



The Division of

Social Work



## MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

### Student Handbook

2010-2011

Division of Social Work  
Florida Gulf Coast University  
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<http://cps.fgcu.edu/sw/index.html>

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## Foreword

This handbook has been designed to supplement FGCU materials already provided to students. It is organized to provide an overview of the Division of Social Work at FGCU, including: its history and mission; the NASW Code of Ethics to which the Division subscribes; information regarding the MSW Program; the Field Curriculum and requirements; and services and opportunities available to MSW students. Every effort possible is made to keep the information accurate and up to date. However, policies and procedures do undergo development and revision from time to time. Therefore, we reserve the right to alter or change any policy or procedure contained in this manual at any time. Every possible effort will be made to inform students and other constituents (i.e., field instructors, faculty, etc.) of any changes made in a timely manner. Inquiries should be directed to:

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

### Mission Statements

#### *Florida Gulf Coast University*

Established on the verge of the 21st century, Florida Gulf Coast University infuses the strengths of the traditional public university with innovation and learning-centered spirit, its chief aim being to fulfill the academic, cultural, social, and career expectations of its constituents.

Outstanding faculty uphold challenging academic standards and balance research, scholarly activities, and service expectations with their central responsibilities of teaching and mentoring. Through these efforts, the faculty and University transform students' lives and the southwest Florida region.

Florida Gulf Coast University continuously pursues academic excellence, practices and promotes environmental sustainability, embraces diversity, nurtures community partnerships, values public service, encourages civic responsibility, cultivates habits of lifelong learning, and keeps the advancement of knowledge and pursuit of truth as noble ideals at the heart of the university's purpose. (<http://www.fgcu.edu/info/mission.asp>)

#### *College of Professional Studies*

The College of Professional Studies is committed to developing students' abilities to successfully address social, political, and economic problems, as well as to educating and training broad-based service professionals in the public and private sectors. Recognizing the rapidly changing environments in which such efforts must be carried out, the College's curricula are oriented toward lifelong approaches to professional and personal development integrating theory, practice, and technology. All programs in the College link students' learning experiences to the needs of the communities and their members. (<http://cps.fgcu.edu/mission.html>)

#### *Division of Social Work*

The mission of the Division of Social Work at FGCU is to prepare students with knowledge, skills, and values of professional social work practice. Graduates will demonstrate competence in strengths-based generalist practice and clinical community practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organization and communities. (<http://cps.fgcu.edu/SW/mission.html>)

#### *Master of Social Work*

The mission of the MSW program is the preparation of competent and effective professional clinical community practitioners able to demonstrate critical thinking skills, promote lifelong learning, advance social work knowledge, and to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems. The program educates students with specialized skills for advanced clinical practice with diverse client systems of various sizes. The MSW program is grounded in the profession's history, purposes, and philosophy and is based on a body of knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession. (<http://cps.fgcu.edu/SW/MSW/Files/Mission.pdf>)

## The Master of Social Work Program

The Master of Social Work (MSW) Program, in accord with the Mission of FGCU and the values and ethics of the social work profession, seeks to prepare competent, reflective and proactive graduates who will promote social welfare and social justice locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Southwest Florida represents tremendous economic disparity, cultural diversity, and political inequities. Graduates will know, respect, and build upon the strengths of diverse groups with priority placed on service to the most vulnerable. The MSW Program empowers graduates to become practitioners and critical thinkers who develop, evaluate, and use knowledge selectively. They will use relevant information and communication technologies and social work traditions, methods, values, and ethics to promote a more just social order.

The curriculum rests firmly upon a generalist framework of social work practice and advanced clinical practice that is an integral part of the mission of the Division of Social Work and FGCU. The curriculum objectives seek to provide the knowledge base required for self-informed, autonomous, agency-based practice with firm underpinnings in clinical/community dynamics, advocacy, activism, and intervention. This dual focus serves as the cornerstone for obtaining expertise in the use of both clinical intervention skills and community activist skills simultaneously. The field experience provides opportunities needed to appreciate and to benefit from perspectives and experiences of others in the profession and the capacity to judge when independence, collaborative interdependence, or supervised accountability is the approach of choice, operating in the best interests of those who are served. Appreciating that students learn by doing, the division provides experiences and instruction in advocacy, autonomy, interdependence, collaboration, community activism, and service, in addition to helping students in their analysis of choices based upon circumstances and the values and ethics of the profession of social work.

Given the mission of FGCU and the diversity of the five counties surrounding the university, the Division of Social Work is committed to recruiting and educating a diverse student body for work in ethnically, culturally, economically, socially, and racially varied communities in Southwest Florida. In addition, the Division is committed to educating students for agency-based practice, with special attention to services in the public and not-for-profit sectors. Emphasis is given to faculty and students forging partnerships with vulnerable communities through training, research, and community-based projects to expand knowledge and skills within the field of social work in response to changing social conditions. Furthermore, all Division activities seek to provide leadership to enhance the well-being of populations-at-risk including people of color, women, lesbians and gays, people with disabilities, the poor, and other vulnerable and stigmatized populations in our society.

### Commitment to Diversity and Nondiscrimination

FGCU is committed to building and maintaining a diverse, accessible, civil, and supportive learning community. It fosters respect and understanding among all cultures and all individuals who work, study, and live within this community. Just as learning benefits from the interplay of multidisciplinary teaching and scholarship, so does the university community learn from diverse cultures and perspectives. Bigotry, expressions of hatred or prejudice, behaviors that infringe upon the freedom and respect that every individual deserves, and harassment of any kind, transgress the university's purpose and values.

Based on the tradition of the social work profession, and consistent with FGCU's Affirmative Action Policy, the Division of Social Work affirms and conducts all aspects of its teaching, scholarship, and service activities without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, socioeconomic status, marital status, national or ethnic origin, age, religion/creed, disability or political or sexual orientation.

The Division of Social Work has a strong commitment to nondiscrimination and diversity. Indeed, diversity is viewed as a strength. This perspective is demonstrated by the composition of faculty and student body, curriculum content, recruitment and retention activities, participation in University committees dealing with vulnerable/oppressed populations, numerous community service activities including advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged populations, selection of Field Placement sites, and Division policies related to promotion and contract renewal of its faculty.

### Program Goals

The MSW Program is housed in the Division of Social Work, which is in the College of Professional Studies at FGCU. The presence of the MSW Program within the University permits FGCU to address in a more comprehensive fashion rapidly expanding social service needs of Southwest Florida while emphasizing the importance of community involvement for both faculty and students.

