



UNIVERSITY *of*  
DENVER

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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK DEGREE PROGRAM

Student/Faculty Handbook to the MSW Program  
2020-2021

MSW@Denver Program

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Our Vision .....	5
Our Mission .....	5
Our Values .....	5
Accreditation .....	5
<b>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MSW PROGRAM</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b> .....	<b>7</b>
2019-2020 Academic Calendar .....	7
Faculty and Administration .....	7
Faculty .....	7
<b>Student Groups and Organizations</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Student Government .....	7
Graduate Student Association (GSA) for GSSW .....	8
Queer Equality Alliance (QEA) .....	8
Phi Alpha Honor Society .....	8
Shades of Brown Alliance (SOBA) .....	8
ECO Conscious .....	8
Spanish Conversation Group .....	8
Colorado Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) .....	9
<b>Governance and Student Participation in Governance</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Dissemination of Information and Facilities</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Communication with the University and the Graduate School of Social Work .....	9
PioneerWeb .....	10
<b>Denver Campus Craig Hall Information and Policies</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Technology Resources</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Policies and Procedures .....	10
Technology Access on Campus .....	10
<b>EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Academic Classification of Students</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Regular Status .....	11
Conditional Status .....	11
Probational Status .....	11
<b>Registration</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Documentation Required Prior to Registration/Holds .....	11
Registration Timeline .....	12
Student Class Load .....	12
Add/Drop .....	13
Independent, Directed Study, & Experiential Courses .....	13
Auditing .....	13
Waitlists .....	14
Leave of Absence/Withdrawing from the Program .....	14
Re-entry to the Program .....	14
<b>Grades and Grading</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Grading Policy .....	15
Grade Reports .....	15
Repetition of Courses/Grades of F or NP .....	16
Incomplete (I) .....	16
In Progress (IP) .....	17
Change of Grade .....	17
Grade Appeal Process .....	17

<b>Transfer of Credit from another Institution or Department</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Transfer Credits .....	18
Course Waiver/Substitution .....	19
Credit for Courses Taken in other Departments at University of Denver or with other GSSW Programs (Cognate Courses) .....	19
<b>Academic Standing</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Academic Probation.....	19
Satisfactory Academic Progress.....	20
<b>Academic and Professional Standards of Performance</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Procedures for Academic Grievances and Appeals</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Academic Student Support Resources</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Student Success Advising .....	28
Academic Advising .....	28
Students with Disabilities .....	28
The Writing Center.....	29
Veteran Services Coordinator .....	29
Student and Career Services .....	30
<b>Student Rights and Responsibilities</b> .....	<b>30</b>
Academic Integrity and Ethical Conduct.....	30
DU Honor Code .....	30
Student Concerns Regarding Courses and/or Instructors.....	30
Student Papers and Projects.....	31
Name and Pronoun Use in the Classroom.....	32
Gender Inclusive Communication Statement.....	32
Technology Use in the Classroom.....	32
Scholarly Language and Writing (APA).....	32
<b>DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT INFORMATION</b> .....	<b>33</b>
Directory Information.....	33
University of Denver Disclosure Policies .....	33
Graduate School of Social Work Disclosure Policy .....	33
Student Role in Program Assessment.....	34
The Office of Equal Opportunity/ADA Compliance.....	34
<b>GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>Graduation Requirements</b> .....	<b>35</b>
Advancement to Candidacy.....	35
Degree Audit.....	35
Applying to Graduate .....	35
<b>Participation in Commencement Ceremonies</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>Preparation for Post-Graduation</b> .....	<b>37</b>
Preparation for Licensure .....	37
Provisional Special Services License for School Social Workers .....	37
<b>GUIDELINES ON MSW STUDENTS PERFORMING CONCURRENT PRIVATE INDEPENDENT PRACTICE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY OR COUNSELING</b> .....	<b>38</b>
Policy .....	38
Definition of Terms .....	38
Guidelines.....	38
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b> .....	<b>40</b>
University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work.....	40
Office of the Dean .....	40
Academic Affairs .....	40
GSSW Registrar .....	40
Student & Career Services .....	40
Field Education .....	40
Enrollment and Financial Aid .....	40

## INTRODUCTION

The MSW Handbook sets forth the educational policies and procedures for the MSW@Denver Program. The policies in this handbook govern these MSW degree programs and its students, exclusive of policies and procedures specific to field instruction and academic degree requirements.

The policies and procedures set forth in this document are in effect for the 2020-2021 academic year and will govern most, if not all, educational experiences of students beginning study in the 2020-2021 academic year (including students beginning in Summer 2020).

Not all policies relevant to GSSW students are included in this document. Students should also refer to the University of Denver Graduate Policies and Procedures in the [Graduate Bulletin](#) for more information.

Faculty of GSSW and of the University of Denver as a whole; however, reserve the right to make those changes in curriculum, policies, and procedures that will enhance the educational experience and outcomes of students. The policies and procedures included within this Handbook will remain in effect until the next year's handbook is published.

## VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

### Our Vision

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Achievement of thriving sustainable communities, actualized human potential, and embodiment of equity across all communities.

### Our Mission

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The Graduate School of Social Work promotes social justice by advancing scholarship, education, and community engagement that leads, connects, mobilizes, and transforms.

### Our Values

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The guiding philosophy of social work includes values that create a framework for social work education, research, and service. These include:

- Progressive ideals of equality, social and economic justice, cultural diversity and freedom;
- Social work's unique focus on systems and their impact on people as the central concept that shapes our curriculum, research, and practice;
- Excellence in the development of social work knowledge and its dissemination to students, communities and policy makers;
- Responsibility for promoting social change and leading the social work profession in this effort.

### Accreditation

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The Master of Social Work program at the University of Denver is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Post-Secondary Accreditation.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MSW PROGRAM

Based on the vision, values, and mission of the University and GSSW, and the mission of the social work profession, the goals of the MSW program are to:

- Prepare students for effective, culturally responsive, and ethical advanced clinical or community professional social work practice that enhances human interaction;
- Involve students in critical scholarly inquiry, application and development of knowledge, and consideration of values and ethics;
- Encourage students to assume leadership in promoting social and economic justice, advancing the public good, furthering multicultural understanding, and eliminating oppression.

Derived from the goals of the MSW program, the objective of the MSW program is to graduate students who are prepared to enter advanced, autonomous practice in an area of concentration. Specifically, our graduates will:

- Demonstrate ethical, culturally responsive advanced clinical or community practice that emphasizes: the strengths of individuals and communities; the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and the role of context in service delivery;
- Analyze policy, identify and collaborate in advocating for strategies that promote social and economic justice, eliminate oppression, foster the public good, and enhance the welfare of clients;
- Demonstrate self-reflective practice that includes: examination of societal and personal bias, privilege, and values; critical evaluation of structural inequities; self-correction to align personal values with the profession's; and demonstration of professional demeanor;
- Demonstrate career-long learning that includes a continuous process of examining published evidence, using supervision and consultation to improve practice, and communicating clearly with clients, colleagues in social work and systems;
- Make ethical decisions based on the standards of social work practice, examining personal values and ethics, exploring all sides of ethical conflicts, and weighing each side against social work codes of ethics to reach a principled decision;
- Critically evaluate and ethically apply the major theories related to human development and behavior that guide advanced clinical or community social work practice using a person-in-environment lens;
- Demonstrate that advanced clinical or community social work practice (including assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation) is guided by a critical review of empirical evidence, including research-based knowledge and practice-based findings;
- Demonstrate preparation for and competency in social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities through appropriate interpersonal skills and ability for mutual engagement;
- Demonstrate competency in holistic client and client-system assessment, goal-setting, planning, intervention, and evaluation of practice.

Updated Fall 2013

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### 2020-2021 Academic Calendar

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To access the 2018-2019 academic calendar, go to the [University of Denver Registrar Academic Calendar](#) and refer to the GSSW Portfolio resources.

### Faculty and Administration

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The faculty of the Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) has diverse skills, talents, and interests. This diversity adds to the educational process. In addition to teaching, members of the faculty serve as consultants, trainers, and participants in a variety of community agencies and projects. They also participate in University projects with faculty from other departments. Most faculty members serve students as advisors and members of educational committees.

For more information about professional staff and their roles, please see the GSSW [Staff Directory](#).

#### Faculty

##### Appointed faculty

Appointed faculty hold continuing appointments and are expected to engage in research or other scholarly endeavors, University service and community service in addition to teaching and serving as advisors. Appointed faculty include tenure/tenure-track faculty, clinical faculty, faculty of the practice of social work, and research faculty.

##### Adjunct faculty

Adjunct Faculty are instructors who are actively engaged in practice in addition to their teaching. They are engaged by GSSW to teach specific courses based on their education, experience, and expertise.

For more information, please see the [GSSW Faculty Directory](#).

Students in each course taught at GSSW complete anonymous evaluations of the course and the instructor each quarter. The results of the evaluations are provided to the instructor and to program administration in an effort to enhance the quality of teaching. Students are encouraged to meet with faculty members. Faculty post regular office hours and can meet virtually by Zoom video conference. For students that can visit the Denver campus, materials and messages may be left for faculty in the faculty/staff mailboxes in the lobby of Craig Hall and through e-mail.

### Student Groups and Organizations

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GSSW student groups and organizations are listed below. If students in the Western Colorado, Four Corners Program or MSW@Denver program are interested in participating in any of the student organizations, please contact that organization directly or the GSSW Student Experience Coordinator. For more information, please visit the [GSSW Student Organizations webpage](#) or the [GSSW Student Resource Portal](#) on DU Portfolio.

#### Student Government

To contact Graduate Student Government (University-wide), use this email: [du.gsgs@gmail.com](mailto:du.gsgs@gmail.com)

#### Graduate Student Association (GSA) for GSSW

GSA serves as the official voice of the entire GSSW student body. It acts as the liaison between the student body and GSSW's faculty and administration, professional associations and the community. To contact GSA email [gsswgsa@du.edu](mailto:gsswgsa@du.edu) (emails will be answered within 72 hours).

GSA provides funding for conference reimbursements up to \$100/student/year on a first-come first-serve basis. The reimbursement can be applied towards a conference or training that aligns with your career goals but does not cover membership fees. Please contact the GSA Treasurer by sending an email titled "Attn Treasurer" to [gsswgsa@du.edu](mailto:gsswgsa@du.edu) for more information and the necessary paperwork required to submit a request.

