeal termination decisions to the Dean or designated appeals committee within 15 business days of notification.
- Decisions made by the Dean are final and cannot be appealed further.

4. Confidentiality and Fairness

- All proceedings will be conducted confidentially and with respect for student rights and program integrity.
- Decisions will be based on documented evidence, consistent standards, and equitable procedures.

Dismissal

Dismissal is the administrative disenrollment of a student. A student who has demonstrated “academic failure” or egregious ethical violations or problematic professional behavior will be dismissed from the program. Academic failure results from a student receiving an “F” in a class. For a course where the student receives their first “F” the student may retake the course. The grade received for the re-take will be placed on the student’s transcript and calculated in the student’s revised GPA. However, the initial F will remain on the transcript. The second “F” will result in automatic dismissal, even in circumstances when the first “F” has been replaced with a passing grade. A course where a student receives a second “F” grade may not be repeated.

Grounds for dismissal for egregious ethical violations or problematic professional behaviors include but are not limited to:

- ethical violations,
- academic dishonesty,

- conviction of a crime
- falsifying information on the admissions application

Readmission and Reinstatement after Dismissal

Following the required 2-year waiting period, students may be eligible for a one-time request for reinstatement via the process below:

- a) complete an application for admission to the UMSSW
- b) communicate their intention to apply for reinstatement in writing to the DSW Director
- c) As part of the reinstatement request, students are expected to describe the changes they have or will make in their academic preparation and strategies that will improve their potential for successfully completing their program.

The DSW Program Committee reviews requests for readmission and reinstatement and may request the student participate in an interview. Decisions are binding and not eligible for appeal. Decisions will be communicated to the applicant within 60 days.

Students readmitted will work with the DSW Directors to create a customized academic success plan. Students who are approved for reinstatement will be readmitted on Academic Probation status and must be in good academic standing, with a GPA of at least 3.0 after their first semester.

Reinstated students who do not achieve good academic standing will be dismissed without possibility of future reinstatement.

Taking a Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is used by students who do not plan to enroll for a semester or for registered students who want to drop all courses after the semester has begun. A leave may be taken from the School of Social Work prior to the drop deadline. Students who, due to extenuating circumstances, seek to take a leave after the drop deadline must request approval from the DSW Director. Students may take a leave of absence for up to two regular semesters, after which they must apply for readmission to the DSW program. Students returning after a LOA will need to start in the fall semester and should plan to be taking classes with another cohort.

Withdrawal from the SSW

Students who wish to withdraw or disengage from the School of Social Work with no intention of returning should complete the Withdrawal from the School of Social Work form located on the School's website ([here](#)). A student can withdraw from the School at any time during the semester, but may be financially liable for the semester tuition and fees as outlined in [the UMB "Refund Schedule for Withdrawal" refund-schedule](#).

Graduation Application

All degree candidates must file a formal [Graduation Application](#) with the UMB Office of the Registrar during the semester in which they expect to graduate. The deadline for submission is on the campus wide Academic Calendar and will be emailed to students by the Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Student Affairs, and Office of Records & Registration. Applications should be

submitted online in SURFS in the Student Records area.

Convocation

The UMSSW holds a Convocation ceremony in May. More information is listed on the UMSSW's website: [Convocation Information](#)

Student Supports and Resources at the School of Social Work and UMB

Your success and well-being matter to us. We know that balancing academic, professional, and personal responsibilities can be challenging, so the DSW program is committed to fostering a supportive environment where you feel cared for and connected. Below are just some of the many supports available to you through the School of Social Work and UMB.

Lactation Room

Located in 4E14, the lactation room offers a private space for nursing parents. Equipped with comfortable seating, a medical grade pump, and a refrigerator, you can request the access code [here](#). Note that changing tables are also available in our restrooms on the 3rd and 4th floors.

Interfaith Sacred Space for Meditation and Prayer

This space is open to students of all faiths and spiritual practices who may seek a place for prayer, worship, or meditation. Conveniently located on the first floor across from the mailroom at 1E21N, the Sacred Space provides a tranquil environment for reflection and spiritual practice. You can sign up for Sacred Space access by clicking [here](#).