The MSW Program at FGCU is the only social work program in Southwest Florida and is committed to providing professional social work education to those who otherwise might not have access to graduate social work education. The MSW Program seeks to prepare individuals who have a solid foundation in the liberal arts to become professional competent advanced clinical practitioners. Advanced clinical practice rests firmly on a generalist framework of social work practice and specialized knowledge and skills needed to practice with individuals, families, groups, communities. The Program promotes an understanding of the social functioning needs of people, particularly vulnerable populations such as the poor, racial and ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

The goals of the MSW Program are consistent with the mission of the Division of Social Work, the College of Professional Studies, FGCU, and the needs of the five counties it serves. These five goals are consistent with the knowledge, skills, values, and ethics for advanced social work practice in the Curriculum Policy Statement of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and with the National Association of Social Work (NASW). Specifically, the goals of the MSW Program are:

- To prepare social workers for advanced clinical practice in the public and non-profit sector agencies with diverse clients systems of various sizes.
- To prepare social workers for competent agency-based practice with a strong commitment to professional social work values and ethics, promotion of social and economic justice, diversity, alleviation of oppression, and discriminating skills to address ethical dilemmas.
- To prepare students with knowledge and skills for informed practice and including the development of critical thinking and lifelong learning based upon a solid liberal arts foundation.
- To provide students with knowledge and skills to evaluate their own practice and programs based upon critical analysis and assessment.

- To educate students about the behavior of communities and organizations within the social contexts of social work practice, and the dynamics of change from a local, regional and international perspective.

These goals are infused throughout the program. The educational program for advanced clinical social work is implemented through the foundation and advanced curricula that incorporate content of the knowledge, skills, values, and ethics required for competent professional practice. Students are prepared to practice as professional social workers in a variety of settings including, but not limited to, mental health agencies, health care facilities (i.e., clinics, hospitals, and hospice), family service and child welfare agencies, schools, adult and juvenile justice agencies, and residential care facilities.

Students are taught a range of theories and methods such as ecological systems theory and person-in-environment theory for integrating clinical practice with empowerment and clinical activism, in preparation for agency-based practice. Critical appraisal and application of theories for practice are encouraged. Examination of personal values and professional ethics are promoted. Throughout their course of study, students are expected to demonstrate an increasing cultural competency and capacity to understand and work with diverse populations. This includes an understanding of discrimination and oppression; the promotion of social and economic justice; human diversity; the needs and strengths for the economically disadvantaged, women, ethnic and racial minorities, gays and lesbians, people with disabilities, the elderly, and others. The Integrated Seminar in the final semester of study provides students with a special opportunity to integrate theory and practice while addressing a particular professional social work issue of interest to them and of importance to the profession.

#### Program Educational Objectives

In line with our Mission Statement, the curriculum has been designed to meet the unique needs of the Southwest Florida community and also equip students to practice in local, national, and international practice arenas at a time of increasing global interdependence. Our particular focus is clinical and community practice as a unified concept, adapted to situations of economic and social injustice, with special attention to diverse populations-at-risk in Southwest Florida.

#### *Foundation Year Objectives*

The foundation curriculum provides grounding in generalist practice with a dual focus on people and communities, in order to provide underpinnings for a concentration curriculum in Advanced Clinical Practice. Our conceptualization of generalist practice is based on an empowerment perspective, which focuses on client's strengths, client's competence, and supportive communities (Compton and Galaway, 1999). The foundation curriculum also presents a dual focus on people and communities in order to provide underpinnings for a concentration year in advanced clinical practice based in empowerment and clinical activism.

The foundation curriculum develops social workers who are skillful in assessment and case planning. The problem-solving model is the foundation for generalist practice and the development of specialization in complex modes of intervention. Practitioners are able to assess and intervene in all types of systems (Compton & Galaway, 1999). The foundation curriculum provides core knowledge in Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Social Welfare Policy and Services, Social Work Research, Values and Ethics, Populations-at-Risk, Social and Economic Justice.



Although students learn problem-solving skills with individuals, families, and groups the courses also the environment in which the client lives and works. This is evident in course outlines, objectives, syllabi, and course descriptions. The key concepts underpinning the curriculum are used in every course. Each course outlines specific objectives and learning outcomes related to overall goals of the program. Upon completion of the foundation curriculum of the MSW program, students will be able to apply the knowledge, values, and skills of generalist social work practice. In particular, students are expected to demonstrate:

1. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
5. Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.
6. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
7. Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues.
8. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
9. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
10. Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.
11. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their practice interventions.
12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.

### *Concentration Year Objectives*

In the concentration curriculum, students continue to use the problem-solving approach and generalist social work skills developed in the first year. In the fall semester of the concentration year the student is enrolled in Advanced Practice with Individuals and Families to gain in-depth assessment and intervention knowledge utilizing several assessment classifications. Students are also enrolled in Advanced Practice with Groups in which treatment groups, the broader mutual aid/empowerment oriented group and task groups such, as grass-roots community groups are covered. Field education in both years supports

an integrated approach, but the concentration curriculum also focuses heavily on advanced clinical knowledge and field experiences.

In both foundation and concentration years students learn to work with individuals, families and groups in the context of their environments. However, the concentration curriculum requires understanding of behavioral disorders and conditions consistent with the clinical focus of Florida State Licensure as well as the needs of those with mental illness and populations-at-risk identified in our mission statement.

The key concepts underpinning the curriculum are used in every course and these concepts are infused throughout the curriculum. This infusion is evident in course outlines, objectives, syllabi and in course descriptions. Each course syllabus specifies objectives and learning outcomes that are related to the overall goals and objectives of the program.

The advanced clinical curriculum is designed to prepare students to integrate knowledge, values, and skills of social work practice with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations. Students are prepared as advanced clinical practitioners to use an integrated approach that involves a continuum of clinical, as well as community activist skills. They synthesize and apply a broad range of knowledge to practice with a high degree of autonomy, in order to intervene at the appropriate level in the larger client systems—community, organization, agencies, neighborhood, and policy.

Students who successfully complete the MSW Program are prepared for entry into advanced social work practice and will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Practice using advanced clinical practice skills, including highly differentiated intervention skills, without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
2. Synthesize and apply a broad range of theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities using advanced clinical community social work practice skills.
3. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to advanced clinical social work practice while maintaining a high degree of autonomy and proficiency.
4. Analyze, formulate, and influence/advocate for social policies in ways that are highly differentiated.
5. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions in ways that are highly discriminating and self-critical while increasing the knowledge base for practice and improved service delivery.
6. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change by refining and advancing the quality of their advanced clinical practice and that of the larger social work profession.
7. Apply a broad range of knowledge and skills of an advanced/specialized social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.

## Structure of the MSW Program

The Master of Social Work (MSW) prepares students for professional clinical social work practice through the acquisition of specialized knowledge and the necessary skills for advanced clinical social work. This forms the base of the empowerment orientation of the curriculum. The curriculum in the MSW Program is delivered through the Full-Time, Advanced Standing, and Part-Time programs.

### *Full-Time Program*

Through the full-time program, students complete the 60 credit hours required for the MSW degree in a period of two academic years (four semesters): 30 CHs in the Foundation Year and 30 in the Concentration (or Advanced) Year.

### *Foundation Year*

By the end of the Foundation year students demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and values of a beginning generalist social work practitioner. They will be able to assist in the empowerment of client systems of all sizes in situations of varying complexity. They will be comfortable in situations of cultural diversity and seek to alleviate human oppression and enact social justice along with their client groups.