#### Queer Equality Alliance (QEA)

QEA strives to create a supportive and inclusive LGBTQIA community within GSSW and DU. We are committed to shedding light on issues faced by the LGBTQIA Community to reach a socially just Denver. We will work toward creating alliances within the Denver Metro area grassroots movements and other advocacy groups. To contact QEA email [gssw.qea@du.edu](mailto:gssw.qea@du.edu).

#### Phi Alpha Honor Society

Phi Alpha recognizes and promotes scholastic achievement and service among students, and stimulates preparation for a career in social work. Students must apply for membership and meet eligibility criteria. The minimum cumulative GPA to join Phi Alpha is 3.75, which includes all quarters in the program. Students must also be in good standing (this includes performance in field internship as well as the MSW program overall). Students in the student review process are not eligible for Phi Alpha.

#### Shades of Brown Alliance (SOBA)

Shades of Brown Alliance (SOBA) is a student organization that strives to offer a "safe place", supportive, and encouraging environment for all individuals of color, allies, staff, faculty, and alumni of GSSW to learn, voice, escape, mature and positively confront and address the issues people of color experience as a part of the GSSW experience. To contact SOBA, email [shadesofbrownalliance@gmail.com](mailto:shadesofbrownalliance@gmail.com).

#### ECO Conscious

ECO (Environment+Conservation+Opportunity) Conscious aims to promote conservation and environmental justice within the social work profession and to demonstrate such principles in the classroom and the community. To contact ECO Conscious, email [duecoconscious@gmail.com](mailto:duecoconscious@gmail.com).

For more information on student organization contact information and how to get involved, please visit the [GSSW Student Resources Portfolio Page](#).

#### Spanish Conversation Group

Formerly Red Estudiantil de Hispanohablantes en DU GSSW (REhD), this group is GSSW's Spanish conversation group comprising 30+ Intermediate to Advanced Spanish-speaking students. REhD is not a formal student organization, but rather a network of students who would like to connect in Spanish. The group is student lead. REhD provides students a place to:

- Meet other Spanish-speaking students at GSSW;
- Learn new vocabulary and brush up on current skills;
- Promote self-care for bilingual students as they engage in field, community, and as professionals;
- Address critical issues affecting Spanish speaking client systems and social work service delivery;
- Have the occasional cafecito y pan dulce.

To contact REhD, email ([Lorena.Gaibor@du.edu](mailto:Lorena.Gaibor@du.edu) )



Colorado Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

In addition to the GSSW organizations, the Colorado Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) provides for student representation on its board of directors and encourages participation of student members in its committees. For more information, check out [their website](#).

## Governance and Student Participation in Governance

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Educational policy for the MSW Program is determined by the faculty of the whole and by standing committees comprising faculty, students, administration, and community representatives. The committees listed below have student members who are selected each year by the GSSW Graduate Student Association. Students may attend, but not vote, at business meetings of the faculty of the whole. They have equal voting rights in all other committees. Faculty reserves the right to move meetings into executive session that excludes students when deemed appropriate.

Students who are interested in serving on a committee or want more information about a committee and its responsibilities should contact a GSA representative at [gsswgsa@du.edu](mailto:gsswgsa@du.edu).

- Faculty/Community of the Whole
- Field Advisory Board
- MSW Curriculum Committee
- Inclusive Excellence Committee

## Dissemination of Information and Facilities

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Communication with the University and the Graduate School of Social Work

### Contact Information

It is very important that students maintain their mailing address and phone number on PioneerWeb. Please also be sure to provide emergency contact information in the event that an emergency occurs.

### DU E-Mail Accounts

According to DU Policy:

*The University assigned email account shall be an official means of communication with all students, faculty, and staff. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their University assigned email account (firstname.lastname@du.edu).*

The University sends much of its correspondence solely through email. This includes policy announcements, emergency notices, meeting and event notifications, course syllabi and requirements, and correspondence between faculty, staff and students. Such correspondence is mailed only to the @du.edu address.

Email accounts are automatically created for all students. The university contracts with Microsoft to provide email service using [Office 365](#). For more information, please visit the [DU IT website](#). Faculty, staff and students are expected to check their email on a frequent and consistent basis to stay current with University-related communications. Faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-critical.

For information about your DU login or password, please contact the [DU IT Help Desk](#) at (303) 871-4700.

## PioneerWeb

Important information including frequently used forms and important and other deadlines is posted on the GSSW Student Resources Page, which is accessed via the GSSW tab in [PioneerWeb](#). Students are responsible for the information made available via PioneerWeb and should check for updates regularly. PioneerWeb also contains other University resources that students will find helpful. If you are having difficulty accessing your PioneerWeb homepage, please contact the [DU IT Help Desk](#) (303-871-4700) for assistance.

Additional relevant information that is specific to Western Colorado MSW Program students can be found in Canvas. Students in the Four Corners program should see the MSW Director.

## Denver Campus Craig Hall Information and Policies

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For information about the University of Denver Campus, the Graduate School of Social Work's offices and classroom in Craig Hall in Denver, CO, the Four Corners Program Office in Durango, CO, and the Western Colorado Program Office in Glenwood Springs, CO, please contact your student success advisor who can connect you with the program directors at the different campuses.

## Technology Resources

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### Policies and Procedures

DU IT policies are [available online](#). Please read carefully the "Acceptable Use Policy for Computers and Network Systems." GSSW's Manager of Technology Operations is authorized to take reasonable actions to implement and enforce usage and service policies and provide for security. Violations may result in disciplinary action from the University as outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy. If you have questions regarding technology policies, please contact the GSSW Manager of Technology Operations.

### Technology Access on Campus

For information about technology access in Craig Hall, on the DU Campus, or at the other GSSW program offices, please contact your student success advisor.

## EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Academic Classification of Students

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Students are classified at the time of admission as either regular or conditional status.

#### Regular Status

A student unconditionally approved for graduate study enrollment holds regular status. Regular status is required for advancement to degree candidacy.

#### Conditional Status

A student holds conditional status for up to one quarter from the time of admission if any required documents are missing at the time of admission (e.g., final transcript with degree posted). All documents must be received prior to registration for the second quarter of enrollment or the student will not be permitted to register and/or may be terminated from the MSW program.

#### Probational Status

A student holds probational status if they were admitted with a grade point average of less than 2.75 on a 4.0 scale.

A student who has been admitted with probational status will have no more than one quarter to demonstrate their academic competence through earning a minimum GPA of 3.0 and, if registered for field internship, earning a grade of "Pass." A student who has not met these criteria for academic competency at the end of the first quarter of study will be terminated from the program. The Office of Academic Affairs will notify the student in writing of termination and the right to appeal the termination. The student may not register for, or attend, any courses or internship while an appeal, if any, is pending.

Students admitted with probational status who receive one or more recorded grades of "I" (Incomplete) at the end of the first quarter of study will not be allowed to register for, or attend, additional classes until the work is completed and the instructor has changed the grade(s). If the student is registered for field internship in the first quarter in which they are enrolled in GSSW and receives a grade of "IP," the Assistant Dean for Field Education will review the reasons the grade was assigned. If the "IP" was assigned for any reason other than lack of hours, a Student Review may be held as described in the GSSW Field Manual. Students who receive an "IP" may not be allowed to register for additional hours of field instruction until the "IP" has been cleared at the discretion of the Assistant Dean for Field Education. Decisions concerning removal from probational status will be made after each "I" has been changed to a letter grade and/or the "IP" has been changed to a "Pass" or "No Pass."

If a student has been allowed to remain on probational status with an "IP" in field and their GPA falls below 3.0 during this time, the student will be terminated from the program.

Students admitted with conditional or probational status are informed of their entry status at the time of acceptance into the program. They must sign a contract stating they are aware of their status and the policy at the time of admission.

### Registration

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#### Documentation Required Prior to Registration/Holds

Students are encouraged to check for holds prior to their assigned registration time. The following holds may apply:

### Immunizations

Colorado State Law and University of Denver policy requires all students to receive two (2) doses of vaccine against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) and a review of information regarding meningococcal disease (meningitis) prior to registration. Additionally, students living in University of Denver on campus housing (Dormitories and Apartments) must show proof of vaccination for meningococcal disease within the past five years. If proof of immunity and acknowledgement of meningitis information (or proof of vaccination if living on campus) is not submitted to the University of Denver Health & Counseling Center, you will not be permitted to register for classes.

In the event of an MMR or meningitis outbreak on campus, those students for whom an exemption has been submitted will be withdrawn from classes by the CDPHE (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment) until the outbreak is contained (this can take six to eight weeks). Those students who have exempted out of the requirements will not be entitled to a refund of tuition or a tuition credit for any missed time.

### Academic and Professional Standards Agreement

All students must sign the "Academic and Professional Standards Agreement" provided to them by GSSW. Failure to do so in the first quarter of attendance will result in a registration hold placed by the GSSW registrar.

### Financial Responsibility statement

All students have a "Financial Responsibility Agreement" hold put in place by the DU Bursar prior to registration. This is separate from any financial aid requirements you may have submitted. Please be sure to complete the agreement as soon as possible to allow you to complete the registration process.

### Registration Timeline

Students will register via PioneerWeb during University priority registration periods. Information about priority registration will be sent to students from the GSSW Registrar every quarter. GSSW registration dates may vary from the broader University of Denver campus registration dates.

Registration times are assigned by credit hours, so students who are closest to completing degree requirements are allowed to register first. Registration times consider credit hours earned (courses that are completed and for which the student has received a passing grade), credit hours in progress (courses for which students are currently registered), and credit received as transfer credit from other institutions.

However, due to the format of our curriculum, many students have the same number of hours earned and hours registered in any given quarter. As a result, once times are assigned by credit hours, registration groups will further be divided alphabetically according to the first letter of the student's last name. The letter that receives the earliest time will be randomly assigned by the DU Registrar's Office and will change each quarter to ensure that the registration process is fair.

Students who have a documented disability accommodated through the [Disability Services Program \(DSP\)](#) and/or students participating in a dual degree program may be assigned an early registration time. Please email [dsp@du.edu](mailto:dsp@du.edu) for more information about early registration status.

For the best course selection, it is recommended that students register at their assigned time whenever possible. If you have an unavoidable conflict at your assigned registration time, please notify [gsswregistrar@du.edu](mailto:gsswregistrar@du.edu). Students may submit an Absentee Registration Request no later than one week prior to their assigned registration date if they are unable to register online at their assigned time.

### Student Class Load

MSW@Denver full-time students usually take between 8 and 12 credit hours each quarter. Tuition is calculated by the credit hour. For part-time plans or for accelerated plans, please contact your student success advisor.

### Considerations Regarding Class Scheduling and Field Instruction

One of the unique benefits of a social work education is the opportunity to combine coursework with applied field instruction. It is important to remember our agency partners may have schedules that do not always correspond with our class schedule.