Restroom Options

We recognize that student needs and preferences for restrooms can be varied. We offer disability-accessible, all gender restrooms on our 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors. Gender-specific restrooms are available on our 1st and 5th floors, and a single-stall bathroom can be found at the end of the 2-west hallway.

Hydration Filling Stations

Stations to fill your water bottles are available on our 1st and 5th floors.

Community Cupboard

Need something? Know someone who needs something? Visit the community cupboard located in the 3rd floor student lounge and feel free to grab a snack, or some groceries or toiletries. Have something you don't need, but others might? Feel free to place it in the cupboard to share with the community (sealed, non-perishable, non-expired food or toiletry items only please). We're all here to support each other - Maybe you didn't have time to grab breakfast, or forgot lunch, or your budget is tight right now, or you know someone who needs something to eat today.. Any of this is what the community cupboard is here for. It is open to all members of the school community – students, staff, faculty, community members.

UMB Student Pantry

Located on the 3rd floor of the SMC Campus Center, the UMB Student Pantry assists with facilitating students' access to nutritionally rich snacks and meals as well as hygiene items and is open to all UMB students. The pantry values and respect dietary restrictions and preferences related to choice, health and wellness, and/or religious and spiritual practices, offering a selection of Halal, Kosher, vegan, and vegetarian shelf-stable options. Learn more [here](#).

Student Counseling and Health Centers

UMB offers both counseling and healthcare services to students, available right on campus. Learn more about the Student Counseling Center [here](#) and the Student Health Center [here](#).

Writing Center

Even the most talented students can sometimes use some support and guidance in their process. The writing center views writing not just as a set of skills, but as a reflective and strategic process essential to learning, research, and professional practice. Through empathetic and inclusive engagement, they foster a supportive environment grounded in respect and access. They offer consultations (online and in person), writing groups, workshops, and a robust library of resources, all designed to guide writers and educators at every stage of their development. Learn more [here](#).

UMB Policies

UMB Code of Ethics and Conduct

UMB Personnel subject to this Code include UMB administrative and academic officers, faculty, employees, fellows, students (including student employees), and volunteers. In fulfilling the responsibilities of their positions at UMB, UMB Personnel are expected to adhere to and act in accordance with this Code and all laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures applicable to their UMB activities.

This Code reflects the requirements of laws and policies that relate to ethical conduct, including: the Maryland Public Ethics Law, the Maryland Whistleblower Law, and policies of the Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland (USM) and UMB that relate to reporting known or reasonably suspected wrongdoing. UMB Code of Ethics and Conduct is located [here](#).

VA Educational Benefits

Students attending the School of Social Work using Veterans Education and Training Benefits may receive assistance with enrollment certification at the SSW Office of Records and Registration. You may contact the Office of Records and Registration at 410-706-6102 or sswregistration@ssw.umaryland.edu with any questions. Please see [here](#) for more information.

VA Educational Benefits and Title 38 USC 3679(e) Compliance

In accordance with Title 38 United States Code (USC) § 3679(e), the University of Maryland School of Social Work will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or require a covered individual to borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual's inability to meet their financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement of funding from the

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) under Chapter 31 or Chapter 33.

A covered individual is any individual who is entitled to educational assistance under Chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, or Chapter 33, Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits. The student must provide the institution with a Certificate of Eligibility or Statement of Benefits by the first day of class. Students may also be required to submit any additional information needed to properly certify enrollment. Learn more online.

Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act

The Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act (Public Law 101-542), signed into federal law Nov. 8, 1990, requires that the University of Maryland make readily available to its students and prospective students the following information: Financial aid; costs of attending the University of Maryland; refund policy; facilities and services for students with disabilities; procedures for review of School and campus accreditation; completion and graduation rates for undergraduate students; loan deferral under the Peace Corps and Domestic Volunteer Services Act; campus safety and security; campus crime statistics. To obtain any of this information, visit www.umaryland.edu/oac/student-right-to-know

FERPA Notice

Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the UMB Confidentiality and Disclosure of Student Records Policy, this notice is given to students to advise them that the following information about a student is directory information subject to disclosure by the University upon request: name; address telephone listing; date and place of birth; photograph; major practicum of study; dates of attendance; degrees and awards received; and most recent previous educational institution attended. The directory information concerning a student may be disclosed even in the absence of consent unless the student files written notice informing the University not to disclose any or all of the categories within three weeks of the first day of the semester in which the student begins each school year. Notice not to disclose may be filed with the student's school Office of Student Affairs.