### Foundation Courses

#### Fall semester – 12 hours

	Credit Hours
SOW 6235: Social Welfare and History	3
SOW 6105: Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3
SOW 6305: Social Work Practice I	3
SOW 6532: Field Education	3

#### Spring Semester – 15 hours

SOW 6306: Social Work Practice II	3
SOW 6106: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
SOW 6405: Research I: Methods	3
SOW 6236: Social Policy Analysis	3
SOW 6533: Field Education II	3

### Concentration or Advanced Standing Year

The Concentration Year curriculum is primarily a methods oriented curriculum to support the learning needs of a advanced clinical practitioner and the needs of this region. There are four required specialized methods courses. The Advanced Year provides in-depth clinical and community knowledge in separate courses that integrate in Advanced Practice Seminar. Additionally, the clinical course work corresponds to that which is mandated for Florida State licensure.

The Advanced Year provides in-depth clinical knowledge and skills in separate courses that are integrated in the Advanced Clinical Practice Seminar. The curriculum is primarily a

methods-oriented curriculum to support the learning needs of an advanced clinical practitioner and the needs of this region. There are three required specialized methods courses and an Advanced Clinical Practice Seminar intended to help the student integrate the broad range of methods, knowledge, and skills.

#### Concentration Year Courses

Fall Semester – 15 hours

	Credit Hours
SOW 6616: Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals	3
SOW 6435: Research II: Practice Evaluation	3
SOW 6124: Psychopathology Clinical	3
SOW 6611: Advanced Clinical Practice with Families and Couples	3
SOW 6535: Field Education III	3

Spring Semester – 12 hours

SOW 6180: Community Organization	3
SOW 6344: Advanced Clinical Practice with Groups	3
SOW 6369: Advanced Clinical Practice Seminar	3
SOW 6537: Field Education IV	3

Two social work electives must be taken during this two-year program. MSW electives are in the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

#### Advanced Standing and Part-Time Programs

In addition to the Full-Time program the MSW curriculum is delivered through the Advanced Standing program and the Part-Time Program. These programs have been designed to meet the needs of diverse student populations and to fulfill the mission of the Division of Social Work to the five surrounding counties. Each of these programs differs from the Full-Time program only with respect to the scheduling of courses. The same policies and procedures relating to admission, student advising, and field liaison apply to all programs.

#### Advanced Standing

The Division of Social Work admits MSW students once each year the spring for the following fall semester. Both BSW and non-BSW graduates are admitted. Each applicant is carefully reviewed with special emphasis on liberal arts background. CSWE has mandated that course work at the graduate level not be redundant for BSW graduates. Students with a strong academic record, who have earned a Baccalaureate of Social Work (BSW) degree may apply for admission to the Advance Standing Program. Foundation courses may be recognized, if the student meets the following criteria: (1) student graduated from a CSWE accredited program within five years of the time of application; and (2) student received grades of "B" or above in their BSW courses. In some cases, Advanced Standing students may be required to take one or more Foundation Year courses for which there was no equivalent in their BSW program.

If an applicant has less than one year of post-BSW social work experience, a copy of the student's BSW field evaluation is required, and one of three references must be from the field instructor/coordinator. If the student has one or more years of experience, one reference from her/his social work supervisor will suffice for the placement evaluation and field instructor/coordinator reference.

### Part-Time Program

The Part-Time program is designed to increase accessibility of the MSW education for students whose family or work responsibilities do not allow for full-time study or well-qualified individuals who cannot finance full-time study. Both Full-Time and Part-Time students follow the same sequence of courses and must meet the same specific graduation requirements. Applicants admitted to the Part-Time MSW program must meet the following requirements: have a commitment to attain the Master of Social Work degree; meet the admission standards of the Division of Social Work, and demonstrate strong potential for graduate professional education.

In the Part-time program, students complete the Foundation courses and Concentration courses and field education over a 4-year (8 semesters, plus 2 summers) period. This plan includes courses one or two days per week and field instruction one or two days per week. The standard 4-year schedule of courses follows. It is also possible to complete the program in 3 years. Students must request approval from their academic advisors before embarking in a 3-year plan to ensure that courses are taken in the correct sequence and with the correct co-requisite courses. The 4-year plan is:

### Foundation

#### *Year One – Fall Semester*

	Credit Hours
SOW 6235: Social Welfare and History	3
SOW 6105: Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3

#### *Year One – Spring Semester*

SOW 6306: Social Work Practice II	3
SOW 6106: Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3

#### *Year Two – Fall Semester*

SOW 6305: Social Work Practice I	3
SOW 6565: Field Education IA	2

#### *Year Two – Spring Semester*

SOW 6405: Research I: Methods	3
SOW 6236: Social Policy Analysis	3
SOW 6554: Field Education IB	2

#### *Year Two – Summer Semester*

SOW 6552: Field Education IC	2
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## Concentration/Advanced Standing

### *Year Three – Fall Semester*

	Credit Hours
SOW 6616: Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals	3
SOW 6124: Psychopathology Clinical	3

### *Year Three – Spring Semester*

SOW 6180: Community Organization	3
SOW 6611: Advanced Clinical Practice with Families and Couples	3

### *Year Three – Summer Semester*

SOW 6566: Field Education IIA	2
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### *Year Four – Fall Semester*

SOW 6435: Research II: Practice Evaluation	3
SOW 6570: Field Education IIB	2

### *Year Four – Spring Semester*

SOW 6344: Advanced Clinical Practice with Groups	3
SOW 6369: Advanced Clinical Practice Seminar	3
SOW 6571: Field Education IIC	2

## Electives

Students must take two 6000-level social work electives. These provide a further chance to learn clinical and community practice with special populations: older adults, children and families, people with mental and physical challenges, as well as administration, supervision, and task groups.

Students generally take their elective courses after completing the Foundation Year, (under special conditions, students may enroll in an elective during the foundation year, with the permission of the faculty advisor). Many students opt to take one or both electives in the summer term between their foundation and concentration year to lessen the course load during the concentration year.

All electives meeting MSW degree requirements must be at the 6000 level or above. A selection of elective courses is offered each year depending on faculty availability. The elective courses offered in this Student Handbook, are not all offered in any one academic year. Topical elective may be added. An elective course will not be offered if fewer than 10 students enroll in the course.

## Electives

SOW 6181: Grassroots Community Organization	3
SOW 4383: Administration I	3
SOW 6384: Supervision and Training	3

SOW 6386: Administration II	3
SOW 6629: Human Diversity and Oppression	3
SOW 6641: Social Work Practice with Older Persons	3
SOW 6655: Social Work Practice with Children	3
SOW 6931: Special Topics in Social Work	
Inter-relational Violence	3
International Social Work	3
Issues in Health and Mental Health	3
Vulnerable Populations	3
Chemical Dependency	3
Child Welfare	3
Child Abuse	3

Under certain circumstances, a student may request permission from the Division of Social Work to substitute a course offered by another graduate program for an MSW elective. Students may be motivated to make such a request because a graduate level course offered through another school or department (in this or another university), may be especially applicable to the student's professional social work career goals. The student **must** receive formal approval prior to enrolling in the course. In addition to a completed "External Elective Request" form, the student should also include a detailed description of the course—preferably a syllabus. Permission to complete an external course, as a substitute for an FGCU elective, must be approved by the Division of Social Work Director and credit granted provided:

1. The course is graduate level and offered by an accredited college or university.
2. The course bears direct relevance to Master's level social work education.
3. The student's academic advisor approves the course description and confirms that the rationale for taking the course in another program is pedagogically sound.
4. The course is not similar to courses offered in the Division of Social Work.
5. The course is not used to meet requirements for another degree.
6. The student earns a grade of "B" or better and provides an official transcript attesting to that fact.

