

STUDENT HANDBOOK

MASTER'S PROGRAM IN SOCIAL WORK



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
Tacoma, Washington 98447-0003

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INTRODUCTION

A Welcome from the Department of Social Work

We are pleased that you are interested in pursuing a career in Social Work and that you have chosen to study at Pacific Lutheran University. Welcome! Our undergraduate and graduate programs in social work are dedicated to the principle that as professionals, we should strive to improve the quality of individual and community life through the enhancement of social justice and opportunity.

Graduates of the Master's Program in Social Work are prepared for advanced clinical practice with individuals, families, and groups, with a focus on health and behavioral health. Our graduates are employed in social service agencies throughout the region. They also are employed and are providing leadership throughout the state as well as in other parts of the country and in international positions.

Our faculty bring years of experience as social workers, educators, consultants, and agency administrators. The faculty and staff are committed to maintaining a quality educational program, to meeting the needs of our students, and to providing leadership and service to the profession and community.

Pacific Lutheran University's MSW is pursuing accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education and has entered into candidacy. All students who begin the program as of fall 2024 will graduate from a fully accredited program. We look forward to having you as a student in our program. We hope you will find it a challenging and rewarding experience.

Introduction to the Student Handbook

This handbook provides a concise summary of the MSW program for students admitted into the regular standing (24 months) and advanced standing (14 months) programs. It provides information about the program's curriculum, the Council on Social Work Education's standards for social work education, degree requirements, policies, and procedures. It is intended to supplement, not replace, regular meetings with your academic advisor. This handbook is designed to answer the most frequently asked questions about the social work major. Please be aware that the handbook is reviewed and revised regularly; updated versions are available on the program's website.

Your handbook is intended for your personal use as well as for reference during registration/advising meetings. The staff and faculty are ready to assist you in achieving your personal and academic goals. **After you've read the handbook, please fill out the handbook review document in the appendices and return it via the QR code by the date indicated by the Program Director.**

About the Department of Social Work

Reputation: The BSW program has existed at PLU since 1974. Social workers in the community respect and support PLU's program. A Program Advisory Council, made up of local service providers, helps to strengthen this relationship between the community and the social work program. The MSW program admitted its first cohort of regular and advanced standing students in fall of 2024. The MSW program is a clinical program, with a focus on health and behavioral health.

Interaction with Faculty: Because both the BSW and MSW are small programs, students get to know the faculty well and often have the opportunity to work closely with faculty on special projects, research, conference presentations, and community and campus activities. The relatively small class sizes allow for increased interaction with other students as well as faculty.

Accreditation: The baccalaureate social work program at PLU has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, since 1975. The MSW program entered candidacy for accreditation in 2024. Graduating from an accredited program offers several advantages to students, including:

- a curriculum that is competency-based and consistently updated;
- for BSW programs, it allows for advanced standing at many graduate schools of social work, allowing students to complete the Master of Social Work in less time. For MSW programs, it allows for state licensure.

Global Emphasis: Recognizing that human needs and the applicability of the skills of social workers extend beyond the boundaries of this country, the curriculum incorporates a broad understanding of social policy, human behavior, and social work practice theories and skills. Students are encouraged to take a global perspective in framing individual, family, and community issues and solutions. Opportunities exist for study and/or field experience away.

The Tacoma/Pierce County area provides a rich, culturally diverse environment for study and practice. Recognizing that we live in a community that has been enriched by successive waves of immigrants and acknowledging that social work must be practiced in a global context, the social work program seeks to provide content and experiences that enhance students' ability to practice in the 21st century. This includes activities in the classroom, in the community, and across the globe.

MSW Program Overview

Both the BSW and MSW programs are housed in the Department of Social Work in the College of Health Professions. The mission of the MSW program aligns with PLU's and the Department of Social Work's missions as well as the value base and purpose of the profession as stated by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics states that social work is based on the values of service, social and economic justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, and integrity and competence in practice. CSWE's educational policy and accreditation standards state that the purpose of the profession is to

"...promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally." (CSWE EPAS, 2022)

PLU's MSW Program Mission

The mission of the Master's in Social Work Program at Pacific Lutheran University is to prepare skilled, ethical, professional service-oriented leaders and change agents who work toward just, equitable, and empowerment-based service provision, policies, and systems on local and global levels. The program emphasizes critical consciousness, critical thinking, scientific inquiry, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive theories and methods to promote social, economic, and environmental justice and advance human rights and well-being, particularly in underserved and marginalized communities.

The mission and objectives of the MSW program are based on the purpose and values of the social work profession such as integrity, dignity and worth of humankind, respect for human diversity, the significance of human relationships, and the importance of viewing problems and solutions through a person-in-environment lens. The mission and objectives of the MSW program articulate how students will be prepared to competently and effectively engage in change work in various political, geographical, socioeconomic, and other settings.

Program Objectives and Competencies

Graduates of the MSW Program:

- *Will demonstrate advanced professional and ethical behavior; including ethical decision-making, using reflection & self-regulation, demonstrating professional demeanor, and applying interventions from anti-racist and anti-oppressive lenses.*
- *Will be able to identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to services; assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to health services; and, apply advanced critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.*
- *Will be able to provide effective advanced clinical practice with individuals, families, and groups; evaluate their practice by collecting and organizing data and applying critical thinking to interpret data, applying knowledge of human behavior and the social environment and other theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data and implementation of evidenced-based practices in health settings; and will be able to engage anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in practice.*

To achieve the mission and objectives of the program, students of the regular standing program complete 60 credit hours of courses that focus on foundational and advanced clinical social work along with 960 hours in a practicum placement over three semesters. Students in the advanced standing program complete 36-40 credit hours of advanced specialized courses along with 640 hours in a practicum placement (those hours are combined with the hours the advanced standing students bring from their BSW programs, which equal the total of practicum hours completed in their social work education). The curriculum is organized into generalist, foundation courses and advanced, specialized clinical courses:

Generalist courses: These courses form the first foundation year for the regular standing program. Students take courses that offer foundational social work theory and skills, research methods, and the foundational practicum placement, where students begin to integrate knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes with practice.

Specialized, clinical courses: These courses form the second year for the regular standing program and the entire curriculum for the advanced standing students. The specialized clinical courses focus on anti-racism and anti-oppressive practices, assessment and intervention in mental health and substance use disorders as well as advanced practice and policy work in health and behavioral health care settings. Students also engage in advanced clinical practicum placements over the span of two semesters.

An emphasis on ethics, values, professionalism in practice, a person-in-environment foundation for practice, and the importance of research informed practice and practice informed research can be found throughout the curriculum.

Practicum Experience Opportunities: The practicum is considered the “signature pedagogy” in social work education. The hours spent in the practicum placement offer students opportunities to integrate course work with hands-on experience and learn from MSW-level practitioners. Students have many options to choose from for their placements, including health and behavioral health agencies in Tacoma and Pierce County.

Program Competencies: CSWE sets the competencies in their [Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards](#) document that accredited BSW and MSW programs follow to ensure that graduates from the program are prepared for generalist and specialized practice. The MSW program at PLU has a set of generalized competencies for the first year of the two-year program and a set of specialized competencies that build and expand on the generalist competencies in the second year. Each course in the program incorporates these competencies so that by the end of the program, students have met all the competencies and are prepared for specialized, advanced clinical practice. Advanced standing students will have

accomplished the generalist competencies in their accredited BSW program and work through the specialized competencies in the second year of the MSW program.

Generalist Competencies for the first year of the MSW program:

- Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
- Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
- Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Specialized Competencies for the second year of the MSW program:

- **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**
Social workers in clinical practice identify as professional social workers and actively represent and model the values and perspectives of the profession. Clinical social workers utilize the values and ethics of the profession as a foundation for their work to ensure that the systems in which they practice and the colleagues with whom they work are serving people in the most effective ways possible. When faced with an ethical dilemma, they know how to approach ethical decision-making with the goal to resolve the dilemma in a way that serves clients and changes systems to better serve them. Clinical social workers demonstrate the effective use of self in therapeutic and professional relationships and consistently engage in self-reflection regarding their knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes to ensure they practice ethically and competently and continue to learn and improve their skills as a practitioner.