GSSW makes every effort to schedule classes in a way that affords our students as much flexibility as possible but given the complexity of our curriculum and the varied schedules of our agencies, occasional time conflicts between coursework and field instruction are inevitable.

It is imperative that students be mindful of the needs of their field agencies when planning their class schedules. If you are having difficulty planning your course schedule given the requirements of your internship, please contact your academic advisor for guidance.

### Add/Drop

Students may drop 10-week courses themselves via PioneerWeb from the time they register through the first week (seven days) of the quarter. Courses dropped within this window are deleted from the student's record and tuition is refunded 100%, if applicable.

Students may drop 10-week courses through week six of the quarter by sending a request to drop in writing to [gsswregistrar@du.edu](mailto:gsswregistrar@du.edu). Courses dropped within this window are noted as a "W" on the student's transcript. A grade of "W" is not calculated in the student's GPA and is not punitive in any way. GSSW follows University policies and deadlines related to add/drop and tuition refunds. Students are responsible for knowing this information prior to dropping courses. Add/drop deadlines and tuition refund information is available online at [www.du.edu/registrar](http://www.du.edu/registrar).

After week six, students may only drop courses if the withdrawal is caused by reasons beyond their control and only if the student's work at the time of withdrawal is passing. Additionally, the drop must be approved by both the instructor and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Students are not permitted to drop courses after week eight of the quarter.

Note: Students should review specific add/drop policies for summer courses online at [www.du.edu/registrar](http://www.du.edu/registrar). Summer intensive courses may not be dropped once the course has begun.

Dropping classes in cohorted programs (Four Corners or Western Colorado) will have implications for continued study and the timing of degree completion. Please notify the relevant program director and/or the GSSW Registrar if you are in one of these programs and need to drop a class.

As a matter of professionalism, students are encouraged to notify instructors of their intention to drop. When dropping a required course, students are also encouraged to review published class schedules and/or consult with an advisor prior to dropping the course to ensure that they are able to meet all requirements for graduation.

### Independent, Directed Study, & Experiential Courses

With approval, students may engage in an independent study, directed study, or experiential course for course credit. Please review the [GSSW Student Resource Portal](#) and talk with your student success advisor for more information

### Auditing

Auditing courses is not currently available for MSW@Denver or any online courses.

## Waitlists

Waitlists are created and maintained at the discretion of the GSSW Registrar. If a waitlist exists, students can add themselves to via PioneerWeb upon receiving the message that the course is closed. Students for whom a course is required will be given priority on the waitlist, regardless of their initial position on that waitlist. Students will be notified of an open seat for a waitlisted class via an automated e-mail and need to respond within 24 hours. After the 24-hour window, if the notified student has not registered for the available seat, that seat will be offered to the next student on the waitlist. Students are encouraged to be considerate of their colleagues and drop waitlisted courses if no longer needed or wanted.

## Leave of Absence/Withdrawing from the Program

### Medical Leave

Students considering a leave of absence for medical reasons should review the [procedures for a Medical Leave of Absence](#). Students are advised not to withdraw from any courses until they have gone through the approval process. Note that this is the opposite of a personal leave.

### Personal Leave

Students considering a leave of absence for non-medical reasons should meet with their advisor and/or a professional academic advisor from the Office of GSSW Student and Career Services to discuss their options.

If the student decides to take a leave they must first withdraw from all classes by submitting a Withdrawal form to the DU Office of the Registrar at [registrar@du.edu](mailto:registrar@du.edu), or by submitted a withdrawal request via PioneerWeb (instructions are available on the [DU Registrar website](#)). This needs to occur as soon as possible, as there may be deadlines to withdraw from a course, consequences regarding transfer of credit, and/or financial implications. An instructor may deny a request to drop if the student is failing the course. The student should then submit an "Application for Leave of Absence" form to the Office of Graduate Education.

A leave of absence cannot exceed three consecutive quarters or the student will be formally withdrawn and required to submit an application for readmission (see below). Please see the [procedures for a Personal Leave of Absence](#) for more details.

## Re-entry to the Program

If returning from a medical leave a student should first reach out to the Office of Student Outreach and Support to initiate re-entry. Your Student Success Advisor can help you navigate the re-entry process. Students returning from a personal leave of absence need to notify the Office of Academic Affairs ([gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu](mailto:gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu)) of their intended return as early as possible. All degree requirements, including completion of the degree within five years of first admission, must still be met. For students returning from a medical leave, the time to completion date may be adjusted. Students not enrolled in the program for one or more consecutive quarters, must submit a readmission application to the Office of Graduate Education.

- GSSW Academic Affairs may request that a re-entry meeting occur when the student returns from a leave. The purpose of this re-entry meeting is to develop an education plan for degree completion and to ensure the student has appropriate supports in place for success in the program. The student should email [gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu](mailto:gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu) to request the re-entry meeting. The meeting must be scheduled at least 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the quarter of intended return.
- The Office of Academic Affairs will schedule the re-entry meeting and include the student and relevant representatives from the programs, such as the program director, a field team representative, and a representative from student services.
- Meetings for students who have previously had a student review are required and will include the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Field Education, and a representative from Student Services.

Students should be aware that needed courses may not be available in the term in which they want to return.

If the student's absence from the program exceeds the 5-year time limit for the degree, students must re-apply to the program through the Office of Admission. If the student's admission term was more than 5 years' prior, course credit from terms previously attended may be transferred on a case-by-case basis.

If the student chooses to reapply to a program after being terminated, the time limit to complete the degree may not automatically be reset and there is no guarantee a student will be readmitted, even if they reapply. For more information, please see [the Office of Graduate Education website](#).

## Grades and Grading

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### Grading Policy

Grades are based on competence. Letter grades are used as follows for all instruction other than field instruction:

91-100	A	94-100 A 91-93 A-	(4.0) (an A+ cannot be given) (3.7)
81-90	B	88-90 B+ 84-87 B(3.0) 81-83 B-	(3.3) (2.7)
71-80	C	78-80 C+ 74-77 C(2.0) 71-73 C-	(2.3) (1.7)
70 and below	F		

Criteria are as follows:

- A – Excellent work (91-100)
- B – Good work – meets course expectations (81-90)
- C – Poor work – minimally meets course expectations (71-80)
- F – Failing work (70 and below)

Expectations concerning objectives, attendance, examinations, and evaluation of student performance will be stated in each course syllabus and discussed during the first class session of each course. Grades of "Pass" or "No Pass" are not given, except in field internship. No "D" grades are given as final grades.

Grades of "Pass" or "No Pass" are assigned for field internship (SOWK 4950 and SOWK 4970). These grades are not included in computing the student's GPA. Grading criteria for field internships are set forth in the GSSW Field Manual. A grade of "No Pass" will automatically result in a formal student review or termination hearing. A grade of "No Pass" is equivalent to a failing grade in the sense that no credit is earned, however, the GPA is not affected. Please see below for information about repeating the course.

### Grade Reports

Students may view their grades online via [PioneerWeb](#). Grades are available via PioneerWeb approximately 10 days after the close of the quarter. If a hardcopy report is needed, students must [submit a request](#) in the Fall Quarter.

### Repetition of Courses/Grades of F or NP

A course in which a student has a passing grade cannot be repeated (with the exception of repeatable courses such as internship, independent study, etc.). A student receiving a grade of "F" or "NP" in a required course or internship is required to repeat that course or internship hours. If the failed course is a pre-requisite to another course (including field), the student must pass the course prior to taking any courses for which that course was pre-requisite. This may result in delaying graduation due to limitations in course offerings.

When a course is repeated in which a grade of "F" or "NP" was received, the student pays the current tuition rate and the course will be counted as part of the total quarterly course load. The "F" or "NP" grade, and the new grade for the repetition of the course, will both be counted in the total grade point average, if applicable. A student may only repeat a required course or internship once, and a student who fails a required course or internship twice will be terminated from the program. A student receiving a grade of "F" in a non-required course may earn the credit hours lost by enrolling in other elective courses.

### Incomplete (I)

According to University policy:

*A grade of incomplete 'I' is a temporary grade which may be given at the instructor's discretion to a student only when illness, necessary absence, or other reasons beyond the control of the student prevent completion of course requirements by the end of the academic term.*

It may not be used to allow a student with poor performance to retake an examination or complete additional work to enhance the quality of the student's performance.

Incomplete grades may only be given in the following circumstances:

- The student's work to date is passing
- Attendance has been satisfactory through at least 60% of the term
- An illness or other extenuating circumstance legitimately prevents completion of required work by the due date
- The required work may reasonably be completed in an agreed-upon time frame
- The incomplete is not given as a substitute for a failing grade
- The incomplete is not based solely on a student's failure to complete work or as a means of raising their grade by doing additional work after the grade report time
- The student initiates the request for an incomplete before the end of the academic term
- The instructor and student complete the "Application for Incomplete Grade" form before the end of the academic term

Appropriate grades must be assigned in other circumstances. A failing grade and last date of attendance should be recorded for students who cease attending class without authorization from the instructor and the GSSW Registrar. Students who are unable to complete a course and who do not meet these circumstances should consider dropping the course.

The following provisions for Incomplete grades apply:

- The "Application for Incomplete Grade" may be obtained at the [DU Office of the Registrar](#).
- Instructors must submit this form to [gsswregistrar@du.edu](mailto:gsswregistrar@du.edu) when the incomplete grade is assigned
- The instructor will enter the deadline for completion of work in the grading system, as well as a default grade
- The default grade is the grade the student will earn if the deadline determined by the instructor passes and no additional work is submitted by the student
- Incompletes automatically converts to an "F" after a year if a new grade isn't entered
- GSSW policy requires that the papers or projects necessary to make up an incomplete be submitted to the instructor by the fourth Wednesday of the next quarter unless the instructor has stipulated a different date for completion of work. Per University policy, incompletes cannot extend beyond one academic year



- If outstanding assignments are submitted by the deadline, instructor will submit grade change via PioneerWeb
- The student will be notified that the final grade has been posted via PioneerWeb
- An incomplete grade may not be considered passing for purposes of determining academic standing, financial aid eligibility, or other purposes
- Notation of the original incomplete remains on the student's transcript along with the final grade
- An incomplete should not be assigned when it is necessary for the student to attend additional class meetings in order to complete the course assignments. Students who receive an incomplete grade in a course must not re-register for the course to remove the incomplete
- Incompletes are not assigned for field practicum

A student with outstanding incomplete(s) must consult with their advisor. Students having more than one incomplete may not, at the discretion of the advisor, register for a full academic course load. The number of hours for which such a student may enroll will depend on the number of incomplete grades, the length of the incompletes, the balance of the student's academic record, and other pertinent factors. Markers of Withdrawal, Incomplete or Failing grades on a student's transcript may impact their [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#) for determining federal aid eligibility. Contact the [Financial Aid](#) office for further information.