# ACADEMIC POLICES AND PROCEDURES

## MSW Degree Requirements

Full-time MSW students will be enrolled for 15 credit hours each semester. The program is demanding, with required reading assignments, papers, presentations, class projects, and 16-18 hours a week of field practice.

The Division of Social Work requires a total of 60 credit hours for the MSW degree, consisting of:

- 48 hours of classroom work maintaining a 3.0 GPA (B) on a 4.0 grade system
- 12 credit hours of field placement with an "S" for satisfactory performance
- Recommendations of the faculty of the Division of Social Work to the President/Provost of FGCU that the Masters degree be granted.

## Time Limit and Matriculated Status

Degree requirements must be completed within four years of the time of initial enrollment in the program (two years for advanced-standing students). Students may intermit (not take courses) for a period of one year without the necessity of readmission. However, the student must request a leave of absence in writing by **February 1** for the following fall semester, in order to maintain her/his status as an *active* student. The letter requesting a leave of absence must include a tentative date of return and plan for completion of the program. In addition, any student who is considering intermitting or withdrawing from the program must consult with her or his adviser. If withdrawing, an **exit statement** must be submitted for the record, indicating the reason for withdrawal.

## Grading

The basic system for MSW courses is an A, B, C, D, F system, in which an A represents exceptional performance, B represents above average graduate standards, C represents average graduate standards, D represents below average graduate standards, and F represents failure—unsatisfactory work with no credit granted toward a degree. Plus/minus grades may be given and are calculated in the overall grade-point average.

Field Education is graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. Two semesters in the Foundation Year and two semesters in the Concentration Year must be completed at a satisfactory level in order for credit to be earned.

## Program Policies

- To graduate from the MSW program, a student must have a 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA).
- A student with a GPA below 3.0 in any semester will be placed on academic probation.
- A student who does not have a GPA of 3.0 at the completion of the first year will be dismissed from the program. If reinstated following an appeal, a student must repeat all required courses in which they have received a grade lower than a B.
- A student who receives a grade of Unsatisfactory (U) for a field education course will be dismissed from the program.



- A student who receives a grade of F or U in a course is automatically dropped from the program. The dismissal is effective within 14 days from the date that the student is notified in writing by the Division or at the end of the appeal process if the appeal is denied.
- A student who is not registered in any given semester must request a leave of absence in order to maintain her/his status as an active student in the program. A letter requesting a leave of absence must include a tentative date of return and plan for completion of the program.
- The faculty of the MSW Program reserves the right to dismiss from the program a student who does not meet academic requirements, behavioral expectations, or professional conduct appropriate to a master's level professional as defined by this Handbook and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.
- A student dismissed from the MSW program may appeal the dismissal to the Division of Social Work Academic Standing Committee. When a student is dismissed from the program, the division will make reasonable effort to notify the student in writing.
- All foundation and concentration year practice courses (SOW 6305, SOW 6306, SOW 6180, SOW 6344, SOW 6369, SOW 6611, and SOW 6616) are limited to students accepted into the MSW program.
- Students in the foundation year are not permitted to enroll in SOW 6306: Social Work Practice II until they have successfully completed SOW 6305: Social Work Practice I with a grade of B or better and SOW 6532: Field Education I with a satisfactory grade.
- Students in the concentration year are not permitted to enroll in SOW 6180: Community Organization or SOW 6369: Advanced Practice Seminar until they have successfully completed SOW 6616: Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals and SOW 6344: Advanced Clinical Practice with Groups with a grade of "B" or better and SOW 6535: Field Education III with a satisfactory grade.

### Independent Study

MSW students may seek permission from their faculty advisor to substitute a course of Independent Study under the direction of a member of the graduate faculty of the Division of Social Work for an MSW elective. Independent study affords a student the opportunity to explore a topic not addressed in classroom courses or to examine a subject in greater depth. When the independent study involves research of human subjects, the proposed research project must receive formal approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of FGCU prior to course registration (see below).

The student must submit a signed and completed request to the Coordinator of the MSW Program and receive formal approval prior to registering for the course. The student must also attach to the completed Independent Study Proposal form an outline of the proposed course of study. The outline should follow the format described in the Independent Study Proposal form.

Permission to undertake a course of independent study, as a substitute for an MSW elective, must be approved by the Division of Social Work and credit granted provided:

- The proposed course of independent study bears a direct relationship to professional social work and requires graduate level scholarship.
- A Division of Social Work professor formally agrees to serve as the instructor of the course of independent study.
- The student's academic advisor approves the proposal.
- The course of independent study does not duplicate work done in another independent study course or in classroom courses already part of the MSW curriculum.
- The course of independent study is not to be used to meet requirements for another degree.
- The student earns a grade of B for the independent study.

#### Academic Advising

Academic advising is highly valued by the graduate faculty of the program. Each full-time graduate faculty member serves as academic advisor to MSW students. Immediately upon acceptance into the MSW Program, applicants are assigned a faculty academic adviser. The faculty advisor assists students throughout their educational career as they prepare to become competent advanced clinical social workers. The advisor monitors student progress, provides consultation in planning a course of study, and assists in problem-solving with regard to both classroom and field education. The faculty advisor serves as *point person* with whom the student may confer regarding any academic issue or concern.

Faculty advisors serve several important functions within the MSW program:

1. Helping the student identify and clarify personal career goals in the context of realistic professional opportunities and socialization for the social work profession.
2. Fostering and evaluating student academic progress in the context of an educational experience to ensure sufficient number of credits each semester congruent with degree completion requirements and for maintenance of required GPA and individual social work course grades.
3. Helping the student identify and use campus and/or community resources when necessary for financial need, personal counseling, academic skill development, and/or other threats to satisfactory academic and professional performance.
4. Facilitating grievance and appeal processes for students failing to meet the program's academic and professional requirements.