Clinical social workers:

- a. understand the ethics of rapidly changing technology, particularly in health and behavioral health settings, and how it can harm or help different populations disproportionately.
- b. are able to effectively function on interdisciplinary teams to articulate and represent the views of the social work profession.
- c. understand the use of self and how to utilize it in therapeutic and professional situations.
- d. advocate for ethical, evidenced-based interventions, policies, and systems that increase equity and accessibility to services for all people, particularly disenfranchised consumers.
- e. identify one's strengths and limitations as a professional social worker and utilize supervision and other support to address limitations or issues that may affect the quality or effectiveness of one's professional practice.

- **Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

Clinical social workers understand that safety, empowerment, self-determination, and equitable access to services and various systems are fundamental values of the profession. They actively work toward ensuring that the environments and systems with which people interact promote positive health, mental health, and overall well-being and eradicate racism, sexism, and other discriminatory practices that erode that well-being. Clinical social workers actively engage in activities such as education, advocacy, and effective clinical practice at various levels to ensure human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice is supported.

Clinical social workers:

- a. advocate for human rights in clinical settings as well as in other settings where policy, laws, and systems may impinge on the rights of others and the services they have access to.
- b. employ effective methods to address individual and systemic social, racial, economic, and environmental injustice.
- c. educate service consumers, lay people, and other professionals about the deleterious effects of individual and systemic social, racial, economic, and environmental injustice.
- d. utilize evidence-based interventions and models such as trauma-informed approaches, empowerment and strength models, and ecosystems theory to conceptualize and intervene with problems that impede human rights and different facets of justice.

● **Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice**

Clinical social workers serve as models for how to employ anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices and perspectives to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are promoted. Clinical social workers employ these practices and perspectives in their therapeutic relationships but also in ways that support positive change in systems and policies that affect people at an individual levels. Clinical social workers know how to effectively engage colleagues and systems, particularly those that are large and bureaucratic, to promote ADEI efforts that benefit consumers of services.

Clinical social workers:

- a. articulate and employ anti-racist and anti-oppressive models and interventions in practice.
- b. actively educate others (clients, colleagues, lay persons) on the importance of promoting anti-racist, diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices, policies, and systems.
- c. serve as role models for anti-racist and anti-oppressive change agents.
- d. advocate for anti-racist, diverse, equitable, and inclusive services, policies, programs, and systems.

● **Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice**

Clinical social workers are adept consumers and generators of research. They understand and value the important role that research plays in their professional practice. Clinical social workers know how to critique the quality of research, understand the ethical implications of research, can apply research to their own practice, and stay abreast of new developments in practice. Clinical social workers also are able to use research methods to evaluate the effectiveness of their work and adapt their practices based on the outcome of their research.

Clinical social workers:

- a. are active consumers of research on health, behavioral health, and other areas of practice to develop clinical skills and interventions.
- b. understand research methods to critically think about how studies are designed and carried out and how results are applied.
- c. can design and undertake research to evaluate and improve interventions, services, policies, and systems that better and more effectively serve consumers of services.
- d. use their research skills to educate others about and advocate for improved interventions, services, policies, and systems.

● **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Clinical social workers understand the importance of policy in their practice. They can articulate the effect that policy has on those they serve, the systems in which they and their clients' interface, and

the ways in which policy can perpetuate disparities, discrimination, oppression, and inequities in access to and the quality of services. Clinical social workers can conduct policy analysis, apply analysis to their practice, and utilize analysis to advocate for policy change that promotes the well-being of clients and systems.

Clinical social workers:

- a. understand the important role that policy practice plays in clinical social work.
- b. can conduct policy analysis to inform practice and system change.
- c. advocate for policy change to make services more accessible, equitable, and inclusive.
- d. educate colleagues, law makers, administrators, and the public on the affect that policy can have on the health and well-being of people.
- e. know how to critically analyze policy for ethical dilemmas it may pose and disparities in how its applied, which can affect populations differently.

● **Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social workers have a deep understanding of the engagement process with clients and why the engagement process is important in therapeutic relationships. Clinical social workers possess the skills to effectively engage with individual clients as well as with families and groups. Clinical social workers reflect on their skills to continually learn and improve and seek feedback and continued learning on their engagement skills.

Clinical social workers:

- a. can skillfully and authentically convey warmth, empathy, positive regard for their clients and utilize other interpersonal skills to build trust and relationship with clients.
- b. understand how to employ the use of self to connect with clients therapeutically.
- c. can conceptualize client issues from a person-in-environment, ecosystems, and strengths lenses to engage with clients.

● **Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social workers understand the importance of the assessment process in effective therapeutic work with individuals, families, and groups. They know how to access, apply, and evaluate various assessment models and tools and how to evaluate the effectiveness of their own assessment methods. Clinical social workers understand how bias and other oppressive factors can infiltrate and affect assessment; thus, they are self-reflective of their work and are able to critically evaluate assessment methods for bias and other oppressive factors that may hinder assessment and harm clients.

Clinical social workers:

- a. understand the importance of assessment in the therapeutic process.
- b. know how to access and employ a variety of assessment methods and choose appropriate methods based on the client situation.
- c. understand how to consistently evaluate the assessment process to revise the process for best therapeutic outcomes.
- d. are aware of how bias can affect the assessment process and effectively use self-reflection to evaluate how their own biases may impact their work.
- e. utilize anti-racist, anti-oppressive lenses and tools in the assessment process.

● **Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social workers are skilled at choosing and using a variety of interventions in their work with individuals, families, and groups. Clinical social workers stay abreast of research and innovation in interventions and engage in on-going education on new modalities. Clinical social workers know how to critically think about interventions in terms of their effectiveness but also any ethical or other concerns interventions might bring in their applications with various populations and problems.

Clinical social workers know how to utilize self-reflection and supervision to assess their own competency in utilizing various interventions.

Clinical social workers:

- a. know how to effectively intervene with individuals, families, and groups using a wide variety of evidence-based interventions.
- b. utilize various resources such as research, trainings, colleagues, and supervision to stay abreast of new interventions and applications.
- c. critically evaluate interventions for effectiveness, ethical applications, and appropriateness for different populations and problems.
- d. utilize self-reflection and supervision to continually evaluate their practice and engage in on-going education ensure competency in intervention work.
- e. know their strengths and limitations with regard to interventions and when to refer clients.

- **Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups**

Clinical social workers understand the value of evaluating their practice with individuals, families, and groups. They know how to approach and carry out evaluation and how to use results to improve their practice and the profession. Clinical social workers utilize resources such as research, supervision, consultation, and training to improve evaluation skills. They engage in regular evaluation to continually improve their practice.

Clinical social workers:

- a. are able to evaluate their own practice with individuals, families, and groups.
- b. know how to evaluate the effectiveness of various interventions and approaches to therapeutic work.
- c. are able to use a range of resources (e.g., self-reflection, supervision, research, consultation) to evaluate practice.
- d. are advocates for evaluation of practice and ensuring that the profession engages in consistent evaluation to improve the effectiveness of and access to services.

Each competency is demonstrated through performance of practice behaviors. Practice behaviors are each measured or “benchmarked” through formative and summative assessments at least twice during the student’s program of study. Each course syllabus identifies the competencies and practice behaviors students will study and specifies which will be recorded as benchmarks. A chart showing each competency and the course(s) in which students become aware of, apply, and/or demonstrate the practice behaviors is contained in Appendix B.