#### In Progress (IP)

Only SOWK 4950, SOWK 4970, and international experience courses may remain in progress (IP) beyond the final day of the academic term. Typically, the field internship remains in progress when a student has not completed the required number of clock hours in a given quarter, but may also occur for other reasons as set forth in the GSSW Field Manual. When an internship course remains in progress, it will be changed to either a "Pass" or a "No Pass" when the circumstances resulting in the "IP" are resolved. Unlike the case when a grade of "I" is assigned, the "IP" does not remain on the student's record, and the student does not need to submit a form to change the grade. At the discretion of the Office of Field Education, students may not be registered for subsequent terms of field until the IP is resolved. An IP in field may affect the student's tuition refund and/or eligibility for financial aid in subsequent quarters.

#### Change of Grade

Grades turned in by instructors at the end of the quarter are final and are not subject to change due to revision of judgment on the part of the instructor. The instructor of a course is the only one who can change a grade for a student in that course, and only if such change is warranted due to errors in computation. Grades cannot be changed based on a second trial, such as a new examination or additional work undertaken or completed after the grade report has been turned in. In the event of grade error, the faculty member must initiate a Correction of Error in Grading through the Faculty tab in PioneerWeb. The request requires the electronic approval of the GSSW Registrar and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Any correction of the grade must take place no later than the quarter following the one in which the grade was given.

#### Grade Appeal Process

Grade appeals must be based on problems of process and not on differences in judgment or opinion concerning academic performance. The burden of proof rests on the student to demonstrate that one or more of the following occurred:

- The grading decision was made on some basis other than academic performance and other than as a penalty for academic misconduct.
- The grading decision was based upon standards unreasonably different from those which were applied to other students in the same course and section.
- The grading decision was based on an unreasonable departure from previously articulated standards.
- The chairperson, grade appeal committee or dean may recommend grade changes but shall have the power to alter grades only in cases of clearly established procedural error or substantial capriciousness or arbitrariness in evaluation.

For more information about the grade appeal process, see [the Office of the Registrar's website](#).

#### First Level: Appeal to the Faculty Member

A student will, where possible, attempt to resolve the issue informally with the professor before filing a written grievance. Should attempts at informal resolution fail, the student may wish to file a formal grade appeal, as described by [University of Denver policy for Grade Appeals](#). After receiving a formal appeal, the faculty member shall assure that a written decision with expressed reasons is available or delivered to the student within 30 calendar days. Should the student fail to take further action within seven calendar days after receiving the faculty member's decision that decision shall stand. If the student is dissatisfied with the decision or does not receive a response from the faculty member within 30 calendar days, the appeal may proceed to the second level.

#### Second Level: Appeal to the MSW@Denver Program Director

If the student elects to continue the appeal, the appeal goes to the MSW program director for that student (i.e., Denver Campus MSW Program, Four Corners MSW Program, Western Colorado MSW Program). The Associate Dean assures that a written decision or recommendation about the appeal is available or delivered with expressed reasons within 30 calendar days after receiving the appeal.

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision or does not receive a response from the Associate Dean within 30 calendar days, the appeal may proceed to the third level. Should the student or faculty member fail to take action on the Associate Dean's decision or recommendation within seven business days following its receipt, the accepted recommendation of the faculty member or new decision by the Associate Dean shall be final.

#### Third Level: Appeal to the Associate Dean

If the student elects to continue the appeal after the Associate Dean's decision or recommendation has been received, the appeal may be taken to the Dean (or the Dean's designee) within seven business days. The Dean shall ascertain within 30 calendar days whether the appeal procedures at the first and second levels have been duly followed; if they have not, the Dean will require that they be followed before taking further action. The Dean shall appoint an appeals committee consisting of three faculty members chosen by the Dean or the Dean's designee. The Dean or designee shall serve on the appeals committee as chairperson without vote. All deliberations of the committee will be closed and confidential.

Faculty who have a prior relationship with the student (course instructor, advisor, etc.) may not serve on the appeals committee.

The appeals committee should meet as soon as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days after a written, dated request for appeal at this level has been received and the Dean has ascertained that appeal procedures at the first and second levels have been duly followed. The presence of all eligible committee members (the three faculty members and the Dean or designee) shall constitute the quorum.

A written recommendation shall be furnished by the appeals committee and transmitted through the Office of the Dean to all affected parties and the GSSW Registrar within seven calendar days after the conclusion of the committee's deliberations. The decision of the appeals committee is final.

## Transfer of Credit from another Institution or Department

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### Transfer Credits

MSW@Denver does not currently accept transfer credits.

### Course Waiver/Substitution

Request must be made in writing (forms available at [GSSW Student Resource Portal](#)) and approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the advisor prior to the quarter in question. Requests for a waiver or substitution of a required course for the concentration/certificate must additionally have the approval of the concentration or certificate coordinator.

### Credit for Courses Taken in other Departments at University of Denver or with other GSSW Programs (Cognate Courses)

With the exception of dual and cooperative degree students, students may earn a maximum of 10-quarter credit hours or their equivalent in courses taken outside MSW@Denver after enrollment. The 10 quarter hours include (a) any graduate courses taken at GSSW program, and (b) graduate courses taken in other departments at the University of Denver. For more information on how to take these classes, look for information on [Visiting Students within the GSSW Student Resource Portal](#).

In order to receive credit for courses taken outside the Graduate School of Social Work after enrollment:

- A student must submit the course waiver form obtained from to [gsswregistrar@du.edu](mailto:gsswregistrar@du.edu) prior to enrolling in the course. If waiving a concentration course the student's advisor, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the concentration chair must approve the request. Once approved, the GSSW Registrar will update the student's academic records, and the waiver/substation will be noted in the degree audit in Pioneer Web.
- The credits earned through outside courses (a) must be from a regionally accredited graduate level program; (b) not be "Pass" or any other grade simply signifying completion of course requirements; (c) carry a minimum grade of "B" (3.0); (d) not have been applied toward a degree earned at another university or the University of Denver; and (e) at the graduate level. If a course is taken at an institution other than the University of Denver, the student must provide the GSSW Registrar with an official transcript showing completion of the course and the grade earned.

Please note that University College and the Sturm College of Law follow different tuition and refund policies and different academic calendars than other graduate schools on campus. As a result, students taking classes from University College and the Sturm College of Law may be assessed additional tuition (classes may not apply to the DU flat rate) and students should pay close attention to course meeting dates, add/drop deadlines, and refund policies for these courses.

## Academic Standing

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### Academic Probation

Students are considered to be in good standing if they have a minimum 3.0 GPA and are not subject to an academic or field review or completing a remediation plan of a student or field review.

Students are expected to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 at all times. If at the end of any quarter a student's cumulative GPA is less than a 3.0, the student will be placed on the first quarter of academic probation. If the student's cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 for two consecutive quarters in which they are enrolled, the student will remain on academic probation. If the student's cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 for three consecutive quarters, the student will be terminated from the program.

The Office of Academic Affairs will notify students in writing at the end of any quarter in which their cumulative GPA falls below 3.0. The notification will provide links to relevant DU policies and support resources. A copy of the notification will be sent to the student's advisor, the Assistant Dean for Field Education, the Manager of Professional Advising, the Executive Director for Enrollment and Financial Aid, and the program director. The student is encouraged to contact their advisor to develop a plan designed to remedy the student's academic deficits. If the student is in a field internship, it is also recommended that the student notify the field supervisor of the risk that the academic probation may disrupt the field internship process in the future quarters, if not resolved. This notification to the field agency is considered a professional courtesy.

A student whose cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 for three consecutive terms in which they are enrolled will be notified in writing by the Office of Academic Affairs of termination from the program and the right to appeal the termination. The student may not register for, or attend, any additional classes or internship while an appeal, if any, is pending.

If the GPA falls below 3.0 as a result of fulfillment of requirements for incomplete grades from prior terms which results in two or more terms on the transcript with a GPA below 3.0, the student may not receive a warning that they have been placed on warning and may instead be terminated immediately at the time the grades are posted. If a student takes a leave of absence while on probation, that probationary status will remain in place upon the student's return from leave.

#### Satisfactory Academic Progress

The [Below 3.0 Grade Point Average](#), [Probation](#), and [Termination](#) policies state that the student will be terminated "if it is numerically impossible for the student to raise their GPA to 3.0), or if in the opinion of the student's advisor, department chair and/or dean, the student is not making academic progress to finish the requirements of the degree." Per the Termination policy, a student will also be terminated for maintaining a GPA lower than 3.0 (2.7 for Law Master's, 2.3 for Law JD) for three consecutive quarters (two semesters).

Failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress will also affect your eligibility for Financial Aid. For more information, please see [the Financial Aid website](#).

## Academic and Professional Standards of Performance

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The University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) is committed to a program of excellence; therefore, students in our program must possess and demonstrate certain personal characteristics, abilities, competencies and behaviors necessary for success in the GSSW program. Students are expected to meet the standards below in the classroom, the community, and in their field internships, with or without accommodations.

The following academic and professional expectations serve as a guide to everyday professional and ethical conduct for students at the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW). The expectations describe skills and qualities needed to be both a successful student and social worker. Students are automatically moved forward to the next quarter and should consider themselves as making satisfactory progress concerning these expectations unless they are informed otherwise. Student progress is evaluated in courses, the community and in field internship based on assignments, examinations and observations made by faculty members and internship instructors that evaluate knowledge, skills, values/ethics, and professional behaviors of students. The criteria for student satisfactory progress are outlined below.

Academic and professional standards are explicitly stated in this guide; fieldwork standards are explicitly stated in the GSSW Field Manual; and the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the reference point for determining professional and ethical conduct of GSSW students. Social work students are social workers and are to be held to the same standards of behavior as graduate professionals. In addition to the NASW Code of Ethics as a reference point, the following competencies and behaviors are necessary to successfully continue in the program. Any student who does not demonstrate competencies in one or more of the following areas will be evaluated through GSSW's Student Review Process or may be terminated from the program.