#### Student's Rights and Responsibilities

MSW students are viewed as competent adults who have not only the right but also the responsibility to participate in the decision-making process about the educational program in which they have enrolled. Students regularly contribute to the continued development and growth of programs in the Division. Student input is highly valued across the continuum of the program. For example:

- All students enrolled at FGCU have an opportunity at the end of each course to evaluate their instructors. Students are given standardized faculty evaluation forms to complete. These evaluations are confidential. Results are provided to the faculty to use in strengthening content, teaching, and learning methods to facilitate more effective instruction.
- Through their elected and/or volunteer representatives, MSW students provide input to and learn from each of the following committees: Curriculum, Student Affairs and Education Review, Division Meetings, and various others which might be convened throughout the year. Student representatives are viewed as especially valuable members of these committees.
- Students have the opportunity to meet both informally and formally with any candidates being considered for faculty positions. Additionally, a student representative is selected to be a member of any screening committee commissioned in the hiring of new faculty. Students are asked to provide written assessments of each candidate to be included as a part of the recommendation package prepared by the Division for employment purposes.

#### Minimum Academic Standards

To be in good standing in MSW Program, a student must maintain a graduate grade point average of 3.0 or better in all graduate credit courses and must maintain reasonable progress toward MSW program requirements.

The Division of Social Work MSW Program places a student, whose graduate cumulative point-hour ratio falls below 3.0, after 15 graduate credit hours have been attempted, on probation. Further academic action may be taken at the end of the following semester of enrollment on the basis of the student's progress.

#### Incomplete Grades

A student who has not completed all of the required coursework by the end of the term may, with the permission of the instructor, be assigned a grade of "I" (Incomplete). A grade of "I" is not computed in a student's GPA.

An incomplete grade cannot be assigned to a course if the student fails to attend the course, drops the course after the drop/add period, or withdraws from the university. A student, who registers for a course but fails to meet the course requirements, without officially dropping the course, will receive a grade of "F" in the course.

To initiate consideration for a grade of "I", a student must contact the instructor before grades are reported. The decision to allow an "I" is solely at the instructor's discretion. Should a professor decide to assign the grade, both the student and the professor must complete an Incomplete Grade Agreement form. A copy of this form must be on file in the Office of Registration and Records and should be submitted by the instructor with the final grade roster.

The maximum amount of time to complete coursework to remove a grade of "I" is one year from the ending date of the semester for which the grade was assigned. However, at the instructor's discretion, the amount of time given to the student to complete the coursework may be restricted. After one year, a grade of "I" will be changed to an "F" if the instructor

has reported no grade. A student may not re-register for a course in which he or she currently has an incomplete (I) grade.

## Grievance Policy

### **6C10-4.004. STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.**

1. **General** – The intent of this rule is to provide a procedure whereby student grievances are processed promptly and resolved fairly. Students shall be given adequate opportunity to bring complaints to the attention of the University with the assurance that the proper University officials will promptly investigate the facts of the case and evaluate these facts in an objective manner.

- a. Student problems should be resolved, whenever possible, before the filing of a formal written grievance and open communication is encouraged so that resort to formal grievance procedures will not be necessary. Informal resolution of grievances may be continued throughout the process.
- b. Time limits contained in this rule may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties. Upon failure by the University or its representatives to provide a decision within the time limits provided in this rule or any extension thereof, the grievant may appeal to the next appropriate step. Upon failure of the grievant or counsel to file an appeal, or take prescribed action, within the time limits provided in this rule, the grievance shall be deemed to have been resolved at the prior step.

2. **Exclusions** – Grievances pertaining to the following matters shall not be processed under this rule:

- a. Disciplinary actions taken under FGCU Student Code of Conduct.
- b. Traffic and Parking Violations.
- c. The professional judgment exercised by an instructor in assigning a grade.
- d. Professional judgment of licensed practitioners in the health related professions.

3. **Definitions** -

- a. "Day" means a calendar day, unless expressly stated otherwise. If a time limit expires on a non-business day, the limit shall be extended to 5 p.m. of the next business day.
- b. "Grievance" means a dispute or request for redress of the interpretation or application of any law, University rule or policy that adversely impacts the Grievant's substantial interest.
- c. "Grievant" means any enrolled or admitted student who presents a grievance under this rule.
- d. "Respondent" means the FGCU faculty or staff member who is alleged to have caused the grievance by identifiable acts of omission or commission.

- e. "Party" means either the grievant or the respondent.
- f. "Counsel" means an attorney or lay advisor.
- g. "Resolution" means an action by or on the behalf of the University that is satisfactory to the student.

#### **4. Informal Resolution of Student Grievances.**

- a. It is the University policy to encourage the informal resolution of grievances directly between the student and the respondent. If this cannot be accomplished, the student is encouraged to continue informal resolution presenting the problem orally through appropriate administrative channels up to, but not including, the Office of the Vice President in whose area the respondent is employed.
- b. Upon request, the University Ombudsperson will inform the student as to the administrative channels to be followed in an attempt to secure informal resolution.

#### **5. Formal Resolution of Grievances.**

- a. If informal resolution attempts do not succeed, the student may present the grievance in writing. The grievance shall contain a statement of the facts and circumstances giving rise to the grievance that identifies relevant dates and witnesses, specifies the law, rule or policy alleged to have been violated and describes how the grievant's substantial interests are adversely impacted. This written grievance shall be mailed or delivered to the University Ombudsperson no later than thirty (30) days following the date on which the alleged act or omission causing the grievance occurred; or not later than thirty (30) days from the date the student acquired knowledge, or could be reasonably expected to have acquired knowledge, of the alleged act or omission unless the time limit has been extended by mutual agreement.
- b. Upon receipt of a formal student grievance, the University Ombudsperson will review the grievance to determine whether or not action under this rule is appropriate or is excluded under the provisions of subsection (2) above. If action under this rule is appropriate, the University Ombudsperson will notify the student of receipt of the grievance and of the name of the respondent's Vice President who will handle the procedures outlined herein; simultaneously the Ombudsperson will notify the respondent and deliver the written grievance to the Vice President in whose area the respondent is employed. The Ombudsperson will inform the student that proceedings under this rule are not appropriate if such is the case. Regardless of the disposition, such notice will be mailed to the student within fifteen (15) days after the Ombudsperson's receipt of the written grievance.
- c. Within 15 days of receipt of notification of the grievance, the respondent (or in case of absence of the respondent's supervisor) shall prepare a written response to the allegation(s) made by the student and shall furnish copies of this response to the grievant, and to the appropriate Vice President.
- d. Upon receipt of the grievance and the respondent's reply thereto, the Ombudsperson shall review the matter and conduct an inquiry, if necessary. The Ombudsperson shall forward a recommendation to the Vice President after review of the grievance,

the Ombudsperson's recommendation, associated documents and any discussions necessary to determine the facts, the Vice President or designee shall render a decision within thirty (30) days. This decision shall be forwarded in writing to the grievant and the respondent. The decision of the Vice President is final. (Student Guidebook, 2009-2010)

### Academic and Scholarly Guidelines

Students admitted to the MSW program at the FGCU Division of Social Work have already demonstrated in their undergraduate or other graduate studies their capacity for superior academic work. Students should be familiar and comfortable with high academic and scholarly standards. Students are expected to attend classroom and practicum course meetings. Regular attendance is viewed as the personal and professional responsibility of each MSW student. Active participation in course activities is the expected. In participating, students are expected to display interest in and respect for their colleagues in a manner that is congruent with the values, ethics, and skills of the profession.