THE MSW CURRICULUM

The first year of the MSW curriculum provides a professional generalist social work foundation that is transferable to different settings, populations, and problem areas. The curriculum provides content in a number of areas that are essential to generalist social work practice. Students learn about:

- **Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE)** – empirically based theories and knowledge focusing on interactions among and between individuals, groups, societies, and economic systems, locally and globally; theories and knowledge of biological, sociological, psychological, cultural and spiritual development across the lifespan; the range of social systems in which people live (individual, family, group, organization, community) and the ways such systems promote or impede health and well-being.
- **Social Work Theory and Practice** – the integration of theories, values, skills, knowledge to enhance the well-being of people and to help ameliorate the environmental conditions that affect people

adversely; approaches to and skills for practice with clients from differing backgrounds and with systems of all sizes; focus on strengths, capacities, and resources of client systems in relation to broader environments; skills to engage clients in working relationship; identifying issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets; collecting and assessing information; use of communication skills, supervision and consultation; identifying, analyzing, and implementing empirically based interventions designed to achieve client goals; applying empirical knowledge; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; promoting social and economic justice.

- **Research** – demonstration of critical thinking as well as applying research knowledge to practice; an understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic and ethical approach to building knowledge for practice and to evaluating service delivery in all areas of practice; familiarity with quantitative and qualitative methodologies; ability to develop, use and communicate empirically based knowledge; use of research knowledge to provide high quality services, initiate change, improve practice, policy and service delivery.
- **Practicum Education** – supervised social work practicum which provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in an agency setting; reinforces identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; promotes development of professional competence; systematically designed, supervised, coordinated and evaluated.

The second year of the MSW program provides students with specialized, advanced clinical courses to prepare students for practice. Students learn about:

- Advanced clinical courses: Courses in mental health assessment and intervention and substance use disorder provide students with content and practice in advanced practice in health and behavioral health.
- Advanced clinical and policy courses in health and behavioral health. Several courses focus on health and behavioral health issues, policies, and practices to prepare students for practice in these settings.
- Practicum Education – advanced supervised social work practicum which provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in an agency setting; reinforces identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; promotes development of professional competence; systematically designed, supervised, coordinated and evaluated.

Content that cuts across and is an important aspect of all courses includes:

- **Ethics and Values** – knowledge about professional social work values and their ethical implications; principles of ethical decision making; developing awareness of one's own personal values analyzing ethical dilemmas and the ways these affect practice, services, and clients; developing, demonstrating, and promoting the values of the profession.
- **Anti-racist, anti-oppressive, diversity, equity, inclusion, human rights, and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice content** – understanding, affirming, and respecting people from diverse backgrounds, including, but not being limited to race, culture, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, disability, age, religion; emphasis on interlocking and complex nature of cultural and personal identity; recognition of diversity within and between groups that influence assessment, planning, intervention, and research; learning how to define design, and implement strategies for effective, culturally relevant practice. Learning about patterns, dynamics, and consequences of discrimination,

economic deprivation, and oppression; examining the factors that contribute to being at risk; identification of how group membership influences access to resources and strategies to redress risk factors; understanding of distributive justice, civil and human rights, and the global interconnections of oppression; learning strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation and to promote social, racial, economic and environmental justice.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Generalist Year

SOCW 505: Human Behavior & the Social Environment (4)

This course is designed to introduce students to human behavior in the social environment through a critical race lens as students begin to explore theory and practice with diverse clients in healthcare settings. Students will explore the concepts of privilege, oppression, social justice in their work with diverse clients. This course will emphasize the impact discrimination and oppression by individuals and society on the developmental experience for people from culturally diverse backgrounds and orientations. Students will develop an understanding of the ecological systems perspective and how it is utilized in social work. Issues of power and oppression will be explored at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of social work practice.

SOCW 510: Social Work Theory & Practice I (4)

This course provides a foundation and background to the practicum of social work practice. Students will be introduced to the history of social welfare and the development of the social work profession in the United States. They will learn about foundational theories that apply to generalist social work practice as well as a more focused exploration of work with individuals and families. Content on working with diverse populations will be integrated to assist students in developing social work practice skills using various theoretical constructs (i.e. strengths perspective, problem-solving, empowerment) and evidence-informed practices. Additional focus will be to assist students in developing a professional self with an integration of social work values and ethics throughout the course. Skill building will be practiced using role plays, videos, and written assignments in preparing students for their practicum experience in the spring semester.

SOCW 515: Social Work Theory & Practice II (4)

Students will build on the foundation provided in Social Work Theory & Practice I to explore work with groups, organizations, and communities. Content on working with diverse populations will be incorporated and students will be encouraged to use an anti-racist lens to look at social work theories that underlie mezzo and macro level practice. Prerequisite: SOCW 510.

SOCW 532: Social Work Research Methods (4)

Social work relies on careful collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to answer theoretical, empirical, and applied research questions. This course will introduce students to methods of data collection and analysis in social work and provide students with the tools to engage in this central component of scientific inquiry. This course lays the foundation for social research, including an introduction to the scientific method and ethics. Students will learn about several of the most used methods of research in social work, including experiments, surveys, interviews, practicum research, single subject design, content analysis, and analysis of secondary data. Research design, conceptualization, and sampling will be covered. Students will apply methods in course assignments and will demonstrate their cumulative learning through preparation of a research proposal using one of the methods.

SOCW 576: Foundational Practicum Experience I (4)

Students are assigned to a practicum setting (e.g., healthcare, mental healthcare, or social service agency) and participate under social work (practicing MSW degreed social worker) supervision and mentoring in the delivery of social work services. Students will have the opportunity to practice foundational social work skills including completing intakes, developing social histories, interviewing, developing intervention plans, analyzing policies relevant to practice, and other skills that the student, the practicum instructor, and faculty

liaison mutually develop. The experience is a minimum of 320 clock hours. Along with practice in the community, students attend a regular classroom seminar, which provides students with the opportunity to integrate the content in their courses with their practicum experience learning activities. The seminar provides students with an opportunity to explore, question, and process their experiences in their placements
Prerequisite: SOCW 505, SOCW 510.

Advanced Specialist Year

SOCW 525: Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Equity in Social Work Practice (4)

In this course, human diversity is broadly explored and defined to include race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and ability. The course content looks critically at privilege and the ways in which a society's cultural practices and structure may oppress, marginalize, and alienate some while enhancing power and privilege of others. Students will explore how awareness of these factors influences delivery of social work practice in healthcare and mental healthcare settings.

SOCW 535: Advanced Social Work Foundations (4)*

This course is provided for incoming students into the advanced standing program. The course provides a review of the central social work theories, values, and skills that enhance the understanding of social work assessment and intervention at multiple system levels. Students will also review research methods as well as history and policy underlying the social work profession and social work practice. **For students who meet certain criteria for advanced standing.*

SOCW 555: Social Work in Health Care (4)

This course builds on generalist social work theory and practice with a look at advanced assessment and intervention skills in healthcare settings across micro, mezzo, and macro practice settings. Theory will guide assessment and intervention selection for social work practice in healthcare settings. Issues of diversity and equity in practice will be addressed to meet the needs of multiple constituencies. Prerequisite: SOCW 505, SOCW 510, SOCW 515, or acceptance into the MSW program with advanced standing status.

SOCW 560: Mental Health Assessment & Intervention (4)

This advanced course helps students develop a multi-dimensional assessment and intervention framework for clinical social work practice. This course builds on Social Work Theory & Practice from a Racial Justice Perspective and focuses on bio, psych, social, and spiritual assessment, and intervention at the individual and family levels, and includes work with children, youth, adults, and older adults. The DSM-5-TR classification system is discussed within the context of social work values and ethics. Several empirically based assessment tools and intervention techniques that are grounded in social work practice are explored to meet the needs of clients and families from diverse backgrounds. Prerequisite: SOCW 505, SOCW 510, SOCW 515 or acceptance into the MSW program with advanced standing status.

SOCW 565: SUD Assessment & Intervention (4)

This course provides a broad understanding of the stages, processes, and effects of substance use disorders, the social and psychological dynamics of substance use disorders, and the social worker's role in prevention, intervention, and aftercare, including recovery and relapse prevention. Students will also learn specific interventions for substance abuse treatment, such as motivational interviewing (MI) and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Prerequisite: SOCW 505, SOCW 510, SOCW 515 or acceptance into the MSW program with advanced standing status.