GSSW does not discriminate on the basis of disability. It is the responsibility of the student with a disability, who believes they may need reasonable accommodations to meet any of the Academic and Professional Standards of Performance, to contact the [University of Denver's Disability Services Program \(DSP\)](#) at (303) 871-2372 (phone), [dsp@du.edu](mailto:dsp@du.edu) (email), or (303) 871-2248 (fax). Early contact by admitted students with the DSP is strongly encouraged to ensure the timely provision of reasonable accommodations to both the classroom and field internship. Academic accommodations cannot be applied retroactively to previous quarters, assignments, exams, or field experiences.

Students must:

#### Demonstrate capacity for academic success

- Maintain a 3.0 GPA and a “pass” (P) in field internship.
- Successfully complete required internship hours and demonstrate positive progress on the field competencies.
- Successfully secure a field internship with no more than three post-interview rejections by potential field agencies.

#### Demonstrate Sensory Motor Abilities

- Have sufficient sensory motor abilities to attend and participate in classes and field internships.
- Be able to acquire, integrate, and apply knowledge through the use of their senses.
- Be able to navigate transportation to attend field and classroom requirements in a timely manner.

#### Demonstrate Cognitive Skills

- Demonstrate the ability to acquire knowledge and understanding through thought, experience and the senses, including short- and long-term memory necessary for the integration, deconstruction, synthesis and summary of new knowledge.
- Engage in class both verbally and in writing.

#### Demonstrate Ethical Conduct

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity as prescribed in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.
- Abide by the University of Denver Honor Code.
- Have an understanding of and professionally apply the NASW Code of Ethics in all interactions with clients, peers, staff, regular and adjunct faculty, field instructors, and all other members of the University community. Specifically, students must demonstrate that they meet the criteria of the following two sections of the NASW Code of Ethics (Section 4.05):
  - Social Workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have professional responsibility.
  - Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments to workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.
- Demonstrate responsibility and dependability by meeting deadlines on assignments and projects, keeping appointments, and being responsive to clients, supervisors, faculty, staff, and peers.

### Demonstrate Empathy

- Demonstrate respect in their interactions with clients and client systems, fellow students, faculty, staff, agency staff and others.
- Communicate understanding and empathy for clients and their situations.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with clients, supervisors, faculty, staff, and peers.

### Demonstrate Integrity

- Demonstrate personal and professional integrity in both the academic and field internship settings.
- Understand and practice academic honesty and fairness, and be willing and able to apply properly the rules of academic referencing and citation.
- Demonstrate a commitment to and skill in self-care and self-evaluation of practice.
- Adhere to the attendance policies of GSSW, their field agency and the individual class instructors.
- Disclose any final criminal conviction or plea arrangement resulting from the commission or alleged commission of a felony or crime of moral turpitude in any jurisdiction (except ones that have been “sealed”), discipline by a state licensing board, or legal system malpractice judgments prior to admission to the program and before being placed in a field internship. Convictions for felonies and crimes of moral turpitude must be disclosed as part of the Colorado social worker license application process pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute section 24-34-110(4)(g).

### Demonstrate Effective Interpersonal Communication Skills

- Demonstrate effective verbal, written and listening communication skills.
- Demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly, listen objectively and communicate effectively at a graduate professional level, in both academic and field internship settings.
- Never use harmful or hateful language when communicating with clients, supervisors, staff, faculty and peers.

### Demonstrate Self-Awareness and Reflective Thinking

- Be willing to engage in reflective thinking by analyzing, evaluating and making judgments about what has happened in a given situation.
- Be able to clearly articulate beliefs, values, attitudes and feelings, and how past experiences affect thinking, behavior and interactions with others.
- Be responsive to evaluation, testing, feedback, and criticism with appropriate modification of behavior.
- Be willing and able to examine and change behaviors that interfere with student/client and other interpersonal relationships.

### Process and Procedures for Concerns About Student Performance

The following process and procedures ensure a preventive and collaborative assessment process that identifies appropriate concerns in relation to the Academic and Professional Standards of Performance early and provides both support and guidance for the student’s successful completion of the GSSW program. The process assures that each student maintains adequate progress in gaining the knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors required for graduation.

The identification, reporting, and resolution of an individual student concern in relation to the Academic and Professional Standards of Performance is necessary in order to maintain the integrity of the school’s social work program and the integrity of the social work profession. All students, faculty, and staff have an obligation to report concerns they identify. Concerns may be identified and reported in the following manners:

- A student may self-identify and self-report a concern to a faculty or staff member
- A fellow student may observe a concern with a student on or off campus and report the concern to a faculty or staff member

- An advisor, faculty member, staff, field supervisor, or field liaison, or other person may observe a concern with a student on or off campus and report it to an appropriate faculty or staff member

This is a discussion of the four-step process followed when individual student concerns are identified in relation to the Academic and Professional Standards of Performance. Contact your advisor if you have any questions or need additional information about this four-step process.

Any concern may be escalated to a higher level at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

It is important to note that often informal, direct conversations may resolve concerns. This process should be used when informal means of problem resolution have not been sufficient.

#### Step 1: Initial Meeting

If there is a concern presented to faculty or staff that a student is not meeting one of the academic or professional competencies outlined above, or if a student self-identifies a concern, an appropriate faculty or staff member should meet individually with the student to discuss the matter, in consultation with a representative of Student Services. If the student identifies a potential disability or asks for an accommodation, the faculty or staff member should refer the student directly to the DSP and inform a representative of Student Services. Field related concerns should follow the process outlined in the GSSW field manual.

All informal concerns and resolutions should be documented in writing by the faculty or staff who meets with the student, with a copy sent to all parties. If academic, behavioral, or ethical problems are not resolved informally to the satisfaction of all concerned, a faculty or staff member may initiate an intermediary discussion or a review of the student's performance at any time.

If the student identifies any personal emotional or mental health concerns, the faculty or staff member will make a referral to [Student Outreach & Support Services](#). Any referrals to Student Outreach & Support Services should include copying the [gssw.advising@du.edu](mailto:gssw.advising@du.edu) email for the GSSW Manager of Professional Advising. If the GSSW faculty or staff member assess there is an imminent or immediate risk that a student will harm themselves or others; call 911, then Campus Safety at (303) 871-3000. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Field Education, the program director and the GSSW Manager of Profession Advising may also be copied and included in the response plan for Student Outreach & Support services and for any emergency situation.

#### Step 2: Intermediary Discussion with MSW@Denver Program Director and/or Field Director

If a student needs additional support than is offered in Step 1, or if there is a disruption in field or academic courses that warrant concern, the student will be referred for an Intermediary Discussion to consider strategies and explore additional supports and steps that may benefit the student. The meeting's purpose is to clarify expectations and identify action steps for the student to successfully continue in the program. Written documentation of the plan will be distributed to all parties and will be maintained in the Office of Academic Affairs. If issues persist, the student will be referred to Step 3: Student Review. The Intermediary Discussion is an attempt to address concerns before the need arises for a Student Review.

#### Step 3: Student Review Process and Procedures

Pursuant to the Student Review process, GSSW formally notifies a student in writing that they may not be performing successfully in relation to one or more of the academic and professional standards of performance. The Student Review evaluates the student's performance, determines whether the student needs to remediate any concerns, and establishes a remediation plan.

A grade of No Pass in field will automatically result in a student review.

Adherence to the timeframes may be adjusted due to University closures including inclement weather and holidays, and/or due to unforeseen circumstances related to the availability of key participants.

- Review Notification & Meeting Process



Whenever a faculty or staff member has a concern regarding a student's ability to meet the Academic and Professional Standards outlined above, and an informal resolution is not possible, the faculty or staff member shall immediately notify the Manager of Professional Advising and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in writing via email or in person. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will then notify the student in writing within 10 business days that a Student Review has been scheduled. The student's advisor, the GSSW registrar, and the Assistant Dean for Field Education will also be included in this notification.

- a. The notification may be distributed electronically per University Policy: Proof that communication has been sent to a student's official DU email address is proof that it has been received.
- b. Within 10 business days of student notification, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will convene a Student Review Committee to meet with the student. This Committee includes the student's advisor, if possible, the Manager of Professional Advising, the Assistant Dean for Field Education, additional field team members (as appropriate), and other involved faculty to examine and understand the concern and develop a plan to address and remediate the concern. A GSSW staff member may also be present as a note taker but will not be an active participant in the meeting.
- c. The student may invite one support person to be present during the meeting.
  - i. By doing so, the student understands that this support person will have access to those aspects of the student's educational record (protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) that are presented as part of the meeting. If the student intends to bring a support person to the Review Committee, the student must complete and submit a "Release of Confidential Student Record Information" form to the Office of Academic Affairs at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.
  - ii. This is not a judicial proceeding, and therefore attorneys are not permitted to attend.
  - iii. The support person cannot be a current student in any GSSW program.
- d. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will chair the meeting.
- e. In the case of a field-related Student Review, the Field Office will be responsible for providing a summary of events leading up to the initiation of the Student Review.
- f. The note taker, typically the Program Coordinator for the MSW program, will record notes from the meeting.
- g. All members present will be given the opportunity to share their perspective related to the concern.
- h. If during the review hearing, a student discloses for the first time an issue that needs to be referred to Student Outreach and Support, the Manager of Professional Advising will submit the referral and notify the student of the referral filing.
- i. If there is a perceived safety risk to campus personnel, Campus Safety will be notified by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or a designee.
- j. If the student does not attend the Student Review Committee meeting, the meeting will continue without the student and a decision will be made in the student's absence with the information available at that time. Non-attendance is not grounds for appeal.
- k. Directly following the meeting, the student and the student's support person, if any, will be excused, and the remaining participants will deliberate potential remediation plans.
- l. Outcomes for remediation plans may include, but are not limited to, the following: no action needed, writing of a reflection paper, delayed field placement, or recommendation for termination from the program. Based on the unique and particular circumstances of each Student Review, the Review



Committee has the discretion to determine whatever outcome is most appropriate in the Committee's judgment.

- Remediation Plan from Student Review

Based on the deliberation, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will compose a communication to the student within 10 business days\* of the Student Review Committee meeting (unless extenuating circumstances delay the process) that summarizes the meeting and presents a remediation plan or indicates that no action is needed. If a remediation plan is presented, the plan shall:

- a. Be in writing
- b. Specify the conditions the student must meet in order to continue in the program
- c. Specify any further actions that will be taken by GSSW faculty related to the concerns that were expressed
- d. Specify the date by which the student must fulfill the requirements. Failure to complete the plan by this date or submit a request for an extension by this date will lead to termination.
  - i. The plan must allow for a reasonable period of time for remediation, depending on the activities outlined in the plan. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will monitor the remediation plan by reviewing progress per completed courses and field internships at the end of the quarter following the quarter in which the review took place.
  - ii. The student can request in writing to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs a new timeframe to meet the conditions based on any extenuating circumstances that arise during the remediation plan. It is at the Associate Dean's discretion to approve this request.