In written assignments, students are expected to prepare documents in a scholarly and professional manner. Submissions should be typewritten in double-space format and carefully edited for spelling and grammar. All direct quotations, paraphrases, empirical research findings and other restatements of the research, scholarship, or creative work of others must be appropriately documented using the standard bibliographic citation methods set out in the sixth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2009)*. **The APA Manual serves as the guide for style and format of all papers submitted in the MSW program.**

Competent and effective social work practice requires well-developed and refined communication skills, including the use of the written word. Writing well helps social workers communicate information accurately and concisely to others involved in helping client systems. For this reason, formal writing assignments in social work courses will be evaluated on both the basis of the quality of the scholarly content as well as the quality of its presentation.

### Student Misconduct

The FGCU, Division of Social Work may discipline a student for academic misconduct which is defined as any action which could compromise the academic integrity of the University and undermine the educational process.

Academic misconduct includes, but not exclusively, the following:

- *Cheating*. The following actions are considered cheating:
  - The use of external assistance on any in-class or take-home examination, unless the instructor specifically has authorized such assistance. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the use of tutors, books, notes, and calculators.
  - Having another person as a substitute in the taking of an examination or quiz.
  - Stealing examinations or other course materials.
  - Allowing others to conduct research or to prepare any work for him or her without advance authorization from the instructor to whom the work is being submitted.

- Making unauthorized use of materials obtained from commercial term paper companies or from files of papers prepared by other persons.
- Collaborating with other persons on a particular project and submitting a copy of a written report that is represented explicitly or implicitly as the student's own individual work.
- Using any unauthorized assistance in a laboratory, at a computer terminal, or on fieldwork.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit or honors more than once without permission of the instructor to whom the work is being submitted.
- Altering a grade or score in any way.
- *Fabrication.* To falsify or invent any information or data in an academic exercise including, but not limited to: records or reports, laboratory results, and citations to the sources of information.
- *Plagiarism.* To adopt or reproduce ideas, words, or statements of another person without an appropriate acknowledgement. A student must give due credit to creativity of others and acknowledge an indebtedness whenever he or she does any of the following:
  - Quotes another person's actual words, either oral or written.
  - Paraphrases another person's words, either oral or written.
  - Uses another person's idea, opinion, or theory.
  - Borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material, unless the information is common knowledge.
- *Interference*
  - To steal, change, destroy, or impede another student's work. Impeding another student's work includes, but is not limited to, the theft, defacement, or mutilation of resources so as to deprive others of the information they contain.
  - To give or offer a bribe, promise favors, or make threats with the intention of affecting a grade or the evaluation of academic performance.
- *Violation of Course Rules.* To violate course rules as contained in a course syllabus or other information provided to the student.
- *Facilitating Academic Dishonesty.* To intentionally or knowingly help or attempt to help another student to commit an act of academic misconduct.

#### Division of Social Work Policy on Student Continuation, Review, and Dismissal

#### Educational Requirements

For continuation in and graduation from the program, students are required to:

- Earn at least a "B" in each social work course.
- Earn a grade of "Satisfactory" in Field Education I, II, III, and IV.
- Maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA in required social work courses and 3.0 overall GPA.

- Carry out professional activity in conformity with the values and ethics of the profession and comply with any Corrective Action Contract that may have been entered into (see below).

### Policy on Student Performance Review

All students are admitted on the assumption that they have the potential academic ability and personal suitability for completing the professional program in which they are enrolled. All students in the MSW Program are expected to maintain the standards established by the Division of Social Work and those held by the social work profession. In order to identify possible academic problems, the Division reviews students' performances periodically.

#### *Criteria for Review*

Conduct that is not congruent with the values and ethics of the social work profession (e.g., NASW, NABSW, CSWE) and the Academic Code of Conduct for Students at FGCU constitutes grounds for review. This includes behavior in the student's fieldwork and the classroom that does not conform to the profession's values and ethics such as:

- Behavior that interferes with the student's functioning and/or jeopardizes the welfare of those to whom the student has responsibility, such as clients and co-workers.
- Failure to communicate effectively, both verbally and in written form, including interviewing skills and interpersonal skills that permit comfortable interaction with other people.
- Failure to adhere to internship agency policies and professional standards.
- Failure to use sound judgment, both in work with clients and in regard to oneself, such as failure to seek professional help for physical or emotional problems which interfere with professional functioning.
- Having more than one Incomplete at a time in course work, or having received more than two grades of Incomplete in any course after admission to the program.
- Academic dishonesty such as cheating on examinations or plagiarism or otherwise presenting the work of someone else as one's own.
- Grade Point Average fall below 3.0.
- A request by a faculty member for a review due to student's poor course work performance.

#### *Procedures for Social Work Student Performance Review*

The Division has established mechanisms to respond to requests for students' performance reviews. At the beginning of the academic year, a Performance Review Committee, composed of a Chair and a faculty member, shall be formed. The Chair will be responsible for convening the meeting for the review process. The performance review committee is conceptualized as a mechanism to identify and resolve as early as possible any developing problems with students' academic and/or professional performance.

The functions of the Student Performance Review Committee will be to:



- Review those students who fall under "Criteria for Review by Performance Review Committee."
- Receive faculty requests for student performance review.
- Receive student requests for a student performance review.

When a student's performance is evaluated as deficient, the Committee can recommend the following:

1. *Corrective Action Contract.* In situations where such action is feasible and desirable, a Corrective Action Contract will be created.
  - The contract will set forth problems to be solved, actions to be taken to solve said problems, and a time period for completion of designated actions and re-evaluation of student performance.
  - Consequences for non-performance also will be included in the contract.
  - The Committee will work together with the student, her/his advisor, and other relevant parties.
  - If the student fails to fulfill the contract, or, while working on the contract some serious impropriety or failing academic performance occurs, the Committee may decide that the student cannot continue in the MSW program.
  - Dismissal can occur during any semester of enrollment in the MSW Program, including the last semester of enrollment.
2. *Automatic Probation.* The following circumstances will result in automatic probationary status:
  - Failure to maintain a 3.0 grade-point average or a grade of "D" or below in any social work course.
  - Two incompletes in one semester.
  - Incomplete in Field.
3. *Automatic Dismissal.* Automatic dismissal will occur as a result of the following:
  - Failure in any Field course.
  - Failure to carry out professional activity.
  - In the event of an automatic dismissal, the following notification procedures are followed:
    - The Committee will notify the instructor for the course, the faculty advisor, and the Division Director.
    - Within five (5) working days of receiving the Dismissal Notification, the Division Director will send, by certified mail, a written statement to the student indicating that she/he has been dismissed from the program and invite the student to meet with the Division Student Affairs Committee to discuss her/his academic plans. A copy of the letter will also be forwarded to the Division Student Affairs Committee.
    - The Division Student Affairs Committee and faculty advisor will meet with the student, should s/he wish to discuss options and reinstatement procedures.

### *Appeal Procedures*

Should the student wish to continue in the program, s/he should petition the Division Student Affairs Committee for a continuance.