SOCW 570: Comparative Health Care (4)

In this course, students will have the opportunity to visit and learn about health care in another country or location. They will explore different cultural meanings attached to health and well-being, see how healthcare policy is implemented in other countries and communities, and learn about access to and quality of health care in another global context. Prerequisite: SOCW 555.

SOCW 573: Policy Practice & Advocacy in Health Care (4)

The course builds on policy content offered in previous courses.. The course provides students with knowledge, skills, and abilities for understanding the interrelationship between developments in health policy, the health care delivery system, and social work practice. Diversity, inequality, social and economic justice are continuing themes of study in the advanced concentration year. Prerequisite: SOCW 555, SOCW 570.

SOCW 586: Advanced Practicum Experience II (4)

Students are assigned to a practicum setting (e.g., healthcare, mental healthcare, or social service agency) and participate under social work (practicing MSW degreed social worker) supervision and mentoring in the delivery of social work services. Building on their foundational skills, students will begin to practice advanced social work skills of assessing, intervening with research informed practices, and assessing interventions with individuals, families, and groups. The experience is a minimum of 320 hours. Along with practice in the community, students attend a regular classroom seminar, which provides students with the opportunity to integrate the content in their courses with their practicum experience learning activities. Students develop a plan to monitor and evaluate their advanced clinical practice in their advanced practicum experience setting. The seminar provides students with an opportunity to explore, question, and process their experiences in practicum-related advanced clinical social work practices. Prerequisites: SOCW 576 or acceptance as advanced standing.

SOCW 596: Advanced Practicum Experience III (4)

Students continue their advanced clinical practicum experience under social work (practicing MSW degreed social worker) supervision and mentoring in the delivery of social work services. Building on their advanced practice skills, students will continue to practice advanced social work skills of assessing, intervening with research informed practices, and assessing interventions with individuals, families, and groups. The experience is a minimum of 320 hours. Along with practice in the community, students attend a regular classroom seminar, which provides students with the opportunity to explore, question, and process their experiences in practicum-related advanced clinical social work practices. Students have the opportunity to prepare and present a capstone project to document their learning and skills related to the specialized competencies of the program. Students will also develop a professional resume and explore the MSW job search and licensure process. Prerequisites: SOCW 586.

COURSE SEQUENCING

The course sequencing for the MSW program is as follows (shaded areas denote sequencing for advanced standing and the second year of the regular standing programs):

Fall	J-Term	Spring	Summer
505 Human Behavior & the Social Environment 510 Social Work Theory & Practice I	Elective	515 Social Work Theory & Practice II 576 Foundational Practicum Experience I	532 Social Work Research Methods 525 Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Equity in Social Work Practice 535: Advanced Social Work Foundations*
Fall	J-Term	Spring	Summer
555 Social Work in Health Care 586 Advanced Practicum Experience II Elective	570 Comparative Health Care	560 Mental Health Assessment & Intervention 596 Advanced Practicum Experience III	573 Policy Practice & Advocacy in Health Care 565 SUD Assessment & Intervention

Admissions Procedures

Admission to the MSW program is based on a holistic review of the applicant's academic preparation, work and volunteer experiences, and potential contributions to the classroom experience, the social work profession, and social justice. Review of applications and acceptance into the MSW program is determined by faculty evaluation by the MSW Graduate Admissions Committee. Review of MSW applications is based on the following requirements:

Regular Standing (2-year program)

1. An earned baccalaureate degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting organization;
2. Undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher;
3. Open to all non-social work majors.

Advanced Standing (one-year program)

1. Bachelor's degree in social work from a [CSWE/CASWE/ISWDRES-evaluated accredited program](#);
2. Applicants who graduated from a CSWE-accredited BSW program within 7 years from the time of application to the MSW program may opt to waive the bridge course (SOCW 535) offered in the first summer of the program*;
3. GPA in social work courses of 3.0 or higher and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Applicants with a GPA below a 3.0 may also be considered. Applicants with less than a 3.0 GPA are encouraged to provide additional information related to the context of their GPA in the application.

Current PLU undergraduate social work majors with a GPA of 3.0 or higher in social work courses may apply to the MSW program (advanced standing) by submitting only a resume and a personal essay. Current PLU social work minors with a cumulative 3.0 GPA may apply to the MSW program (regular standing) by submitting a resume and personal essay.

Transfer Credits:

For the regular standing (2-year) program, up to 18 credits may be transferred into PLU's MSW program. For the advanced standing (1-year) program, up to 12 credits may be transferred into PLU's program. As a general rule, several of the program's "practice" courses - *Social Work Theory and Practice I & II* courses and all three *Practicum Experience* courses - cannot be transferred. In cases where any practice course transfers are approved, they must be from another CSWE accredited MSW program. All transferred courses must fulfill PLU MSW course requirements and learning outcomes. Credits from another discipline, from international institutions, or which received grades of C+ or lower are generally not transferable. Students may not receive credit for life experience or previous work experience nor have any practicum experience or courses waived on this basis.

To request consideration of transfer credits, please submit a statement to the MSW Director that includes the courses you are requesting to transfer including grades earned, which courses in the PLU curriculum you would like to replace, and how you think the courses you are transferring meet the learning outcomes of the replacement courses. Include the syllabi of the courses you are requesting to be transferred, and offer documentation (via a website reference or letter of support) that practice courses are from a CSWE accredited program. Requests will be reviewed after students are admitted to the PLU MSW program and are considered on a case-by-case basis by the MSW Director.

** Those who earned their BSW degrees 8+ years upon the time of applying for the MSW degree, and who have not been working at least part-time in a social services-related field for every year since earning the BSW degree, must take the bridge course (SOC 535) the first summer term. These applicants may also be asked to schedule an interview with program faculty members. All other students (in both the regular and advanced standing programs) may access content in the bridge course upon request for review purposes.*

Deadlines and application deadlines:

Sept 1st - Applications open

Jan 15th - First Priority Deadline

Feb 15th - Second Priority Deadline

After the priority deadlines, applications are accepted on a rolling basis depending on space availability

Capacity Each Fall: 12 advance standing; 18 regular standing

Program Start Date: Advance standing starts in Summer; Regular standing starts in Fall

Application materials: Official undergraduate transcripts; personal statement; resume/CV; two recommendations; personal interview may be requested. (please see the program website for details.)

Advising

Each social work student is assigned to a faculty advisor in the MSW program. This advisor is a resource person for you and can be consulted about issues relating to your academics or your career options and goals. Your academic advisor will help you monitor your progress toward the fulfillment of graduation requirements. Advising meetings will occur at least once a semester; students may make additional advising appointments at any time by contacting their advisor directly.

Student Organizations

Graduate Social Work Organization: All students are encouraged to participate in GSWO activities, which include service projects, social events, and a variety of activities around current social and political issues. Members also help to coordinate organized feedback for the program's implicit and explicit curriculum and other processes.

Phi Alpha Honor Society: Students are invited to apply for membership in Phi Alpha Honor Society. To be eligible for membership students must have (a) completed 8 semester hours of Social Work classes, (b) an overall GPA of 3.0, and a 3.25 GPA in required Social Work classes. Phi Alpha also offers scholarships for MSW students. Students may serve as representatives to short-term committees for the Department of Social Work or on the student panel, which works with the Washington State Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

Other Program Requirements

You are subject to the University requirements that are in effect when you enter the University, but you must follow the MSW program requirements in effect when you are admitted to the program. The following procedures and policies should guide your program planning and course sequencing:

- Students may not challenge (credit by examination) courses within the MSW program.
- Life experience may not be used for Practicum Experience. Likewise, Practicum Experience credit may not be transferred from a non-accredited institution.
- Social work courses from other accredited institutions will be reviewed and may be accepted on a course-by-course basis toward the MSW at PLU.

Continuation Policy: To remain in the program, a student must: 1) maintain an overall 3.0 grade point average and 2) demonstrate behavior that is consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and University [Code of Conduct](#). See the *Policies for Review of Academic Performance* section for additional details.

Admission to Practicum Experience: To be admitted to the Practicum Experience sequence, students must:

- have completed prerequisite courses;
- have demonstrated the ability to successfully meet academic requirements (based upon GPA);
- have demonstrated the capacity to deal with potential stresses in practicum situations;
- have demonstrated ethical conduct.