It is the policy of the University of Maryland, Baltimore to adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (also known as FERPA or the Buckley Amendment). Students can access their educational records by making a formal request to the Office of Records and Registration, sswregistration@ssw.umaryland.edu.

Financial Aid Policies

[Please click here for financial aid policies.](#)

Policies Related to Students with Disabilities

The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) is committed to the principles of equal access and opportunity for persons with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. You can find more information [here](#).

Educational Support and Disability Services

UMB's office of [Educational Supports and Disability Services \(ESDS\)](#) coordinates services to assist

students with disabilities in obtaining reasonable accommodations through an interactive process involving the student and the UMSSW. Pregnant and parenting students may also connect with the Title IX Coordinator for additional support. [The Title IX Coordinator](#) can coordinate specific actions to prevent sex discrimination and ensure the student's equal access to UMB's education program or activity.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The University of Maryland, Baltimore prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. Read the [UMB Notice of Non-Discrimination](#) for more information.

Additional University Policies

The University publishes policies and procedures [online](#).

- [Nondiscrimination Notice Policy](#)
- [Public Safety Policies](#)
- [Administration Policies](#)
- [Immunization, Social Media, and Student Affairs Policy](#)
- [Financial Affairs Policies](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)

APPENDIX A: STUDENT GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE (SGC)

Purpose

The SGC, a standing committee of the faculty, is the committee to which MSW and DSW students may grieve actions of the faculty, administrators, and/or staff. Membership consists of a faculty chair and five faculty members. Selection and representation is delineated in the Faculty Plan of Organization (FPO). A voting student representative will be selected by the DSW Program Committee (DPC) for each DSW grievance. The Committee will make recommendations to the SGC Chair and the Dean.

Note:

- View Student Policies [here](#).
- The faculty member, administrator or staff person must be a current employee of UMB throughout the grievance process.

Discrimination Complaints: The SGC does NOT review discrimination complaints. The University of Maryland, Baltimore is committed to fostering a safe and just environment for its students, faculty and staff. UMB does not tolerate discrimination in any form including sexual harassment and violence or illegal discriminatory practices. All discrimination should be reported promptly to the Office of Accountability and Compliance. The Report Form located at [this link](#) may be used to report prohibited sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct. Information will be kept as private to the fullest extent possible and will be disclosed only to those individuals who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the complaint, and/or as required by law.

Scope

The SGC shall review any grievance brought to it based on one or more of the following:

1. arbitrary and capricious action on the part of a faculty member in, but not limited to, evaluations or grading. (As defined by the Board of Regents USM Policy II – 1.20, “the term ‘arbitrary and capricious’ grading means:

1) the assignment of a course grade to a student on some basis other than performance in the course;

2) the assignment of a course grade to a student by unreasonable application of standards different from the standards that were applied to other students in that course; or

3) the assignment of a course grade by a substantial and unreasonable departure from the instructor’s initially articulated standards.”)

2. violation of due process according to generally accepted norms of the University community by faculty, administrators, and/or staff;

3. any behavior that violates the [University’s Policy on Faculty, Student and Institutional Rights and Responsibilities for Academic Integrity \(III – 1.00\)](#).

Procedures

For Grievances against Faculty:

- Grievant (student) and faculty member whose action is the subject of the grievance shall meet. It is the responsibility of the student to request the meeting.
- Failing resolution in the meeting, the grievant (student) should meet and discuss the matter with the DSW Directors or Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.
- Failing resolution in this meeting, the student shall arrange to communicate and meet with the SGC Chair. (If the grievance is against the SGC Chair, the next senior-in-rank SGC Committee member shall assume the Chair role on a pro term basis.)
- There may be situations where the before established channels cannot be followed due to the nature of the allegation and the student may go directly to the SGC chair (i.e. fear of retaliation).

For Grievances against Administrators, Exempt Staff or Non-exempt Staff:

- Arranged by the grievant (student), a meeting to discuss the matter shall be held with the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.
- Failing resolution at this meeting, a meeting shall be arranged with the SGC Chair.
- There may be situations where the before established channels cannot be followed due to the nature of the allegation and the student may go directly to the SGC chair (i.e. fear of retaliation).