- The petition should be presented in writing and should address two major points.
  - First, an identification of extenuating factors, if any, which contributed to the poor performance in the course.
  - Second, a discussion of the steps that will be taken to: (1) alleviate the impact of those factors; and (2) improve academic performance, if permitted to continue in the program.

The faculty advisor will forward to the Division Student Affairs Committee a recommendation (with rationale) regarding continuation. The recommendation should take into consideration the specific situation as well as the student's overall academic performance. The faculty advisor should consult with the instructor of the course the student has failed.

Within five (5) business days of receipt of the petition, the Division Student Affairs Committee will set a date for a hearing. After a review hearing is set, the Committee Chair shall give at least five (5) business-days notification to the student, the student's advisor and members of the Student Affairs Committee about the hearing time and place. The student submitting the petition will be notified via Certified U.S. mail. All Committee members and the student's advisor must be present at this hearing. The committee will review the case and make a decision.

#### *Appeal Hearing*

##### Fact-Finding

- The student may attend and also present information to the committee during the fact-finding part of the meeting. Prior to the meeting, the student must inform the Student Affairs Committee Chair of intent to attend the meeting and/or address the Committee.
- The student may ask up to two persons who are knowledgeable about her/his performance to present information to the committee during the fact-finding part of the meeting. Such persons must make brief statements and are permitted to be present in the Committee meeting only to make their presentation to the Committee. The Student Affairs Committee Chair must be informed at least 48 hours in advance about those persons who will appear on behalf of the student as well as the general nature of the information that each will present.
- The student's advisor shall:
  - Secure evaluations from other instructors regarding the student's performance in their course in previous semester(s)
  - Present brief background information about the student and present information gathered from instructors and provide an assessment of the student's overall performance.

- Make any recommendations for resolving the student's performance problems for the Committee's consideration.
- Other faculty members who can contribute information regarding the student's performance may also participate during the fact-finding part of the meeting.
- The student and any other persons (including faculty) addressing the committee during the fact-finding part of the meeting shall not be present during the Deliberation and Action part of the meeting.

#### *Deliberation and Action*

- For this part of the meeting, the student's advisor shall be present, but will not participate in the voting. Only Committee members vote.
- Deliberation and action will involve:
  - Consideration of all the factors in the present and past performance of the student.
  - Discussion of alternative plans to address the performance problem(s).
  - Decision on plan to be completed by student to resolve the performance problem or decision to dismiss the student from the MSW Program.
- The appeals committee shall prepare a written recommendation for submission to the Chair of the Performance Review Committee which will include a statement describing the nature of the performance problem, a summary of the facts as they were presented to the Committee, a description of the Committee's action, and the reasons for supporting said action.

#### *Notification*

Within one (1) week after review hearing, the Performance Review Committee's recommendation will be sent in writing to the Division Director who may accept, reject or modify the recommendation of the Committee. The Director's decision is sent in writing to the student, the student's advisor, the Performance Review Committee, the Student Affairs Committee, and the Division Director, with a copy going to the student file in the Division.

#### *Confidentiality*

All procedures related to performance review must be carried out in a manner that assures protection of the student's rights to privacy regarding information about her/his academic records, performance, or any of her/his personal affairs. The student has the right to review all written information that is presented to the Committee. Members of the Committee and other persons who appear at the hearing are expected to maintain confidentiality with regard to all aspects of the hearing. Actions of the committee are to remain confidential and are to be shared only with those persons involved with the student in an educational capacity.

#### *Appeal for Readmission*

- If the student has not been reinstated after automatic dismissal, the student may present a substantive written appeal requesting a review by the Division Director.
- Upon receipt of the appeal for readmission, the Division Director will review the case expeditiously, including consultation with appropriate individuals, in order to avoid unnecessary delays in the student's progress in the program.

### Students and Governance

The following Meetings and Committees in the Division are comprised of both faculty and student members:

- Curriculum Committee. Reviews issues pertaining to the curriculum and practicum of the program.
- Student Affairs and Educational Review Committee. Makes formal recommendation after consultation regarding the academic status of students whose performance in either class or field is being questioned. Reviews requests for grade appeal/change.
- Division Meetings. Primary governing body for policy changes within the Division.
- Faculty Search Committees. Screens candidates for faculty positions and makes formal recommendations to the Chairperson regarding hiring.

Chairs of the various Division committees will recruit student members every fall via the social work student organization and by posting openings in the Division. Students interested in serving on any of these Division committees may also communicate their interest to their advisor who will forward this information to the appropriate committee chair.

### Faculty Responsibilities

#### Course Syllabi

The Faculty of Florida Gulf Coast University, Division of Social Work subscribes to the principle that a course syllabus represents a "contract with students." Therefore, learning activities, experiences, assignments, and evaluation procedures are expected to relate logically to the course objectives described in the syllabus. Significant variations in course content from what is described in the course syllabus would necessarily occur only with full understanding and consent of the students enrolled in the course.

#### Course/Instructor Evaluations

Faculty members and instructors regularly seek evaluative feedback from students concerning classroom or field instructional learning activities. Toward the end of the semester, formal course/instructor evaluations are distributed to all students. When completed, these evaluations are forwarded to the Administration for aggregation, review, and analysis before being forwarded to each instructor. These formal course/instructor evaluations are used for numerous purposes, including promotion and contract renewal decisions, merit raises, and various faculty development activities.

## Advising

Each MSW student will be assigned a social work faculty advisor responsible for evaluating transcripts, providing course approval, reviewing program requirements, preparing degree audits, and certifying graduation.

Students are expected to take primary responsibility to meet with their social work faculty advisor at least one time per semester to review their program of study to meet their individual needs and to insure progress toward completion of requirements for graduation.

## Criteria for Evaluating Academic Work

**Written Work:** Quality writing is essential for social work practice. Generally, papers must begin with an introductory statement of purpose and an overview of the ideas to be presented. Each aspect of the assignment must be thoroughly addressed and *adherence to guidelines provided by individual instructors is expected*. Citations and references in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* format, according to the most recent edition of the publication manual (currently 6<sup>th</sup>), must be included. APA style resources can be accessed at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Students must carefully proofread their papers for typographical, grammatical, sentence structure, spelling, and other mechanical errors.

**Class Presentations:** Presentations are an important part of graduate study. The purposes of the presentation should be clear in the syllabus. Presentations should be well organized and articulately delivered. The presentation should demonstrate practice insights and skills and ample integration of theoretical material from the readings and class discussions. A skillful presenter involves the audience in the presentation. Handouts should be written clearly and include all reference material used to construct the presentation. Use of audio-visual technology (i.e., PowerPoint) can greatly enhance a presentation and is often required by the instructor. As with the use of any technology, it is advisable that training be obtained in developing PowerPoint presentations to enhance their effectiveness.

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Students in the MSW program are expected to demonstrate performance and behavior appropriate to a graduate level professional. This includes attending each class session, preparing for class and arriving on time. A student who must be late or absent (because of illness, for example), is expected to make a concerted effort to notify the instructor and is solely responsible to ascertain what work was missed.