Grading Policy

A	<i>Students consistently demonstrate, both in oral and written work, excellence and originality in content, arrangement, style, format and mechanics. Students are informed as they critically and appropriately seek to master the discipline of Social Work, its concepts, theories, and perspectives. Students will not only demonstrate increasing and sustained social work competence, but will also excel in the creative, critical, and argumentative aspects of speaking and writing.</i>
B	<i>Students' work demonstrates competency and mastery in all graded criteria, but lacks the originality of thought and style which characterizes an A student.</i> Students' work consistently demonstrates advanced quality and content. Students' ideas are based firmly on course material. Students demonstrate some ability for original thought and critical thinking.
C	<i>Students' work demonstrates competency of course materials. Work is acceptable in all graded criteria.</i> Students' work is of average quality and content. Students' ideas and work may exhibit problems with tangents, presentation, and organization. Students' work lacks the vigor of thought or expression that characterizes a B or A student.
D	<i>Students' work demonstrates some competency and is below average quality in most areas of grading.</i> Students' work is sloppy, needs specific attention to course content and oral/written work. Students' ideas may be expressed incorrectly and ineffectively. Students have played with the course materials, but have not tried to achieve mastery or competence.
F	<i>Students' work demonstrates no competency or mastery of course material and is consistently below acceptable quality in all areas of grading.</i> Students show little or no learning during the course or in course related activities. Students fail to state and sustain main ideas and concepts.

If you receive a D or F grade anytime during the term, you should make an appointment to speak with your professor immediately.

University Grade Dispute Policy and Procedures

PLU is dedicated to fair and accurate appraisal of student coursework. When a disagreement over a final grade in a course occurs, the student should first pursue informal grade dispute resolution with the course instructor. If the informal procedure is unsuccessful, students may undertake the university's formal grade dispute resolution procedure. However, no formal grade dispute procedure may be pursued when the course grade in question is less than one full letter grade (i.e., disagreements over A- versus B+). Additionally, this procedure allows for the review of student work to ensure that it is consistent with the course syllabus and/or assignment or exam grading rubric, but does not allow for disputing the content of a syllabus.

Informal Grade Dispute Procedure

Process: A student who disputes a grade must first attempt to do so through an informal grade dispute procedure. This procedure involves discussing the reason for the grade with the instructor who assigned the grade. The student must request an opportunity to discuss the grade via PLU email.

If no resolution is forthcoming after discussions with the course instructor, or if the instructor is away from campus or no longer employed at the university, the student may take the dispute to the instructor's supervisor (chair, associate dean, or dean) who will attempt to resolve the matter informally. To find the supervisor, look for the list of "Academic Unit Heads" on the Office of the Provost website.

Timeline: Students who wish to dispute a grade may start the informal process as soon as the grade in question is posted on Banner, and must do so no later than 20 business days (days during which the university is open for business) after the final grade is posted there. This timeline ensures availability of instructor records for review if needed.

While students may take up to 20 business days to initiate the informal process, they should be mindful of how the grade in question might affect their continued progress in their academic program when determining

their own timeline for starting the process (for example, if the course is a prerequisite for a class they are registered to take the following term, they should launch the process as soon as possible).

If the dispute is not resolved through the informal process within 10 business days from the date the student initiated contact with the course instructor, students can initiate a formal grade dispute procedure. See process description and timelines below. Please be advised that instructors may not be available for immediate response for a host of reasons (especially during breaks between terms or while leading study away courses).

Formal Grade Dispute Procedures

Timelines: If a grade dispute is not resolved through the informal process within 10 business days from the date the student initiated contact with the faculty member requesting a discussion about the disputed grade, students can initiate a formal grade dispute procedure. The formal procedure must be initiated within 5 business days after the conclusion of the informal process. It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty member's college dean via PLU email to begin the process within this time frame. The college dean may dismiss a grade dispute if the stated timelines in this procedure are not followed. To find the college dean, look for the list of "[Academic Unit Heads](#)" on the Office of the Provost website.

Student Support: Throughout the formal grade dispute process, the student may rely on a support person from the current PLU community to help them submit paperwork and/or join them in attending any meetings that should arise. While the support person may attend meetings as an observer, they may not participate in the proceedings or argue on the student's behalf.

Submitting Materials for Reviewing Dispute: The student's dispute must be submitted in writing via PLU email, with full explanation and supporting materials, to the instructor's college dean.

Within 3 business days of receiving these materials, the college dean shall request the materials described above from the faculty member assigning the grade. The instructor who assigned the grade will be asked by the college dean to provide a copy of the course syllabus. If the disputed course grade results from a disputed grade on a specific assignment/exam in the course, the instructor will also be asked to provide to the college dean a grading rubric and/or an explanation for why they assigned the grade in question for that assignment. The college dean will provide copies of these materials to the student.

Initial Review by College Dean: After relevant materials have been provided by the student and instructor, the college dean will conduct an initial review of the case to determine whether the complaint involves an alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy or other university policies, such as those related to discrimination. Grade disputes arising over alleged violations of the university's Academic Integrity Policy are considered by an Academic Dishonesty Hearing Panel (ADHP). Issues involving discrimination are considered by the University Dispute Resolution Committee. Previous decisions, including those from ADHP or UDRC processes, will not be reconsidered through the grade dispute process.

If the college dean determines that the dispute is appropriate for the formal grade dispute procedure, they will convene a review panel.

Convening of Review Panel: After determining that the dispute is appropriate for a formal grade dispute procedure, the college dean will convene a review panel composed of three faculty: two faculty members from the same or closely related discipline as the course instructor (from the same department/unit, when possible), and a faculty member from the same college but from outside of the department/unit. The panel will receive the materials collected by the college dean as described above.

The panel may consult with subject matter experts, the instructor who assigned the final grade, and/or the student as needed.

This panel will review the case and resolve the dispute by arriving at a decision about the student's final course grade.

Communication of Decision: Following its convening, the review panel should make every effort to come to a decision regarding the student's dispute within 10 business days. The review panel will communicate their decision to the college dean, who will communicate the decision to the student and course instructor. If a change of grade is required, the college dean will facilitate that process.

Appeal to the Dean: If either the student or course instructor believes that the grade dispute process failed to follow the appropriate procedure or neglected to include relevant details, and if they believe that these procedural violations materially affected the decision of the review panel, they may file a limited written appeal with the college dean within 5 business days of the notification of the outcome of the review panel. In this limited appeal, the student or faculty member should describe the procedure that they believe was not followed and/or the relevant details not considered, as well as information they have that supports these claims.

The dean will review the written material, conduct any investigation that they believe is necessary, and, in consultation with the provost, make a decision within 5 business days as to whether material procedural error occurred. This decision of the college dean is final and not subject to further appeal.

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE
Initiate <u>informal</u> dispute with faculty member.	After final grade is posted on Banner and up to 20 business days from the date of posting.
If no resolution to informal dispute after 10 business days, initiate a <u>formal</u> dispute with the college dean.	Initiate formal dispute within the next 5 business days after conclusion of informal process.
College dean confirms case is appropriate for formal dispute policy.	Within 3 business days of receipt of formal grade dispute materials from student and faculty member.
College dean convenes review panel.	Within 3 business days of receipt of formal grade dispute materials from student and faculty member.
College dean receives recommendation from review panel, and communicates decision to the student and faculty member.	Generally, within 10 business days of receipt of decision from review panel.
Appeal of committee's decision by student or instructor.	Within 5 business days of the notification of the outcome of the review panel.

Late Assignment Policy for MSW Courses

The Social Work Department has adopted a policy governing late assignments. Completing work in a timely manner is an important social work value, however we recognize that students have complex demands, and that on occasion assignment extensions may be appropriate. The following policy had been adopted across all MSW courses. Students must formally request an extension on an assignment prior to the due date and time. This request must be in writing (email is fine).

Assignment extension requests must include the following details:

1. Identifying the problem that prevented you from meeting the due date, & requesting a 1:1 faculty meeting if needed.
2. A proposed new completion date and time.