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will distribute copies of the remediation plan to the GSSW Registrar, the student, the advisor, the Manager of Professional Advising, and the Assistant Dean for Field Education. The Assistant Dean for Field Education will distribute copies to the field team members, as appropriate.

If additional concerns arise before the remediation plan has been provided to the student, or during the remediation period, then the Student Review Committee will be re-convened to determine whether a new remediation plan should be developed or whether the concerns should be addressed in a termination hearing.

Note: If a student takes a leave of absence for any reason during the period of a remediation plan, the remediation plan will be reviewed and amended, if necessary, upon the student's return.

Upon deliberation of the Student Review Committee, if it is decided that a reasonable remediation plan cannot be developed due to the nature of the concern, then the process for a termination hearing will be initiated (see Step 3 below).

- Progress During Remediation

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs shall notify a student who has an unresolved Student Review whether they may progress to the next quarter on a probationary basis. A student will not be advanced to candidacy or graduated if they are undergoing a Student Review or have not satisfied the terms of a remediation plan.

- Final Determination of the Student Review Process

Once all steps are completed and indicated on the student's record in terms of passing required courses and field internship, the student is returned to good academic standing and the remediation plan is considered complete. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the GSSW Registrar will indicate this resolution in the student record, and the student will be able to advance to candidacy and graduate. If the student has questions about their status on this remediation plan, they are encouraged to contact the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

#### Step 4: Termination Hearing

A Termination Hearing is a formal process whereby the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs notifies a student that they have not met the School's criteria for student progress as described above and therefore is recommending dismissal from the school. A Termination Hearing concerning a student's performance is held in the following situations:

- A faculty or staff member has knowledge of serious misconduct in violation of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics;
- A student has been found responsible of a violation of the University's Honor Code; or
- The Student Review Process and/or the required remediation plan has not led to a satisfactory resolution of identified concerns.

Adherence to the timeframes may be adjusted due to University closures including inclement weather and holidays, and/or due to unforeseen circumstances related to the availability of key participants.

- **Notification of Recommendation of Termination**  
The Associate Dean shall compose a written notification of Recommendation of Termination and pending Termination Hearing (date to be determined) and send it to the student, the student's advisor or designee, the Office of the Dean, the Assistant Dean for Field Education, the Manager of Professional Advising, and the GSSW Registrar. The notification shall be sent within 10 business days of:
  - a. the Student Review Committee's recommendation of termination hearing; or
  - b. the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs having been notified of serious misconduct in violation of NASW Code of Ethics or a violation of the University's Honor Code.

The notification will:

- a. Specify ways the student has not satisfied expectations related to the Academic and Professional Standards listed above;
  - b. Summarize the process to be used by the Evaluation and Review Committee, once convened.
- **Evaluation and Review Committee Appointment**  
The Dean shall appoint an Evaluation and Review Committee to recommend to them whether or not the student should be terminated from the program. The Committee shall be appointed within 5 business days of the Dean receiving notice of recommendation of termination. The Committee shall consist of:
    - a. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (chair, non-voting member). If the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is the student's advisor, then another person shall be appointed by the Dean to serve as chair;
    - b. Three faculty members (voting members) who have not had a faculty/student relationship with the student in the previous year.

Also attending the meeting shall be:

- i. The faculty or staff member who initiated the termination process

- ii. The student's advisor
- iii. The Assistant Dean for Field Education or representative
- iv. Additional relevant field representatives
- v. The Manager of Professional Advising
- vi. The student

1. The student may invite one person (a non-DU student) who has specific knowledge of the student's behavior, which was cause for the hearing, to speak on their behalf. By doing so, the student understands that these people will have access to those aspects of the student's educational record (protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) that are presented as part of the meeting. A student who intends to invite anyone to the hearing should complete and submit a "Release of Confidential Student Record Information" form to the Office of Academic Affairs at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

This is not a judicial proceeding and therefore attorneys will not be permitted to attend. If an attorney joins the meeting will automatically be cancelled.

- Notification of Termination Hearing Date

The Associate Dean shall compose a written notification of the Termination Hearing date and send it to the student, the student's advisor, the Office of the Dean, the Assistant Dean for Field Education, the Manager of Professional Advising, and the GSSW Registrar. The hearing shall be scheduled to occur within 10 business days of Committee appointment and the notification of this date shall be sent within 5 business days of the Committee's appointment.

- Evaluation and Review Committee Process

The Evaluation and Review Committee shall review information from all relevant parties. The Committee shall hear the response of the student, hear from the person(s) speaking on behalf of the student, and discuss with the student's advisor and other relevant persons earlier attempts to resolve the problem. Outside documents pertinent to the hearing may be submitted by the student to the committee.

At the conclusion of the discussion, all persons shall be asked to excuse themselves from the room except the voting members of the Evaluation and Review Committee to deliberate and determine which of the following outcomes will be recommended to the Dean:

- a. In the case of a Student Review leading to a Termination Hearing, the student has provided satisfactory evidence that the remediation plan was completed and that the student therefore should not be terminated from the program and the review shall be considered remediated; or
- b. A return to the Student Review committee for further development of a remediation plan if it finds that procedural errors were made in the original Student Review Process; or
- c. The student's conduct did not warrant the recommendation of termination and therefore the student should not be terminated from the program and should be returned to good standing; or
- d. The student should be terminated from the program.

- Notification of Committee Recommendation

The Evaluation and Review Committee shall notify the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of their recommendation. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will then write a report that summarizes the termination hearing, decision(s), and rationale. The report will be delivered to the Dean within 5 business days of the meeting and copies will be sent to voting members of the Committee.

- Notification of Final Decision  
The Dean shall send written notification of their decision to the student within 5 business days\* of receiving the report of the Evaluation and Review Committee. A copy of the notification shall be sent to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Field Education, the student's advisor, the Manager of Professional Advising, and the GSSW Registrar.

## Procedures for Academic Grievances and Appeals

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The Academic Grievance Process for graduate studies is outlined in the [Graduate Bulletin](#).

## Academic Student Support Resources

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### Student Success Advising

MSW@Denver student success advisors (SSAs) serve as the first point of contact for students. They help with schedule planning and issues, direction to needed supports, and navigation of DU systems.

While not required, students are strongly encouraged to meet with their advisor throughout the program.

### Academic Advising

MSW@Denver students have access to a Professional Academic Advisor to help them navigate DU policies and practices, academic standing, reviews and resolutions, and licensure questions. Students should contact [gssw.advising@du.edu](mailto:gssw.advising@du.edu) to connect with their Professional Academic Advisor.

### Students with Disabilities

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a person with a disability has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Short-term, non-chronic conditions are not included under this Act. Any student having a documented disability as defined by ADA guidelines has the right to reasonable accommodations, unless those accommodations impose an undue hardship on the University, alter programs, or compromise the integrity of the pursued degree. Essential components of academic course objectives or essential functions of the GSSW internship experience cannot be altered.

Students who have disabilities or a medical condition and who want to request accommodations should contact the [Disability Services Program \(DSP\)](#): (303) 871-2372 or (303) 871-2278. Within the DSP website, you can access their handbook that provides guidance on DU policy and procedures concerning students with disabilities. If you have questions about the process you can contact the Office of Student and Career Services for GSSW students.

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Disability Services Program (DSP) to initiate the request for accommodations, make their needs known, and provide appropriate expert documentation regarding the disability before accommodations can be granted.

### DU Policy Statement

1. *Students requesting accommodations must register with DSP through a disclosure process that includes providing appropriate documentation.*
2. *Instructors should only implement accommodations approved by DSP. Written notice of approved accommodations will be provided by DSP.*

After DSP has determined and notified the student of the accommodation(s) to be afforded, the student must contact their instructors concerning how the accommodation(s) will be implemented. Please note that accommodations cannot be granted retroactively. Accommodations are approved and must be used in the term during which they are requested and for future terms. Faculty may grant only those accommodations approved by DSP, shown in a DSP Faculty Letter. Additional accommodations, or modifications to existing ones, may be requested at any time.

Undiagnosed or undocumented disabilities cannot be the basis for grade appeals. Students cannot petition grades received as a result of not using accommodations or following appropriate procedures to request accommodations. Documentation must be current and also meet current University guidelines, which can be obtained from DSP.

#### Temporary Injury/Illness – Not DSP Accommodations

DSP can provide accommodations for temporary injuries or illnesses, including, but not limited to, broken bones, on-going illness, and concussions. Please submit a Request for Temporary located on [DSP's website](#). Students with short-term illnesses, such as cold or flu, are not covered by the ADA, and should work directly with instructors to discuss informal modifications. Instructors may request appropriate medical documentation from students. Only DSP can grant official accommodations.

The Office of Student and Career Services is the liaison with DSP. The DSP office can provide academic accommodations to eligible students to assist them with their academic success while they are in the program. Academic accommodations include but are not limited to extended time on examinations, alternate format books and handouts, or extended time on papers. More information is available from the DSP and in the [Handbook for Students with Disabilities](#).

#### The Writing Center

The Writing Center supports and promotes effective student writing across all University of Denver programs. In a non-evaluative collaborative setting, consultants help DU students with writing projects: class assignments, personal writing, professional writing, and multimedia projects. The Writing Center serves any student affiliated with the University and welcomes students in all classes, at all levels of writing ability, and at any stage of the writing process.

During 45-minute collaborative consultations, consultants can help with any writing assignment or project at any stage, from brainstorming to final revisions. The Writing Center encourages the development of writers by providing a supportive environment, populated by friendly, knowledgeable peers.

To make an appointment you can call the Writing Center at (303) 871-7456 or you can request an appointment online through [PioneerWeb](#). For more information on the services and hours, visit the [Writing Center](#). Please note: The Writing Center will conduct consultations via video conferencing for students not on the Denver campus.

Students in the Western Colorado and Four Corners programs should contact their program director for more information about additional writing support services.

#### Veteran Services Coordinator

The Veterans Services staff is your primary point of contact for any military- or veteran-related issues, concerns or questions you may have. You can find more information on the web at the [Veteran's Service website](#).

## Student and Career Services

The Office of Student and Career Services provides a wide range of student support services. Services include, but are not limited to, assisting students to develop time management strategies, providing referrals to community counseling resources, transition to graduate school concerns, providing career advice and career workshops, and supporting the Graduate Student Association and other student organizations. Please note, the Office of Student and Career Services is not a confidential resource, however they are able to talk privately with you about any stressors impacting your time on campus and at GSSW. For the Four Corners and Western Colorado programs, see the program director for more information about additional services.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

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### Academic Integrity and Ethical Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, GSSW's Academic and Professional Standards of Performance, the criteria for student evaluation and review found in the MSW Handbook, and the University rules concerning academic misconduct, found in the University's Honor Code.