Oral participation should demonstrate:

- An ability to make conscious, purposeful use of self in interactions within the classroom
- Self-awareness (feelings as well as behaviors)
- Receptivity to feedback and an ability to integrate feedback into behavioral change;
- Respect for difference and for others' feelings, including, but not limited to a nonjudgmental attitude, sensitivity to ethnic diversity and oppressed groups, respect for confidentiality and client self-determination;
- An ability to contribute comments that are clearly stated and immediately germane *to the focal issues under discussion*; and
- An ability to use the group to meet own needs, while respecting and without infringing upon the needs of others.

## Policy Concerning Confidentiality

The faculty of the Division of Social Work recognizes the value and importance of each student's right to confidentiality. Students may request that specific information shared with individual members of the faculty, field instructors, and/or academic administrators be kept confidential. Although confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, such information will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, Division of Social Work, the NASW Code of Ethics, and FGCU policies. The Division of Social Work regards faculty, faculty advisors, field instructors, and Division administrators as members of each student's educational team who may be consulted periodically to discuss student progress. Information shared confidentially by a student will be shared with their team members only when a team member deems it necessary to address a student's educational needs.

The faculty of the Division of Social Work acknowledges the value and importance of free and open classroom discussion. Students are encouraged to express opinions relevant to course content. In sharing information about others (e.g., clients in their practice), students are expected to protect the confidentiality of others in the classroom, to the extent possible under the law and college/Division policy. Students are expected to refrain from divulging to others outside of the classroom confidential information shared within the classroom. The confidentiality of classroom discussion cannot be guaranteed because of "duty to protect" and "mandatory reporting" laws and/or policies which may require disclosure.

Students are expected to protect the right to confidentiality of the clients that they meet in field. Therefore, ALL identifiers must be removed when presenting case studies for class assignments. This includes names, addresses and any other demographic information that may disclose the identity of the client. Under **NO** circumstances may a student remove a record from an agency setting, photocopy a record or transcribe any identifying information from a record. **Violations of confidentiality are grounds for immediate dismissal from the MSW program.**

## Non-Discrimination Policy

The University's policies on non-discrimination are implemented in all aspects of program operation. Social work faculty members are committed to the principles of equal opportunity and non-discrimination in all program components including admissions, instruction, field placement, and evaluation of student performance. The social work program is conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed or national origin, disability, political orientation, or sexual orientation. Policies on non-discrimination are published in the Field Handbook of both the BSW and MSW programs are implemented by program faculty and staff alike.

FGCU has publicly proclaimed its commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity in its Affirmative Action Plan ([http://www.fgcu.edu/eo/eo\\_01\\_05.html](http://www.fgcu.edu/eo/eo_01_05.html)). The Plan was developed in accordance with the Guidelines published by the Department of Labor, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, effective February 1, 1998, pertaining to Executive Order 11246, as amended; Section 503(a) Public Law 92.540.86, as amended, and Section 503 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## Equal Opportunity

Florida Gulf Coast University is committed to the principles of Equal Educational and Employment Opportunities without regard to race, color, marital status, sex, religion, national origin, handicap or age, as provided by law, and in accordance with the University's respect for personal dignity. The University is also committed to the employment and advancement of qualified disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era.

## Sexual Harassment Policy

Pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Florida Education Equity Act, and in compliance with our policy of equal opportunity, it is the goal of Florida Gulf Coast University to create and maintain a work and study environment that is positive and free of discrimination of any kind. In order to help provide such an environment, faculty, staff, and students must be aware that sexual harassment is sex discrimination, and in unacceptable conduct that will not be tolerated at the University.

Any Applicant, student or employee who believes that he or she has not been treated in accordance with the University's Equal Educational, Employment Opportunity Policy, and Sexual Harassment Policy may file a complaint with the Director of Equal Opportunity Affairs.

Florida Gulf Coast University maintains an Internal Auditing and Reporting System to monitor the progress, or lack of progress, of the University's EEO/AA program. The following areas are included in the University's internal audit program.

## University Notices

### Anti-Drug Abuse Act

Students convicted of drug felonies may lose their eligibility for federal financial aid programs. The Omnibus Drug Initiative Act of 1988 gives courts the authority to suspend eligibility for federal student aid when sentencing an individual convicted of possession or distribution of a controlled substance. For a drug possession conviction, eligibility is suspended for one year for the first offense, two years for the second offense, and indefinitely for the third offense. For a drug sale conviction, eligibility is suspended two years for the first offense, and indefinitely for the second offense.

### Drug-Free Campus Policy

Federal legislation mandates every individual's right to work and learn in a drug-free environment. Florida Gulf Coast University firmly supports this right in policy and practice. Information regarding university policy is available from the Office of the Dean of Student Services and the Office of Human Resources.

### Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment undermines the integrity of the academic and work environment, and prevents its victims and peers from achieving their full potential. All members of the university community are entitled to work and study in an atmosphere free from sexual overtures or innuendoes that are unsolicited and unwelcome. It is the particular

responsibility of those members of the university community who hold positions of authority over others to avoid actions that are or can be considered sexually abusive or unprofessional.

Florida Gulf Coast University's sexual harassment policy and procedures seek to ensure an environment that is free from sexual harassment. Such conduct is costly in human terms and seriously undermines the atmosphere of trust and respect that is essential to work and study for all members of the academic community. All employees, students, and vendors must comply with both the spirit and the intent of federal and state laws and regulations that relate to sexual harassment. The coverage of this policy extends to persons visiting the campus.

When resolution is not achieved within the local unit, university procedure is available. It should be clearly understood that the university will take action to prevent sexual harassment, including, if necessary, disciplining those individuals whose behavior violate university policy. Discipline may include, but is not limited to, oral or written reprimand, transfer, suspension, or dismissal. It is expected that the deans, chairs, department heads, team leaders, directors, and other supervisors will monitor and take corrective action whenever instances of sexual harassment are either observed or reported to them. While the decision regarding resolution normally remains within the unit, all allegations of sexual harassment are to be immediately reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, which will monitor, provide advice, and take appropriate action as required by federal and state laws.

To the extent possible, the confidentiality of the complainant, alleged offender, and all those officially involved in the proceedings and/or investigation shall be preserved. The information shall remain confidential during the investigation and hearing process. For information and informal advice pertaining to sexual harassment, contact the Office of the Dean of Student Services, Student Union Building, Room 104, 590-7900; the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Library, Second Floor, 590-7011; or the Director of Human Resources, Howard Hall 228, 590-1400. Formal complaints are filed with the Director of Equal Opportunity Programs, Library, Second Floor, 590-1022.

#### NASW Code of Ethics

The Division of Social Work adheres to the NASW Code of Ethics and students enrolled in the MSW Program are expected to adhere to the Code in their interactions with clients, colleagues, the community, and the profession-at-large. The full-text of the NASW Code of Ethics can be accessed at: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/codenew/code.asp>. A link to the Code is also provided on the MSW Field site on ANGEL.