It is expected that students will only occasionally need to request extensions, so a pattern of repeated requests may result in your faculty scheduling a meeting with you to discuss time management strategies.

Finally, extension requests on work due on the last day of semester cannot be approved for an extension due to grading timelines. Students unable to complete work by the last due dates can approach faculty and request an incomplete grade; however this is not guaranteed and is awarded at the discretion of faculty.

Students who submit late work without following the process described above will be penalized at the rate of 5% of the value of the assignment for each 24-hour period, up to 4 days. Thus, the maximum grade the student could earn would be 80%.

Policies For Review of Academic Performance

Standards for Social Work Education

Because of the nature of professional social work practice, the MSW Program has different expectations of students than do non-professional programs. Standards are linked to students' abilities to become effective social work professionals and are provided so that students and faculty can be clear about expectations and procedures to address academic performance concerns. The ultimate goal of the Standards is to help students have a successful experience at the School of Social Work.

Since becoming a professional is a gradual process, not all criteria are expected to be met at all times. Those who teach and supervise students, along with program administrators, will assess student academic performance and apply their professional judgment to determine if standards are being met during a student's educational career. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the social work profession, combined with a professional's own experience and practice wisdom. It also represents the application of knowledge, values, and skills to making decisions in a helping process. These expectations include the classroom, practicum, and off-campus university related activities.

Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance

To meet its responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that its graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, the MSW program evaluates the academic performance of its students in four general areas: Basic abilities to acquire professional skills; Mental and emotional abilities; Professional performance skills; and Academic performance. Meeting the criteria for academic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a program. Both professional behavior and academic performance comprise academic standards.

Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills

Communication Skills: Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.

Written Skills: Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling, and applies appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and complete adequately all written assignments as specified by faculty.

Oral Skills: Communicates effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to

others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to adequately complete all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of practicum placement experiences, as specified by faculty.

Interpersonal Skills: Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others. Takes appropriate responsibility for own actions and considers the impact of these actions on others.

Cognitive Skills: Exhibits sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and practicum. Demonstrates grounding in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research - including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge to professional practice.

Physical Skills: Exhibits sufficient motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class and practicum placement with or without accommodations. (See section on Accommodations for Disabilities for clarification.)

Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice
Stress Management: Demonstrates ability to recognize and deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. Handles stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.

Emotional and Mental Capacities: Uses sound judgment. Seeks and effectively uses help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Engages in counseling or seeks out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties do any of the following:

- Compromise scholastic and other performance;
- Interfere with professional judgment and behavior; or
- Jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the current Code of Ethics by the National Association of Social Workers).

Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice

Professional Commitment: Exhibits a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Demonstrates commitment to the essential values of social work that includes the respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and his/her rights to a just share of society's resources (social justice).

Professional Behavior: Exhibits behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in the classroom, university community, field and community. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect a professional manner. Shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements, and accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner.

Works effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. Advocates for himself/herself in an appropriate and responsible manner and uses proper channels for conflict resolution. Shows a willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance professional development

Self-Awareness: Exhibits knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. Accurately assesses one's own strengths, limitations, and

suitability for professional practice. Shows awareness of self and how one is perceived by others. Reflects on one's own limitations as they relate to professional capacities. Is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.

Ethical Obligations: Current behavior and classroom performance demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the NASW Code of Ethics. Ethical behaviors include:

- Comprehension of another individual's way of life and values. Empathic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.
- Appreciation of the value of diversity. Effective and nonjudgmental relation to and work with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or value system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.
- Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.
- Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and field placement.
- Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.
- Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways; or participate in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist.

Academic Performance: MSW students must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better to graduate from the program. Students are placed on academic probation if their overall GPA drops below 3.0 in any given semester and must bring their overall GPA up to a 3.0 in the next semester. For those students whose overall GPA drops below 3.0, the Chair of the Student Review Committee will inform the student, advisor, and Program Director in writing of their probationary status. It is strongly advised that the student meet with their advisor so that the advisor serves as or helps the student connect with a mentor to meet regularly with the student to assist in the improvement of academic work. Preferred is that the advisor and mentor are one and the same. If the student does not achieve an overall 3.0 GPA in the subsequent semester, he/she/they faces termination from the program.

Students must receive a C or better for the courses to be considered "passed." Students must receive a B or better in all practicum courses. Grades lower than a B in any semester of practicum results in a review of the student's overall performance in the practicum by the Practicum Coordinator in consultation with the MSW Program Director and may result in the student needing to repeat a semester of practicum.

A student can repeat one class (Practicum or other course) in a graduate program. Note: Students with more than one "F" on their transcripts cannot graduate from the MSW Program.

Indicators of Academic Performance Criteria

Indicators of academic performance in the MSW program may include but are not limited to the following:

- Feedback or reference letters from faculty, work supervisors, or supervisors of volunteer human service activity or other practicum experiences.
- Feedback from agency-based or faculty practicum instructors.
- Observation of classroom, volunteer, or practicum behaviors.
- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs, or other appropriate coursework.
- Student personal statements or self-assessments.
- Interviews with faculty or other professionals.
- Taped interview situations (audio or video).

- Feedback from students, staff, university, helping professionals, or community.
- Feedback from faculty in other social work programs that students may have attended.
- Signed confidentiality statements, scholastic honesty statements, contract to adhere to NASW Code of Ethics, other contracts between the program and the student.

Accommodations for Disabilities

No otherwise qualified student shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the MSW program. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for reasonable accommodation to provide equal opportunity to meet academic criteria for professional behavior and scholastic performance.

Any otherwise qualified student with a protected disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify the [Office of Accessibility and Accommodation](#) and provide documentation as needed. The Office of Accessibility and Accommodation makes recommendations for accommodations. The MSW Program will review academic performance criteria in light of individual student circumstances to explore issues of appropriateness and accommodation. An initial assessment, subsequent plan, use of outside experts, and periodic checks between the MSW program and the student are appropriate courses of action in making accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Acceptance into the MSW Program requires you pledge to abide by the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics (NASW, 2017). The Code of Ethics is a guideline for professional and ethical social work behavior.

The standards of behavior asserted in the Code of Ethics should be adopted and applied to social work student scholars' everyday lives. The Code addresses:

Respecting all individuals (clients, student peers, colleagues)

1.01, 2.01

Honoring diversity

1.05, 4.04

Honesty, Dishonesty, Fraud, Deception

4

Many principles found in the NASW Code of Ethics are also found in the [PLU Student Code of Conduct](#). Of particular relevance is the Academic Integrity policy, which reflects NASW ethical standard 4.04.

“Academic Integrity is honesty concerning all aspects of academic performance. Students must not cheat or plagiarize. Academic misconduct not only jeopardizes the career of the individual student involved, but it also undermines the scholastic achievements of all students and attacks the mission of this institution. Students are inherently responsible to do their own work, thereby ensuring the integrity of their academic records.”

Criminal Background Checks and Arrests while in the MSW Program

Before beginning the practicum placement, students need to be cleared through the Washington State Patrol background check. Additionally, many placement settings may require additional background checks as part of the onboarding process. Any criminal record (infraction, charge, misdemeanor or felony) may make a student ineligible for placement in certain agencies. Students are advised that a lack of disclosure about a criminal background during the agency interview process may result in a denial of placement at some agencies. It is strongly recommended that students with any level of criminal background openly discuss the specific situation with their designated program Field Coordinator during their pre-placement field meeting so they can get a better understanding of the potential challenges of placement, on a case-by-case basis.

Students may be ineligible for placement, or terminated from an agency, if criminal background information comes to light without prior disclosure. The Practicum Coordinator can provide insight to students as to potential opportunities and barriers to securing a field practicum site but cannot guarantee placement or choice of placement. Information disclosed will be used only for the purpose of determining appropriate field options. Please note: If a student cannot be placed, they will not be able to continue in the MSW Program.