The University's definition of Academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism, including any representation of another's work or ideas as one's own in academic and educational submissions;
- Cheating, including any actual or attempted use of resources prohibited by the instructor(s) or those that a reasonable person would consider inappropriate under the circumstances for academic submissions, and/or any actual or attempted effort to assist another student in cheating;
- Double submission, including any submission of an academic work for more than one course without expressed permission;
- Fabrication, including any falsification or creation of data, research or resources to support academic submissions.

Assignments will be reviewed for plagiarism using a plagiarism-checking software (i.e., Veracite). If Academic Misconduct is determined to have occurred the following academic actions may be taken by the professor:

- Failure of the assignment
- Failure of the course
- Referral to GSSW Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for Student Review (see Student Concern Process)

Any form of Academic Misconduct will be taken seriously and referred to the [University's Office of Student Conduct](#).

### DU Honor Code

It is important to remember that the Graduate School of Social Work is a member of the larger University of Denver community. The DU Honor Code and relevant policies follow. All GSSW students are bound by the policies below and are held accountable both by GSSW and the University. The full text of the DU Honor Code can be found [here](#).

### Student Concerns Regarding Courses and/or Instructors

If a student has a concern regarding a course or an instructor, it is the student's responsibility to follow this specific process that demonstrates professionalism in voicing that concern:

- The student should speak directly with the instructor.
- If concern is not alleviated by this discussion, the student may consult with their advisor or meet with the MSW@Denver program director who can act as mediator.
- If the problem persists, the student should immediately contact the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

## Student Papers and Projects

Instructors may require students to submit assignments electronically. Most faculty request that assignments be submitted via Canvas. Some instructors may require that assignments be submitted via email and/or in hardcopy. It is the student's responsibility to maintain a record of both electronic and hardcopy assignments and to ensure that papers submitted are received by the instructor. Instructors reserve the right to submit student papers to plagiarism-checking software or on-line services.

Papers will be returned to students in one of the ways listed below unless the student specifically requests an alternative option (e.g., specifically requests that an instructor give a classmate a paper to give to the student):

- Graded and available through Canvas
- Returned as an email attachment
- Handed directly to the student in class
- Handed directly to the student in the instructor's office
- Placed in the student's mail folder in an envelope with the student's name on the envelope
- Placed in the student's mail folder, folded over, stapled/taped on three sides, with the student's name on outside
- Mailed to the student in a stamped, self-addressed envelope

Projects and papers in student mail folders will be discarded approximately 30 days following students' graduation.

### GSSW Submission of Assignments Policy

Course assignments are due on the date specified in the course syllabus. Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances arise (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency) which may make it difficult for a student to complete the assignment by its designated due date time. Should this happen, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor. At the instructor's discretion, a student's request for an extension of an assignment past its due date may be granted, usually for no longer than one week past the due date. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points for late assignments.

### GSSW Class Attendance Policy

Attendance is a matter of professional behavior. Students are expected to be punctual and attend all meetings of a class, including the scheduled hours for field instruction, for which they are registered. Attendance requires not only being physically present in class or field, but also demonstrating the readiness to learn and be accountable for the outcomes of one's own learning.

A single missed session or lateness due to illness or personal/family emergency, inclement weather, or severe traffic jams generally does not affect a student's grade. However, multiple absences and/or repeated lateness are detrimental to the continuity of the learning process and the learning community. Students must notify the instructor (in advance, if possible) if they will be absent from or late to class. The responsibility for reviewing content missed and completing all work in the course rests with the student.

Students must attend a minimum of 70% of the class in order to receive a passing grade. Multiple tardies will result in the reduction of points from the final course grade per tardy and/or early departure.

- A second absence will result in the reduction of the final grade by one-half step (i.e. A to A-, A- to B+, etc.).
- A third absence will result in the reduction of the final grade by a full step (i.e. A to B, B- to C., etc.)
- Four absences, regardless of reason, will result in a failing grade (F) for the course.

Under rare and extenuating circumstances, beyond the student's control, an exception to the above policy may be granted upon request. University policies related to persons with disability (i.e. temporary or permanent accommodations), bereavement, and religious observations supersede this policy. Visit the [DU Religion and Spiritual Life website](#) for more information about excused absences for religious observance.

Please review your course syllabus for attendance expectations specific to each course.

### Name and Pronoun Use in the Classroom

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. The instructor will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise your instructor of your request early in the quarter so that they may make appropriate changes to language use in the classroom.

### Gender Inclusive Communication Statement

At the Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) we encourage all students, staff, and faculty to use gender-inclusive writing and speech and to avoid references to gender unless pronouns are known. Assuming a person's gender based on name or appearance can create communication that ignores essential aspects of one's identity. Whenever possible use gender neutral pronouns to include individuals whose gender is unknown or non-binary. For example, use "person" instead of "man or woman", say "they" instead of "he/she" and "you all" instead of "you guys" to ensure that our whole community is addressed in our communications. At GSSW we also encourage you to share your pronouns in your professional communications. For more information on why this matters, please visit [My Pronouns.Org What and Why](#).

### Technology Use in the Classroom

GSSW supports the use of technology for learning and advancing knowledge while at the same time respecting the classroom environment. In order to create and maintain an optimal learning environment, we ask that students use technology appropriately. During live sessions and in-person sessions, work on laptops, cell phones, and other devices that is not related to the course can disrupt fellow students and negatively hinder shared learning. Students are encouraged to use Zoom video conferencing to connect with instructors and peers for collaboration and consultation outside the live session and in-person class. For more information please consider these [tips for Zoom etiquette](#).

### Scholarly Language and Writing (APA)

The GSSW faculty acknowledges the importance of non-exclusionary language in recognition of gender equity. The faculty therefore is committed to the use of non-exclusionary language in written documents and in courses. Students are urged to commit themselves to the use of non-exclusionary language in their courses and written assignments.

Formal papers must be prepared in accordance with the American Psychological Association (APA) style of reference and citation. Students should refer to either the Publication Manual of American Psychological Association (6th edition) or The Concise Rules of APA Style (also published by the APA). Handbooks specific to writing within the social work profession include The Columbia Guide to Social Work Writing, edited by Warren Green and Barbara Levy Simon and Writing with Style: APA Style for Social Work by Lenore T. Szuchman and Barbara Thomlison. Students who have questions or concerns about using APA are encouraged to contact the University Writing Center at (303) 871-7456.



## DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT INFORMATION

The University of Denver complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the "Buckley Amendment." Students have a right to inspect their educational records at the University and to request amendment to those records if they believe them to be inaccurate. The FERPA law and its implementing regulations may be reviewed in the Office of the Registrar, University Hall, Garden Level. Additional information is also available at [www.du.edu/privacy](http://www.du.edu/privacy).

### Directory Information

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The law provides that "Directory Information" may be released without the consent of the student unless they have specifically asked that prior consent be obtained. The University of Denver designates the following student information as "Directory Information":

*The student's full name, address (local and home/permanent), telephone number, campus electronic mail address, digitalized I.D. photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, full-time or part-time status, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, anticipated date of graduation, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.*

Students who want their directory information withheld from public disclosure must annually submit to the Office of the Registrar a Request to Withhold Information form, available from the [Office of the Registrar](#).

### University of Denver Disclosure Policies

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Academic and administrative offices at the University with a "legitimate educational interest," as defined by FERPA, may receive all student data, including mailing labels, regardless of any restrictions. In addition, a student's record may be released in compliance with a court order or subpoena, and student information may be released for health or emergency reasons.

University selection committees, which sometimes include students as committee members, will select students for membership in honor societies or for other awards or recognition. Students may request that students on selection committees not view academic record information.

### Graduate School of Social Work Disclosure Policy

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GSSW will not provide third parties with home addresses or telephone numbers of social work students. Response to requests, either by telephone or in person, will be, "I can take your name and number and ask the student to call you." The same policy holds true for faculty and staff, unless they have authorized disclosure of this information. Students should be aware, however, that while GSSW will not disclose home addresses or telephone numbers of students, the University may do so. Students who do not want this information disclosed must submit the Request to Withhold Information form referenced above.

## Student Role in Program Assessment

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In order to ensure that the MSW program continues to meet the highest standards of excellence while meeting the needs of our students as well as the community we serve, GSSW takes the student role in program assessment very seriously. Students will be required to participate in program assessment throughout their degree program by completing surveys and submitting papers for review by faculty and staff who are not assigning course grades. No identifying information is considered or retained.

Students are assessed throughout the curriculum to determine mastery of practice behaviors (foundation and advanced) related to core and advanced competencies for social work practice as outlined in the CSWE Educational Policy of 2015.

## The Office of Equal Opportunity/ADA Compliance

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The Office of Equal Opportunity/Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance exists to assure that the University complies with our policies on discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and to promote full compliance with all federal, state, and local discrimination laws.

The Office of Equal Opportunity/ADA Compliance can assist you with:

- Consultation concerning issues of possible discrimination, harassment or retaliation;
- Filing a formal or informal complaint of discrimination harassment and/or retaliation;
- Assistance assessing and correcting a disability access problem;
- Reasonable accommodations for participants in university programs or activities;
- Assistance with religious accommodations;
- In conjunction with the Center for Multicultural Excellence, activities to improve the climate for diversity in your department or organization.

If you think you have experienced discrimination and would like to speak to the Office of Equal Opportunity you can contact them at 2199 S. University Blvd. Denver, Colorado 80208, (303) 871-7436. For more detailed information on DU's anti-discrimination policies, please visit [the Office of Equal Opportunity website](#).

# GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT

## Graduation Requirements

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### Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to candidacy must be accomplished no later than one quarter prior to the expected date of completion of requirements for the degree. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs must approve any exceptions.

Following completion of the requirements of the foundation curriculum for two-year students or, in the case of advanced standing students, the completion of the second quarter of study, the student is eligible for advancement to candidacy for the degree, based upon the following criteria:

- Enrollment as a regular status student
- Minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0
- Two-year students: completion of foundation courses and foundation field internship
- Advanced standing students: completion of SOWK 4120, 4132, 4299, at least one course required for the concentration, one elective, and five hours of field internship with a grade of "Pass"

Advancement to candidacy is not automatically made upon the completion of any required number of courses or hours of field. If a student fails to make satisfactory progress in the areas of academic performance, professional attitude or behavior, ethical conduct, and/or field performance, the GSSW Registrar may withhold advancement upon recommendation by the faculty.