Documentation/Decision Process

Once the above procedures have been completed the Grievant (student) must submit to the SGC Chair a written grievance petition, which includes:

- A statement that the grievance falls within the scope of the committee.
- Facts that clearly delineate and support the grievance, attaching copies of all relevant documentation.

- A description of the specific steps that the student has taken in an attempt to resolve the conflict through established institutional channels before submission to the Committee.
- The student is encouraged to keep and present in support of the grievance a record of all meetings and what is found to be an unsatisfactory resolution of each step.

SGC Chair Review/ Response:

- Upon receipt of the grievance submission, the SGC chair will review the petition for determination of whether it constitutes a grievance that falls within the scope of the SGC in keeping with the SGC Committee internal procedures.
- When a petition is determined to fall within its purview, the SGC chair shall notify the person(s) named in the grievance (Respondent) and provide them with a complete copy of the petition.
- The SGC Chair shall offer mediation of the grievance to the parties, and if mediation is to be used, all parties must accept it and a resolution will be offered by the SGC Chair. (Mediation is not binding and does not preclude continuation of the grievance by the student.)
- If mediation fails to resolve the grievance, the SGC Chair shall appoint faculty members and a student representative for each grievance as needed, following Committee procedure. This constitutes the Grievance Review Committee (GRC). (No SGC member may be appointed to the Grievance Review Committee if the member is a respondent of the alleged grievance.) In addition, the Respondent is notified within 14 calendar days to submit a written response.

Time Restrictions and Notifications:

- A written grievance petition shall be submitted to the SGC Chair within 10 calendar days of the action/ incident/grading. If the grievance relates to a grade, then 10 calendar days from the posting of the grade.
- The SGC Chair will notify the respondent when the procedures (mediation) have failed to produce a solution and request a written response from the respondent within 10 calendar days of the receipt of this notification. The respondent's written response will be shared with the student (grievant).

If a GRC Committee meeting is necessary the recommendation should be completed, or a status report generated within 20 calendar days of its receipt of the grievance petition, and the respondent's written response.

- The SGC Chair will be notified of the Committee's recommendation and then this recommendation is forwarded to the Dean for final decision. (If the respondent is the Dean, and the grievance was sustained then the recommendation is forwarded instead to the President of the University for decision and final action.)
- The required timetable for the grievance review and recommendation may be suspended for the period of June 16 to August 20 as determined by SGC chair.

Grievance Review Committee Meeting:

- The SGC Chair will provide all received documents (grievant and respondent) to the GRC Chair.
- The GRC Committee may request the student and respondent to appear before the Committee. If so, both parties may bring an advocate. (Advocate may not be an attorney.)

- The Grievant has the option of deciding if the committee's student representative shall participate in the meeting.

Decision:

- The Dean will consider the GRC recommendation and the documentation prior to making a decision on the grievance. The Dean may accept, modify or reject the committee recommendation.
- The Dean's decision, which is final, will be sent in writing to the student, the respondent, the SGC chair and the GRC chair.

Grievance Process Synopsis

If a student (Grievant) believes they have a grievance based upon the before listed information, they should:

1. Meet with Respondent (faculty, administrator or staff person) to discuss and attempt to clarify/resolve issue.
2. Meet with DSW Directors or Associate Dean to discuss and attempt to resolve if step 1 is unsuccessful.
3. Meet/communicate with SGC Chair to discuss the grievance if step 2 is unsuccessful.
4. Provide documentation to SGC Chair as requested after meeting. This should occur within the timeframe noted above.
5. Meet with SGC Chair and Respondent for mediation if offered.
6. Meet with GRC Committee if requested
7. Receive final decision from Dean

The University of Maryland, Baltimore is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (267-284-5000)). Both the baccalaureate program (offered at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County campus) and Master of Social Work program (offered at the School of Social Work, University of Maryland, Baltimore) are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the authorized professional accrediting body for social work in the United States.

No provision of this publication shall be construed as a contract between any applicant or student and the University of Maryland, Baltimore. The University reserves the right to change any admission or advancement requirement at any time. The University further reserves the right to ask a student to withdraw at any time when it is considered to be in the best interest of the University. Admission and curriculum requirements are subject to change without prior notice.

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