In the event a student is arrested or charged with a new offense or is convicted during the program, the student is required to disclose this information to the MSW Program Director and the Practicum Coordinator within 48 hours of arrest, charge, or conviction. Students may be terminated from the program if an arrest or charge comes to light without immediate disclosure.

Failure to provide the required disclosures or notices will be deemed as deception and will be handled as a form of academic dishonesty in addition to any other violations. Arrests, violations, and/or convictions that violate university and/or department policies or standards could result in sanctions. Please see the NASW Code of Ethics, “4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud and Deception.”

Students who are arrested, charged, or convicted during the program are not permitted to return to the practicum placement until further notice. The student will be referred to the Student Review Committee for an initial review of the situation. The student assumes the risk involved with disclosing information and thus may choose not to disclose information. However, if the student chooses not to disclose information, the Student Review Committee will not be able to determine a course of action based on the program guidelines and the NASW Code of Ethics.

If a student is charged with a new offense, the student will most likely be required to take a leave of absence until the case has been resolved and a decision has been made by a court of law. A student may be permitted to complete classroom course work for the current semester. Once the outcome of the specific case or circumstance has been determined, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the MSW Program Director and the Practicum Coordinator. At that time, the student will be referred to the Student Review Committee again for consideration of specific factors and implications related to the social work profession and his/her ability to return to the program and practicum.

Dismissal from the MSW Program

Academic Dismissal

Academic performance is measured by maintaining a 3.0 GPA in the program, the overall and “within major” cumulative grade point averages of students. Students who fall below this grade point average receive a letter at the conclusion of the first semester in which they do not meet the requirement. The letter invites them to meet with faculty if desired, but requires them to craft a plan for reaching the grade point standard, and suggests various resources around the University which might help them in this pursuit. Students who attain the grades needed are sent a letter congratulating them on their accomplishment.

Students who are unable to successfully complete their plan are not permitted to enter the practicum. Those students who are not permitted to apply for practicum are invited to meet with faculty and a representative from the Academic Advising office to formulate an alternate plan of study to attain the necessary grade point average. Students who want to contest the dismissal may appeal to the Dean of the College of Health Professions and may follow the Pacific Lutheran University Grievance Policy.

Non-Academic Dismissal

Non-academic performance refers to those interpersonal behaviors, skills, and values that are the vehicle for student’s work with peers, faculty and clients (adapted from Sheafor, B. Horejsi, C. & Horejsi, G (2002), *Techniques and Guidelines for Social Work Practice*. 5th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon).

Faculty anticipate and nurture the demonstration or development of compassion, empathy, genuineness, the purposeful use of self, warmth, creativity, initiative, leadership, active listening, flexibility, good judgment, interpersonal skill, self-awareness and knowledge. Non-academic behaviors and values that impede the ability of

the students to successfully practice social work include, but are not limited to, values which conflict with the NASW Code of Ethics, unresolved mental illness, behaviors that degrade or devalue others, distracting personal habits, significant difficulties in communication, and poor work habits. Along with a list of behaviors that enhance social work practice, a list of examples that may impede social work practice are found in Appendix C.

When these behaviors that impede practice are consistently observed in the classroom, during interactions with students or faculty, or in the practicum placement, all program faculty members meet to describe and discuss the situation. The Program Director and one other faculty member bring the questionable behavior to the attention of the student in a conference. The student is asked to formulate, communicate, and implement a plan to address the behaviors of concern. A follow-up meeting time is set to review progress toward achieving the student's plan.

Students who successfully complete their plan are sent written confirmation and congratulations. Students who are unable to successfully complete their plan are invited to meet with social work faculty member and a representative from the Academic Advising Office to formulate a plan for exploring options to continue in the program or to be dismissed. Students who want to contest the dismissal may appeal to the Dean of the College of Health Professions and may follow the Pacific Lutheran University Grievance Policy.

APPENDICES

- A.** NASW Code of Ethics
- B.** MSW Program Assessment Plan
- C.** Non-Academic Dismissal Behaviors
- D.** University Policies, Procedures, and Resources
- E.** Handbook Review Documentation

APPENDIX A
NASW Code of Ethics
 Summary of Major Principles

The following codified ethical principles should guide social workers in the various roles and relationships and at the various levels of responsibility in which they function professionally. These principles also serve as a basis for the adjudication by the National Association of Social Workers of issues in ethics.

In subscribing to this code, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation and abide by any disciplinary rulings based on it. They should also take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues. Finally, social workers should be equally ready to defend and assist colleagues unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundations of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

Ethical Principles

Value: Service

Ethical Principle: *Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.*

Value: Social Justice

Ethical Principle: *Social workers challenge social injustice*

Value: Dignity and worth of the person

Ethical Principle: *Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.*

Value: Importance of Human Relationships

Ethical Principle: *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.*

Value: Integrity

Ethical principle: *Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.*

Value: Competence

Ethical Principle: *Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.*

Ethical Standards

- I. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients—Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients. Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and provide service to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based on valid informed consent, privacy and confidentiality.
- II. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues—Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and respect confidential information shared by colleagues. Social workers should seek advice and counsel of colleagues and/or refer clients to other professionals when it is in the best interest of the client.
- III. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings—Social workers who provide supervision or consultation should have the necessary knowledge and skill and provide fair and considerate evaluation of others. Social workers should ensure that documentation in records is accurate.
- IV. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals—Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate with any form of discrimination, dishonesty, feud, or deception. Social workers should not permit their private conduct or their own personal problems to interfere with their professional judgment and performance.

- V. **Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession**—Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice. Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research and keep current with emerging knowledge.
- VI. **Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society**—Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social justice.

Appendix B
Pacific Lutheran University
MSW Program Assessment Plan

The MSW program builds upon CSWE's 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, which are reflected below. Elective courses are not included here. Upon graduation, students enter the field of social work as advanced clinical practitioners.

Generalist Curriculum Assessment

Learning Outcomes C = Course Content M = Measured Benchmark	SOCW 505 Human Behv & the Social Env	SOCW 510 SW Theory & Prac I	SOCW 515 SW Theory & Pract II	SOCW 532 SW Res Methods	SOCW 576 Found Practicum Exp I
C1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior	C	M	C	C	M
C2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice.	C	C	M	C	M
C3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice	C	M	C	C	M
C4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice.	C	C	C	M	M
C5: Engage in policy practice.	C		M		M
C6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.	C	M	C		M
C7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	C		M		M
C8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	C	C	M		M
C9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities	C		M		M

Specialized Curriculum Assessment (see specialized learning outcomes above for each competency in the curriculum section)

Learning Outcomes C = Course Content M = Measured Benchmark	SOCW 525 Anti-Rac, Div, & Equity in SW	SOCW 535 Adv SW Found	SOCW 555 SW in Health Care	SOCW 560 MH Assess & Interv I	SOCW 565 SUD Assess & Intrv	SOCW 570 CompHea lth Care	SOCW 573 Policy Pract and Advocacy in Health Care	SOCW 586 Adv Prac Exp II	SOCW 596 Adv Prac Exp III
C1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior	C	C	C	C				C	M1 M2
C2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice.	C	C	C			C	C	C	M1 M2
C3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M1 M2
C4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice.		C	C	C	C	C		C	M1 M2
C5: Engage in policy practice.	C	C			C	C	C	C	M1 M2
C6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups	C	C					C	C	M1 M2
C7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups		C	C	C	C			C	M1 M2
C8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups		C	C	C	C		C	C	M1 M2
Evaluate practice with Individuals, Families, Groups	C	C						C	M1 M2

Appendix C
Non-Academic Dismissal Behaviors

The Social Work program creates a learning environment where students enhance or develop knowledge, values and skills for social work practice. For some students, this requires new awareness of values and interpersonal or personal behaviors which are dangerous to clients or which impede the student's ability to work well with other professionals. The behaviors listed in the first column below are examples of those behaviors supported and encouraged in students. The second column includes behaviors that faculty will bring to the attention of students when observed. ¹ This list is not meant to be complete.