### Degree Audit

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all degree requirements are met. Students are encouraged to track their progress on a regular basis using the Degree Audit in PioneerWeb. For detailed instructions on using the Degree Audit, please see [the Office of the Registrar's website](#). Questions regarding the degree audit should be directed to the GSSW Registrar.

### Applying to Graduate

Application for graduation must be made no later than the seventh calendar day of the quarter before that of the anticipated graduation date (e.g., students planning to graduate at the end of Spring quarter must apply by the end of the first week of Winter Quarter). Students can apply for graduation electronically under the "Student Records" link in PioneerWeb.

Once a student submits their application, the GSSW Registrar will initiate a graduation check. Any changes made to the student's schedule or transcript following the graduation check may change the students' eligibility for graduation. Graduation may be after the Fall, Winter, Spring, or Summer Quarter, dependent upon when the student meets the following degree requirements:

- Residency: Be enrolled at GSSW for at least three quarters and earn a minimum of 45 credit hours at GSSW
- Grades: Maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, excluding field practicum and capstone grades
- Credit hours: Students in the two-year program must earn 81 quarter hours, and those in the advanced standing program must earn 54 quarter hours; both requirements must be met within four years of the date of first enrollment
- Required courses: Complete concentration and other course requirements
- Field internship: Students must satisfactorily complete field internship requirements

- Advancement to candidacy: Advance to candidacy no later than one quarter before the expected date of program completion. Advancement is based on enrollment as a regular-status student, as well as satisfactory progress in coursework and field internship. In addition, students must exhibit satisfactory progress in the areas of professional attitude and behavior and ethical conduct. Students for whom there is a student review pending will not be advanced until the satisfactory resolution of that concern
- Application for graduation: Apply for graduation no later than the seventh business day of the quarter preceding that of intended graduation

Note: Students who receive a grade of incomplete or an in progress in internship in their final quarter of enrollment automatically defer the certification of their degree to the following quarter.

Please note that, although degrees can be certified in any academic quarter, formal commencement ceremonies are only held following Spring (June) and Summer quarters (August). Students who complete degree requirements in the Fall or Winter quarter will be eligible to participate in commencement exercises the following Spring.

Students who fail to achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 when degree certification is verified will be notified by the GSSW Registrar and will be allowed to register for no more than 6 credit hours of additional coursework at GSSW in order to raise the GPA to 3.0. If the cumulative GPA remains at less than 3.0 at the end of the next quarter in which the student is enrolled, the student will be terminated from the program. The Office of Academic Affairs will notify the student in writing of the termination and the right to appeal the termination. If the student chooses to appeal, they will not be allowed to register for additional classes until a decision is granted.

Graduation candidates must fulfill all degree requirements including course assignments and field hours no later than the last day of the term in which they intend to graduate. Faculty cannot extend deadlines for submission of coursework past the last day of the term.

The final responsibility for completing all graduation requirements lies with the student. Students should review their online transcript and Degree Audit each quarter to ensure progress towards completion of degree requirements.

A delay of graduation fee of \$20 may be assessed for graduation candidates who do not graduate at the end of the academic term for which they applied. Students whose graduation term is delayed must submit a new application for graduation to be considered for the subsequent term.

## Participation in Commencement Ceremonies

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Commencement ceremonies at the University of Denver are held in June and August each year. GSSW students must complete all degree requirements before participation in commencement ceremonies.

In the following circumstances, students may request an exception to this policy:

- The student has five or fewer credits of "In Progress" in SOWK 4970 that will be completed by the end of the quarter, including summer session, following the commencement ceremony; or
- The student has registered for a block placement in SOWK 4970 and is within 200 clock hours (equal to five credits) of satisfactorily completing field; or
- The student has registered for an international experience course which will remain in progress until travel occurs after the end of the academic term.

Students must submit a request for an exception to the Office of Graduate Studies [using the exception form](#).

Students should note that participation in commencement ceremonies does not, in and of itself, indicate completion of degree requirements. The diploma will be conferred only after the GSSW Registrar certifies that all requirements for the degree have been completed.

## Preparation for Post-Graduation

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### Preparation for Licensure

The Graduate School of Social Work and the University of Denver provide resources to students to assist them in the licensure and job search process.

- All job postings that are received by GSSW will be compiled and sent out in the Career Services E-Newsletter. To join this mailing list please refer to instructions on page 16 of this Guide;
- GSSW offers a variety of post-graduate continuing education offerings, including licensure preparation courses.

Licensure is governed by state law, and the requirements differ from state to state. For information about requirements in Colorado, visit the website for the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies. The Colorado Chapter of NASW also has helpful information on licensure for social workers [on their website](#). For information about licensing requirements and procedures in other States, visit [www.aswb.org](http://www.aswb.org), the website for the Association of Social Work Boards.

All licensure applications needing signatures or requests for letters verifying graduation should be submitted to the [gsswregistrar@du.edu](mailto:gsswregistrar@du.edu).

Please note: Students are strongly encouraged to save syllabi from all courses completed; these are often required by licensing boards in states other than Colorado, as well as by many prospective employers.

### Provisional Special Services License for School Social Workers

Students interested in school social work are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the requirements specific to their state to ensure that requirements are met in their choice of courses and internships. Students should contact their Student Success Advisor for more information.

# GUIDELINES ON MSW STUDENTS PERFORMING CONCURRENT PRIVATE INDEPENDENT PRACTICE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY OR COUNSELING

## Policy

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GSSW strongly discourages masters-level students from engaging in private independent practice of psychotherapy concurrent with their graduate education. Students who choose to practice psychotherapy with private clients during their graduate education assume sole responsibility for the care and treatment of these clients. GSSW, its faculty and staff, and the University of Denver assume no responsibility for the care and treatment of students' private practice clients. This policy statement and guidelines are not meant to prohibit or restrict students from agency employment in social work, mental health, or related human service organizations during their graduate education.

## Definition of Terms

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As used here, "private independent practice" refers to the delivery of psychotherapeutic services by a mental health practitioner on a fee-for-service basis, independent of a GSSW-approved agency structure, whether practiced as a sole endeavor or group enterprise, business partnership, or as an owner or employee of a professional service corporation. This includes private work done under the contract, auspices, and/or supervision of a psychotherapist or clinical social worker (whether licensed or unlicensed) in private practice.

## Guidelines

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For those MSW students who choose to see "private practice clients" while enrolled in GSSW, the following guidelines shall apply:

- The Colorado State Board of Social Work Examiners regulates the practice of social work, including prevention, assessment, diagnosis, and intervention with individual, family, group, organizational, and societal problems. In addition, the Colorado State Board of Registered Psychotherapists regulates the practice of psychotherapy by registered therapists. Students in private practice are expected to conform to all applicable Colorado laws and regulations [see C.R.S. 12-43-101 et seq.] and regulations of the Colorado State Board of Social Work Examiners and the Colorado State Board of Registered Psychotherapists. This includes registering in the Colorado database directory of registered psychotherapists, taking a jurisprudence examination or workshop, using a mandatory disclosure form with clients, and practicing only within their competency and training and within generally accepted standards of care. In addition, students are expected to practice according to the NASW Code of Ethics and the clinical standards determined by the social work profession.
- The name of the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work may not be stated in conjunction with "MSW candidate," "social work candidate," or "social work intern" for the purposes of representing a student's competence or qualifications to engage in private practice, in advertising, or recruiting private practice clients.
- Students are prohibited from using private practice clients to fulfill any GSSW academic course or field education assignment. Students' private practice may not be used as a work site for field placement setting. GSSW faculty, staff, and field instructors will not supervise, either voluntarily or on a fee-for-service basis, students' clinical work with private practice clients. Students are prohibited from transferring or referring clients seen in a field placement agency or setting to their own private practice.
- In the event that a student receives a sustained violation of professional and ethical standards, legal violation, or judgment of professional misconduct or negligence which has occurred in the context of private psychotherapy practice, they shall notify the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs within five (5) working days

of the determination that the complaint has merit. In the event the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is absent or unavailable, the student shall notify their academic advisor and/or the Dean.

- As defined here, a sustained violation is an allegation or complaint which has been duly investigated and been determined to have merit by a court of law, state regulatory body, agency or organization, or a professional association's ethics committee or peer review committee. Evidence that a violation has been sustained includes termination of employment by an agency for unprofessional and/or unethical behavior, malpractice suit, ethical sanctions imposed by a professional association (e.g., NASW) for unprofessional and/or unethical behavior, any judgment or disciplinary action taken by the State Board of Social Work Examiners or the State Board of Registered Psychotherapists, and conviction for violation of Colorado laws regarding the practice of mental health.

*Note: The titles "social worker," "registered social worker," "licensed social worker," "licensed clinical social worker," and "licensed independent social worker," and their abbreviations "RSW," "LSW," "LISW," and "LCSW," are legally restricted to only those persons who have successfully passed the state's licensing or registration process. The practice of psychotherapy by social workers is restricted to persons holding an LCSW or an LSW who are being supervised by a LCSW.*

Students residing outside of Colorado are responsible for knowing and abiding by the relevant laws and regulations in their state. If students need assistance locating said laws, please contact GSSW Career Services.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work

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Craig Hall  
2148 South High Street; Denver, CO 80208-7100  
(303) 871-2886 (Main Desk); (303) 871-2845 (Fax)  
[www.du.edu/socialwork](http://www.du.edu/socialwork)

### Office of the Dean

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(303) 871-2203  
[gsswdean@du.edu](mailto:gsswdean@du.edu)

### Academic Affairs

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Associate Dean for Academic Affairs: Leslie Hasche, PhD, MSW  
303-871-4816  
[gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu](mailto:gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu)

MSW@Denver Program Director: Stephanie George EdD, MSW  
303-871-3868  
[onlinemsw@du.edu](mailto:onlinemsw@du.edu)

### GSSW Registrar

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(303) 871-2843  
[Gsswregistrar@du.edu](mailto:Gsswregistrar@du.edu)

### Student & Career Services

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(303) 871-6146  
[Gssw.StudentServices@du.edu](mailto:Gssw.StudentServices@du.edu)  
[Gssw.Careers@du.edu](mailto:Gssw.Careers@du.edu)  
[Gssw.Advising@du.edu](mailto:Gssw.Advising@du.edu)

### Field Education

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(303) 871.2844  
[field@du.edu](mailto:field@du.edu)

### Enrollment and Financial Aid

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(303) 871-2841  
[Gssw-admission@du.edu](mailto:Gssw-admission@du.edu)



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