Behaviors that Enhance Social Work Practice	Behaviors that Impede Social Work Practice
Ability to identify and resolve personal or family situations that affect professional practice	Preoccupation with personal problems impairs professional practice
Ability to do individual or team problem solving in stressful situations	Inability to control reactions or exercise self-discipline when in stressful situations.
Warm, genuine and compassionate manner with clients and peers.	Inability to demonstrate warmth, genuineness or compassion with clients or peers.
Acceptance of authority where appropriate as well as skills to resolve problems with authority figures.	Inability or unwillingness to work with persons in positions of authority.
Healthy detachment supports focus on the concerns and problems of the client.	Inability to separate personal experiences from concerns and problems presented by clients.
Reflective and self-evaluative approach to learning and practice	Extreme defensiveness prevents self-critical examination of professional performance
Ability to hear and process the critical comments of clients and colleagues non-defensively.	Inability to hear and process the critical comments of clients and colleagues.
Demonstrate the social work ethics that value the worth and dignity of every person and their right to self-determination.	Impose personal values, political beliefs, religious preferences or lifestyle choices on clients.
Use the policies and procedures of the agency in tandem with standards of ethical conduct in working with clients	Misuse or abuse authority with clients.
Ability to offer one's insights and work interdependently with clients, in peer supervision, and in team decision-making.	Inability to offer one's insights and to work interdependently with clients, in peer supervision, and in team decision-making.
Respect for boundaries of clients, colleagues, faculty, supervisors and agencies.	Failure to respect the boundaries of clients, colleagues, faculty, supervisors and agencies.
Respect for norms of professional practice in use of words and gestures.	Use of words, phrases or gestures that are in bad taste or known to offend clients or peers, including name-calling.
Value diversity in work with clients, col-leagues, and the human service community. .	Demonstrating prejudice, bias, or discrimination against groups or individuals.
Communicates and solves problems directly	Making sarcastic, insulting, or disrespectful comments about colleagues or clients
Careful, critical and balanced discussion of ideas or professional opinions.	Failure to respect the ideas or professional opinions of others.

Seeks and uses supervision from faculty and agency personnel appropriately	Unwillingness to seek or use supervision from faculty or agency personnel or misuse of supervision resources for personal matters.
Careful compliance with the norms and practices of the agency with regard to written documentation and communication	Non-compliance with norms and practices of the agency with regard to written documentation and communication
Comes to class, practicum, and group meetings with work completed and ready for discussion.	Lack of preparation for appointments with clients and agencies, meetings, class and group work.
Socializes appropriately but focuses on task accomplishment for self and others	Distracting other students or staff members, or preventing self and others from doing their tasks.
Familiar and compliant with University and agency policy and procedure.	Unfamiliar and/or non-compliant with University and agency policy and procedure.
Behaves in a manner above negative public comment and suspicion	Behaves in ways that draw negative attention to social workers, the workplace, or the University, thereby lessening client and public regard for the social work agency, the profession, or the University.
Observes and respects the client's right to privacy and any other rights clients may have.	Failure to observe confidentiality with clients or failure to protect client rights in dealing with clients, client documents, agencies, the larger community
No sexual contact with clients	Any sexual contact with clients.
Knowledgeable about and compliant with mandatory reporting statutes about child or elder abuses.	Failure to comply with mandatory reporting statutes about child or elder abuse.
Professional behavior consistent with those standards identified in the National Association of Social Work's Code of Ethics.	Violates the National Association of Social Work's Code of Ethics.

¹ Adapted from Sheafor, B, Hoerjci, C & Horejci, G. (2000). Techniques and Guidelines for Social Work Practice (5th Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Appendix D *University Policies, Procedures, and Resources*

Pacific Lutheran University is committed to providing equal opportunity in education for all students without regard to a person's race, color, national origin, creed, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by law. The university community will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination, harassment, or abuse of or toward any member of the university community.

The university holds as basic the integrity and well-being of every person in the community. It is committed to providing an educational environment which is fair, consistent, caring, and supportive of intellectual and personal growth. Further, it is committed to protecting the rights of its community members to engage in dialog and to express ideas in an environment which is free from harassment, discrimination, and exploitation. This freedom of expression does not, however, entail the freedom to threaten, intimidate, harass, or abuse.

The university prohibits any activities which cause or threaten physical or mental harm, suffering, or exhaustion; which demean the dignity and personhood of any individual; or which interfere with one's academic progress. Examples of such actions are verbal threats or abuse, harassment, intimidation, stalking, threatened or actual physical assault, or consistent disregard of the rights and welfare of others. In particular, the university will see as a violation of this policy, any behavior which communicates a message that is threatening, intimidating, or demeaning or which causes physical harm to a person or persons because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law. Any person or persons who are found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, or termination.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, popularly known as the "Buckley Amendment" and carrying the acronym "FERPA," PLU has adopted the following policies and procedures. This policy was designed to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. This is a notice of students' basic rights under the law, and explains certain procedures for PLU's full compliance with the law.

Correction of Education Records

A student who believes that information contained in her/his education records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of privacy rights may request in writing that the office, which contains those records, amend them. A student should identify the part of the record she/he wants changed and specify why it is believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of privacy rights.

That office will reach a decision and inform the student within a reasonable amount of time after receiving the request. If the records custodian refuses to amend the record, the student has the right to a hearing. A hearing officer appointed by the Provost, Vice President for Finance & Operations, or Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students will conduct this hearing. The hearing officer will be someone who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing, but may be an official of the university. The hearing will be held within a reasonable amount of time after it is requested. The hearing officer will notify the student, reasonably in advance, of the date, place, and time of the hearing.

The student will be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issue raised. One or more other persons, including an attorney, may accompany the student. The hearing officer will make a decision in writing based on the evidence presented at the hearing. The decision will include a summary of the evidence presented and the reasons for the decision. If the hearing officer supports the complaint, the education record

will be amended accordingly, and the student will be informed. If the hearing officer decides not to amend the education record, a student has the right to place in the education records a statement commenting on the challenged information and/or stating the reasons for disagreeing with the decision. This statement will be maintained as part of the education record as long as the contested portion is maintained, and whenever a copy of the education record is sent to any party, the student's statement will be included.

Pacific Lutheran University's policy statement implementing FERPA is maintained by, and available for review in the Office of the Registrar, Hauge Administration Building, Room 130. Students should address questions, concerns, or problems to the Registrar's Office. Students may file complaints regarding alleged failure of the university to comply with FERPA with The Family Policy Compliance Office, US Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605;(202) 260-3887, FAX: (202) 260-9001.

Accommodation of Persons with Disabilities

As stated in the Equal Opportunity policy, Pacific Lutheran University will not discriminate against any student because of the presence of a mental or physical disability. As part of its long-range plan, the University has committed the financial and human resources necessary to provide access to University facilities according to the recommendations and requirements of the ADA. Where a student with a disability is able to perform essential academic/program requirements or job functions, the University may be obligated to provide reasonable accommodation to the needs of that student, unless such accommodations would provide undue hardship to the University.

Resources and Services

[Admission and Academic Records](#)

[Advocacy Services](#)

[Campus Ministry](#)

[Center for Student Success](#)

[Counseling, Health, and Wellness Services](#)

[Department of Campus Safety](#)

[Department of Residential Life](#)

[Disciplinary & Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Multi-Faith Meditation & Prayer Space](#)

[Office of Accessibility & Accommodation](#)

[Office of Student Financial Services](#)

[Pierce County Domestic Violence Services](#)

[Pierce County Sexual Assault Center](#)

[Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

[Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Title IX Coordinator](#)

Appendix E
Pacific Lutheran University MSW Student Handbook Review Documentation

Please complete form [here](#) or
 use QR code to access the form.



I have read and understand:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. The Introduction | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 2. The MSW Program Overview (in its entirety) | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 3. Program Objectives and Competencies | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 4. Grading Policy | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 5. Late Assignment Policy | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 6. Academic Integrity | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 7. Dismissal from the MSW Program | Yes ___ No ___ |
| 8. Appendices | Yes ___ No ___ |

Please read all the sections listed. If you mark “No” because you do not understand a section, please make an appointment with your academic advisor for review. **This form should be completed by September 15th.**